

THE LAND OF COMMON SENSE

Volume 1, Issue 4
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An occasional newsletter from the Community Farm at Donington-on-Bain
Contact us at Doncomfarm@gmail.com or text 07388 671264

Loving the leeks

Are we bringing leeks back into fashion? They are very popular with us and with passers-by who stop at the stall.

So lets share some ways of eating them. Thanks to Harriet and Jude for their tried and tested recipes—warming for body and soul as the cold winter nights continue to draw in.



SIMPLE LEEKS

What we need

Leeks, olive oil and red wine vinegar.

What we do

Split the leeks as shown and rinse upside down (white ends up) to wash out the soil that is always hiding in the leaves.

Simmer as many or as few as you like until soft—with the tops. You can either leave the tops on or shred them finely to cook faster. Place in a dish and drizzle with olive oil, red wine vinegar, salt and pepper.

Give thanks and eat!

SCALLOPED POTATOES WITH LEEKS AND THYME

What we need: 2 tbsp butter, 5 oz. leeks finely chopped, 2 gloves garlic, 1 tsp dried thyme, 250 ml whole milk, 250 ml cream, 2 tsp salt, pepper, 2½ lb potatoes peeled, thinly sliced

What we do

Preheat oven 350° (gas mark 5). Grease the baking dish. Heat butter in a saucepan and stir in the leeks for about 2½ minutes. Add garlic and thyme in the last 30 seconds. Stir in the milk and cream, lower heat to a simmer, and stir occasionally until mixture has thickened slightly (about 5 mins).

Add potatoes, stir to coat them then transfer the mixture to the dish, spreading them evenly. Bake until potatoes are done, light brown and bubbly; if time permits, baste potatoes with sauce halfway through cooking.

Enjoy as a delicious savoury side dish!

Brussels
Sprouts

A new sign for
the stall as we
near Christmas!

Is the farm for food or friendship?

Why are we meeting and working on the Community Farm at Donington-on-Bain? What has brought us together and what will keep us going?

Well, in mid-November we met in the cleared out poly-tunnel, in a circle, to discuss the above. We had a good turnout of 11 and were keen to hear about David's vision and how he saw the future. We voiced the need for a structure and directions. We wanted to be more effective and make more progress.

"We need some guidelines," we used to say.

David agreed. "But the guidelines should be defined by a common purpose," he began. "We need to define a common purpose." That certainly made sense as the project will only be a success if we are all in the same boat paddling madly in the same direction.

Our common purpose

"You can add to this," David continued, "but ... could it be that our common purpose is 'to banish loneliness and isolation'?"

A pin dropped.

Continued overleaf

Calling all young maidens! Did you know you can place a leek under your pillow at night, and the features of your future husband will be revealed in a dream? Just as amazing, a leek can protect you against wounds when you go into battle, against being struck by lightning, and even against the pains of childbirth! Not facing any of those life challenges? Leeks are also thought to cure the common cold...

Source: <https://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/HistoryofWales/The-Leek-National-emblem-of-the-Welsh>





Its mid-November. Juliette and Robbie dig up the mooli that got away. Enough for three, it was shared in the field: Jude later tried her piece in a soup, Veronique pickled her share, and by the time Juliet had cut off the green part—there was not much left to cook! We think it's a bit late in the season, but we are still learning about this exotic and puzzling vegetable...

Our common purpose *continued from p1*

“Could it be to grow organic food at literally no extra cost?” he suggested.

“To survive in this world surrounded by corporate power?”

“To set a replicable example of how to grow and eat healthily?”

It is not often a farmer suggests that the aim of growing food on his land could be to banish loneliness. But its true, we all appreciate the camaraderie on the field and in the tunnels. And we do have an epidemic of loneliness in our country.

He went on to agree that

we needed guidelines for what we are doing, and a plan for who's doing what.

“If we're all happy with why we're here,” he said, “how will we make it work?”

Simple guidelines

The guidelines were simple: “In what way can I help?”

We can consult our own conscience. It's a creative act of each individual person.”

This was not quite what we were expecting! But how fortunate are we, to have a chance to develop something with such values at

the very heart of it. Would such guidelines really steer us in the right direction and hold us together when the seas get rough? Some of us (all of us?) were certainly willing to take it further.

How does this approach turn practical? Some ideas have already begun to surface. However, we need to reflect, share our thoughts, communicate openly with each other, and perhaps have courage to develop a new way of working—based on what the world *really* needs.

More from the meeting in the next Newsletter.



Richard appreciates the Ash in the Wolds

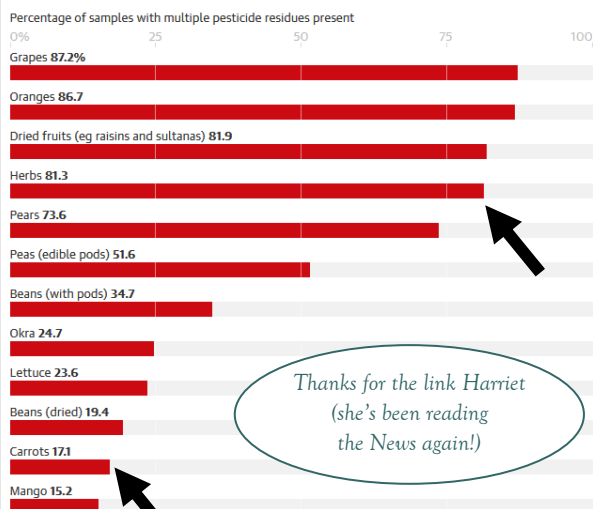
It would be nice for those of us who need to drive to the community farm, to live nearer. But as compensation we do get to benefit in other ways. Here's a thought from Richard...

My country trips out of Louth often have a spin-off in the strong winds, when the leaves are still on the roadside, Ash trees are frequently snapping off quite meaty branches (sail effect). So I grab my 24" bow saw & cut out the useable timber for the small wood burner which is my main source of heat. Ash burns well, even unseasoned.

Another reason to grow herbs and carrots next year...

Shockingly, according to this Guardian article, traces of 122 different pesticides have been found in 12 fruit and veg products, many with links to cancer. Its not surprising carrots are on the list because we can taste the difference in supermarket purchases. But the shocker is herbs. Nick Mole from PAN UK said: “These figures highlight the wide array of chemicals that we are exposed to daily through our diets. While safety limits continue are set for just one pesticide at a time, the evidence is growing that chemicals can combine to be more toxic, a phenomenon known as the cocktail effect.” Every fruit or vegeta-

Grapes and oranges top the list of sampled fruit and vegetables contaminated with pesticide



Thanks for the link Harriet (she's been reading the News again!)

Guardian graphic | Source: Data presented based on PAN UK analysis of the UK Government's Expert Committee on Pesticide Residues in Food (PRiF) Annual Report 2020
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/sep/29/cocktail-pesticides-almost-all-oranges-grapes-uk-study>

ble on the list contains 2 or more types of pesticide, but sometimes up to 25!



The Rota

Send any changes to the rota to:
Doncomfarm@gmail.com

| | Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---------------|--------|---------|-----|------|------------------|-----|-----------|
| Refresh stall | Andrew | Pam/Sal | Jo | Rach | Ali (Wed. night) | Lee | Everyone! |
| Hens | Pam | Pam | Pam | Pam | Pam | Pam | Pam |

Lee needs to change her day, can anyone help?