

# McDougal's Farm LLC

What's Growing On!

July 9th, 2020

## Farm News

Everyone knows that stressed people tend to pick up bugs quicker than the unstressed, but did you know plants are the same way? The only difference is, they are dealing with *real* bugs. When a plant is stressed from extreme heat, drought or cold, it releases a chemical that attracts bugs. This is a fabulous plan if you are a dying tree in the woods. Bugs come help break you down, you decay and then they clean up your mess...nature's perfect little undertakers. But if you are a vegetable whose only dream was to adorn someone's plate, chances are those bugs just blew it for ya. You will probably be adorning someone's compost pile instead. We are starting to see a few stressed plants and a few more bugs in the field this week, but considering the intense heat, the plants look pretty good. If the plants were writing this newsletter, they would probably be saying the same thing about us; ..."We are seeing more stressed humans in the field this week and they certainly are attracting more bugs!". Big "Shout out" to the crew this week! Way to hang in there!!! You are all sweaty rock stars!

The heat has us keeping a close eye on all the romaine in the field. They are the first to bolt. It can happen in a day. One day they look perfect...the next, they are bitter, stretching for the sky, holding their next generation (flower/seed) high above their heads like Simba on the Lion King. Nature is pretty clever...if she makes it taste bad enough, nothing will eat it, therefore protecting the seed. If she gives it a boost off the ground, tomorrow's generation will stay high and dry. We observe her cleverness...think she is amazing....just don't always appreciate it.

There was a lot of heat in your veggies this week when they came off the field. We have taken extra care to quickly chill them down to a crisp 37 degrees. The bags will get packed Thursday morning and our drivers will whisk them away within an hour of completing. Please consider picking your veggies up as soon as possible this week...it's going to be a hot one.

**NOTICE: Advanced Health Pick Up Site now closes at 4pm on Thursdays.** Their normal Friday hours are 8-11am but they **will NOT be open this Friday** so please be sure to pick up before 4pm on Thursday this week.

The fields are a beautiful place to be. Thank you for letting us be your farmers  
*Jerry and Maydene*

## What's in your Bag

This week in your bag you will find **kohlrabies, a bag of spinach topped off with Tatsoi greens, a bag of gourmet leaf lettuce, a bundle of green onions, a bag of kale and garlic scapes**. The large shares will also have the first of the **cucumbers** and boy are they crisp! Much, much more to come!

**Kohlrabi:** This is one of the easiest veggies to eat. Peel it and slice it into thin slices, sprinkle with a little Sea Salt and YUM...all ready! You can also shred kohlrabi and add them to a slaw. Kohlrabi can also be roasted. Peel, chunk, oil, season and roast at 450 degrees for 30 minutes...sprinkle with parmesan cheese.

**Garlic Scapes:** Garlic scapes are tomorrow's garlic. We remove these curly little wonders off the top of the stem so the plant's energy goes into the garlic bulb not the seeds in the pod (aka tomorrow's garlic), this makes the bulb grow larger. Garlic scapes have a lot of garlicky goodness. Remove the pod and discard, chop the remaining stem up finely and add to soups, potatoes, top a pizza, or make a vinaigrette. Try it in a pesto with your kale.

## Zuppa Toscana \*\*\*\*\* 5 star!

### **Creamy Potato & Kale Soup with Italian Sausage**

Creamy, spicy potato and kale soup with Italian sausage. Similar to Olive Garden's

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 pound Italian sausage
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes (or to taste)
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 onion, diced
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 3 small russet potatoes, thinly sliced
- 2 cups kale, finely chopped
- 1 cup heavy cream
- salt and pepper to taste

To a large pot over medium heat, add the olive oil. Brown the sausage until no longer pink. Add the red pepper flakes, garlic, and onion and cook, stirring often, until the onions are translucent and the garlic is fragrant, about 4 minutes. Add the chicken broth, potatoes, and kale. Bring the broth to a simmer, reduce the heat to medium-low, and cook until the potatoes are tender, about 10 minutes. Remove the soup from the heat, stir in the cream, and season with salt and pepper to taste. Ladle into soup bowls and serve

*The following recipe came to us from Holly who found it on Pinterest. We give it 10 stars!!! \*\*\*\*\*Holly recommended adding kielbasa sausage to it. Blew it out of the park! You can use your whole bag of spinach and Tatsoi in this recipe. Thanks Holly!*

## **Farfalle Pasta with Spinach, Mushrooms, and**

## **Caramelized Onions** Pinterest from Julias Album

### **Caramelized onions**

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 3 yellow onions , large, sliced
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar

### **Creamy pasta sauce**

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 10 oz mushrooms , sliced (I used button mushrooms)
- 6 oz spinach
- 1 cup half-and-half
- 1 cup Parmesan cheese , shredded
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

### **Pasta**

- 8 oz farfalle pasta

### **How to caramelize onions:**

1. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil on medium-high heat in a large skillet. Add sliced onions and cook on high heat for about 10 minutes, constantly stirring with the spatula.
2. The onions should start to brown, but without burning.
3. Reduce heat to medium and continue cooking onions for 10 more minutes, continuing to stir, as onions brown even more without burning. At this point add a pinch of salt over onions.
4. Continue cooking for 10 more minutes on medium or low heat, stirring occasionally to make sure onions don't stick to the bottom of the pan or burn.
5. In total, you should have cooked onions for 30 minutes.
6. Remove the skillet from heat and sprinkle the onions with a small amount of balsamic vinegar to deglaze the pan.
7. Using a spatula, stir the onions, scraping the bottom of the pan and coating onions with a pinch of balsamic vinegar you just added. Remove caramelized onions to a plate.

### **How to cook mushrooms and spinach:**

1. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in the same skillet on medium heat. Add sliced mushrooms. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt.
2. Cook mushrooms for about 5 minutes, occasionally stirring, until mushrooms are soft.
3. Add fresh spinach to the skillet and stir on low heat just until spinach starts to wilt.

### **How to make creamy pasta sauce:**

1. Add half-and-half to the mushroom and spinach mixture and bring to a quick boil. Immediately reduce to simmer.
2. Add 2/3 cup of shredded Parmesan cheese and 1/4 teaspoon salt. Keep stirring while the sauce simmers until the cheese melts.
3. Add caramelized onions back to the skillet with the pasta sauce.

### **Cook pasta:**

1. Cook pasta according to package instructions. Drain.

2. Add cooked and drained Bowtie pasta to the creamy sauce. Stir on low heat for a couple of minutes to reheat.