



**Monday 30th March 2020**

Dearest Customer,

How are you ? I hope you are ok and coping with lockdown. I have to tell you that even here in rural Richmondshire we aren't getting off lightly. If you're thinking of slipping off for a walk on the moors, a policeman stops your car..... 'Where d'you think you're going '.....'no you're not'.

It's Sunday morning and snowing. We had a few stunning spring days last week bringing all the daffodils out and the tulips into bud. It drew my old friends, the toads, out from their winter hiding places and into the pond to mate. Amongst them a peculiar pink one, an albino. She was getting a rough ride actually. And I saw a newt, they seem to be back after a long absence. How these tiny, fragile creatures move around and survive. Nature is incredible, so stable, so embracing and resilient. What an incredible planet we live on, what a privilege to be alive, even if these are difficult days. It's all there to look forward to when we come out.

Here are a couple of tasty recipes you could try with this week's spring greens:

#### **Spring Green Risotto**

<i>1 tbsp olive oil</i>	<i>1 small onion, chopped</i>
<i>150g risotto rice</i>	<i>1 clove garlic, chopped</i>
<i>½ lemon, zest and juice</i>	<i>500ml vegetable stock</i>
<i>250g spring greens, shredded</i>	

*Heat the oil in a medium frying pan and fry the onion for 3-4 minutes. Add the rice, garlic and lemon zest and cook for 1 minute. Gradually add the stock, cover and simmer gently until the liquid is absorbed and the rice is tender, 15-20 minutes. Stir in the lemon juice. Meanwhile, cook the spring greens in boiling water for 4 minutes, drain well and mix into the rice.*

#### **Vegeree with Eggs and Cashews**

<i>2 tbsp unsalted butter or margarine</i>	<i>1 onion, chopped</i>
<i>1 bay leaf</i>	<i>300g basmati rice</i>
<i>2 tsp medium curry powder</i>	<i>500ml fresh vegetable stock, heated</i>
<i>1 tbsp mango chutney, plus extra to serve</i>	<i>4 Hen Nation eggs</i>
<i>bunch spring greens, leaves shredded</i>	<i>1 red chilli, thinly sliced</i>
<i>handful cashew nuts, toasted</i>	

*Melt the butter or margarine in a large pan, add the onion and bay, season and cook for 5 minutes or until the onion starts to soften. Stir the curry powder into the onion, cook for 1 minute, then add the rice, stock and chutney and season. Bring to the boil, stir, then simmer gently, covered, for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, simmer the eggs in a separate pan of boiling water for 6-7 minutes. Cool briefly in cold water, then peel. After 10 minutes, pile the greens on the rice. Season, re-cover the pan, then turn off the heat and leave for 10 minutes. Fluff up with a fork and top with the halved eggs, chilli and nuts*

As China now closes its borders to foreigners, I would like to think that one day Xi Jinping might stand up and say to the world that he is sorry. And tell us that he will ban 'wild' markets forever. I would expect it of our own Prime Minister if we unleashed some hell on the world from some of our own vile farming methods.

However, one of the lessons is that we can't leave it to politicians. Here in the UK it was individuals, individuals on social media, businesses, that took the lead - gathering information, sharing information, thinking it through, doing the graphs, cancelling events, cancelling travel, homeworking, locking down. The government was dragged along. I believe that when this is done, we will all rise again and make sure this can never happen again, not like this. It is incumbent on every one of us, to make sure we put into the reverse the damage we have done on this planet and stamp out all the dangerous, unwholesome practices. Money talks, our voices can be heard. We get informed and we can boycott.

We have been so lucky in this country, in our lifetimes, to have had nearly 80 years of peace and overall good health. Maybe we've taken it granted, but I think we all knew deep down that the day would come, and it has.

It is hard to get it into perspective. The initial shock, the information and news overload, the terror and fear, the realisation that it's all not just a bad dream, the contemplating of one's mortality and of those we love. The anger, the switching off of the news, the taking practical steps to rearrange one's life. I guess that is all normal, there's a lot to process, but our brains are good at processing and adapting. Humans are built to solve problems and survive and most of us will. Thirty thousand people have died in a world population of 8 billion. We know it doesn't end here but it may never get as bad we fear it could if we are all sensible and if the world works together.

We have been pretty much in meltdown at Farmaround as have all the food businesses I know. Sorry there was no letter last week. I must say though, it is good to have focus and purpose at this time. We have a waiting list of over 500 people, growing by the hour, but sadly can't take any more customers on. Oh for this in normal times and for a nicer reason. But we do have a sprinkling of new customers and we say a big hello and welcome to you.

From all of us, stay well and stay safe. United we are brilliant, we are more powerful than this thing. It is NOT having us. We are going to make one fantastic world after this.

Kind wishes,

Isobel