Greetings CSA Members and Friends of the Farm!

It’s October, which back in my home state of Massachusetts means colder weather, leaves changing color and football season. In Santa Cruz, however, it’s just continuous perfect weather and surfing, which for the final two weeks of my apprenticeship, I will gladly take advantage of. So, in honor of the start of football season, here is my All Time Fantasy CASFS Crop starting lineup.

My quarterback is going to be Jimmy Nardello. Yes, that same beautiful red Italian pepper that many of you have enjoyed over the season. I love the Jimmy for its simplicity – just a quick roast in the oven, a drizzle of olive oil, a sprinkling of salt and pepper, then placed between a warm French baguette and you have what may be the sneaky best sandwich you ever tasted. At running back I’m starting the Delicata Winter Squash. To be honest, I’ve never had many of the winter squashes that we grow here, and upon first trying the delicata I was excited by its sweetness and versatility on its own – simply roasted, in a soup or mashed with a little butter. About a week after my first experience with the delicata, the field crew put together a taste test of five different varieties grown here (butternut, acorn, delicata, red kabocha, red kuri) – all amazing with some difference in sweetness, texture and dryness. So, if you share my excitement over these winter squash varieties, I suggest grabbing a copy of Jerusalem: A Cookbook by Yotam Ottolenghi, which is in my Cookbook Hall of Fame. The book utilizes winter squash in such creative ways and takes the flavor profile to heights I didn’t think possible.

Moving on to wide receiver, I’m starting the Chioggia Beet. Not only is this beet delicious, it’s also a piece of art. My favorite thing to do with this beet (and any variety) is to roast it with olive oil, chopped garlic, and dealer’s choice of rosemary or dill (or maybe get a little aggressive and use both). Then, in another pot, I’ll boil some potatoes and combine the beets and potatoes in a food processor and you have a mashed potato like you’ve never tasted or seen. Trust me, it’s sweet one moment then rich the next with the final color being shades of pink and purple. Finally I’m starting Fennel as my defense. My favorite things to do with fennel are making soups, roasting with parmesan cheese, shaved in a salad, as a great addition to a pizza or flatbread. Fennel also adds amazing flavor to sausage or chicken, and you can make candy with it using the seeds. I could go on for days about fennel and how creative one can get in the kitchen. I hope you enjoy the final few weeks of what’s to come in your CSA boxes. It has been a pleasure to farm this land and learn such amazing things from fellow apprentices and instructors. I leave you with a haiku that was inspired during one harvest morning by fellow apprentice Jane Kuhn –

Chard on chard
On chard on chard on
Chard on chard
Fall Turnip Frittata  Serves 6

8 oz. broccoli rabe (about 1/2 bunch) or broccolini, trimmed
2 teaspoons minced garlic
1/2 teaspoon salt, divided
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
3 1/2 cups shredded peeled turnips (about 2 medium)
1/2 cup chopped onion
8 large eggs
2 large egg whites
1/4 cup low-fat milk
1/2 cup shredded fontina or cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 425°F. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add broccoli rabe (or broccolini) and cook until very tender, about 5 minutes for broccoli rabe (or 6-7 minutes for broccolini). Drain well. Transfer to a large bowl and toss with garlic and 1/4 teaspoon salt. Set aside.

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large ovenproof nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add the turnips, onion and the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt. Spread and pat the mixture into an even layer; cook, without stirring, for 2 minutes. Then stir the mixture and scrape up any browned bits. Pat the mixture back into an even layer and continue cooking, without stirring, for 2 minutes. Stir again, spread back into an even layer and cook until mostly golden brown, 2 to 4 minutes more. Transfer to a plate. Wash and dry the pan.

Whisk eggs, egg whites and milk in a medium bowl. Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in the pan over medium heat. Add the egg mixture and cook, stirring briefly, until beginning to set, about 1 minute. Remove from the heat. Spoon the turnip mixture evenly over the eggs. Top with cheese, then the broccoli rabe (or broccolini).

Transfer the pan to the oven. Bake the frittata until set, about 15 minutes. Remove from the oven and let stand 5 minutes. To release the frittata from the pan, run a flexible rubber spatula along the edges until underneath, until you can slide it out onto a cutting board or serving plate. Cut into wedges and serve.

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Radicchio, Fennel, and Olive Panzanella

6 oz. country-style bread, torn into bite-size pieces (about 4 cups)
1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest
1/2 cup olive oil, divided
Kosher salt, freshly ground pepper
1 small shallot, finely chopped
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
1 small head radicchio, torn into bite-size pieces
1 small fennel bulb, thinly sliced
1 cup fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves with tender stems
1/2 cup green olives, pitted, halved
3 ounces aged sheep’s-milk cheese (such as Manchego), shaved
3 ounces hard salami, thinly sliced

Preheat oven to 400°F. Toss bread with lemon zest and 1/4 cup oil on a rimmed baking sheet; season with salt and pepper. Bake, tossing occasionally, until crisp on the outside but chewy in the center, 8–10 minutes. Let cool.

Whisk shallot, lemon juice, vinegar, and oregano in a large bowl; season with salt and pepper. Whisk in remaining 1/4 cup oil.

Add radicchio, fennel, parsley, olives, cheese, salami, and bread to dressing; toss to combine.

Note: Salad can be dressed the night before. Cover and chill.

Bon Appétit | April 2014

Quick Pickled Turnips  Makes about 2-1/2 cups

3-4 small turnips (about 12 ounces), peeled and very thinly sliced
1/2 cup quartered and thinly sliced red onion
3 cloves garlic, smashed and peeled
1 cup white-wine vinegar
1 cup hot water
1 tablespoon sugar
10 whole black peppercorns
1 teaspoon salt
1/4-1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper (optional)

Layer turnips, onion and garlic in a quart jar (or similar 4-cup container) with a lid.

Whisk vinegar, hot water, sugar, peppercorns, salt and crushed red pepper in a medium bowl until sugar is mostly dissolved. Pour mixture over the vegetables. Put the lid on and gently shake a few times to distribute the flavorings. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes for the flavors to develop.

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