



## **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> August 2013**

Dear Customer,

I love summer, isn't it lovely! We have Peter Lydiate's purple french beans and Savoy cabbages in the bags this week. We have Charentais melons and peaches from the South of France and greengages in the fruit bags. Here are a couple of recipes you could try this week:

### **Carrot and Courgette Soup**

<i>3 medium courgettes, diced</i>	<i>1 onion, chopped</i>
<i>3 medium carrots, diced</i>	<i>1 tbs tomato puree</i>
<i>1 tbs olive oil</i>	<i>vegetable stock</i>
<i>handful of fresh dill, finely chopped</i>	<i>salt and pepper</i>

*Heat the olive oil in a medium saucepan and add the onion. Saute the onion for a couple of minutes until soft. Add the carrots and fry for a further 5 minutes then add the courgettes. Cook until all the vegetables have softened. Pour in the stock so that it covers the vegetables by 2cm. Stir in the tomato puree and let the soup simmer for 15 minutes. Partially blend the soup leaving some chunks to add texture to the soup. Season with salt and pepper and stir in the dill. Serve with croutons.*

### **Peach and Banana Crumble**

<i>2 large bananas</i>	<i>500g peaches or plums or a mixture, cut in wedges</i>
<i>3 tbs soft brown sugar</i>	<i>2 tbs softened butter</i>

**Crumble**

<i>100g butter, cut into cubes</i>	<i>150g plain flour</i>
<i>50g rolled oats</i>	<i>50g castor sugar</i>

*Preheat the oven to 160C. Grease a large, oven-proof bowl with butter or oil. Distribute the peaches and bananas evenly into the bowl and sprinkle with the soft brown sugar and dot with the butter. To make the crumble, mix together the flour, sugar and oats. Rub in the butter with your fingertips until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Cover the fruit with the crumble and pat it down to make it compact. Bake in the oven for 20-30 minutes until the crumble is golden.*

I drove over to Tosside on Thursday night, over the tops in torrential rain, the sort of rain that even when wipers are on speed 'manic', you still can't see a thing. I stayed in a B & B so I could rise at first light to help unload our second batch of hens arriving from Sussex. I had to set my alarm for 4.40am! The poor things, it was a long journey, 10 in a crate, that was generous, it is normally 15. Within half an hour they were off, climbing the stone walls, investigating the sheep and pigs, marching down the driveway. Happy hens in their heavenly new home and chapter 2 of the Egg Nation experiment. They are now more than a year older than their normal slaughter date and are still producing wonderful eggs.

I was driving back from the sheep the other night and a big hedgehog ran across the road in front of me. I pulled up and put my hazard lights and went back to check it had got safely onto the grass verge. There was no sign of her but I heard a rustling on the other side of the road and found a little baby hedgehog there. I didn't know what to do. Should I carry it to the side of the road it's mother went to or would that screw everything up as was the mother going to get food and then returning. Eventually I thought I'd better not interfere. The next morning driving up the same stretch of road, I found the baby hedgehog dead, squashed by a car.

A while ago, and with me fed up hearing myself telling you about me and realising that it must be even worse for you, I thought it time to invite you to contribute, if you felt like it, and tell us about you. Indeed Gail Haycraft responded and offers us this wonderful glimpse into her life:

'I sometimes wonder about the other farmaround customers, who they are, what they do, where do they live and what do they cook with their butternut squash.....?'

I'm lucky enough to live in a small square off Knaresborough High Street. It is more of a long, narrow rectangle in shape and quite well hidden. In the summer, people wander up and say in surprise "isn't this pretty? I never knew it was here". At this time of year all the tubs and window boxes and hanging baskets are blooming. The pink peonies are finally out and the Japanese maple tosses it's leaves in the wind.

No. 7 has been empty ( the 'sold' board has just gone up ) and the garden has become wild. It is about 6 feet high and in between the weeds are dinner-plate-sized orange red poppies.

On nice mornings I like to sit on the doorstep to eat my porridge. The blackbird used to start singing at 4.30am but it is a bit more civilised now. The sparrows flit in and out of their nest under the eaves, feeding their chicks. We have one cat in the square who slinks about, pretending the birds aren't watching her. Her owner, who is just 4, is fascinated by it all. Left to her own devices, she would probably never get to play-group as everything claims her attention. Someone has told her that if you kiss a frog, sometimes it will turn into a prince. When she passes my doorstep she likes to try with my green plastic frog. So far, no princes.....but we can hope!

Regards to you all,  
From Gail'

I think I can safely speak for all of us Gail – we were there, on your doorstep, eating your porridge. It sounds utterly blissful, who could want for more.

Please, please follow Gail's lead and tell us about yourselves, we would really love it. You could send any contributions to me at [Isobel@farmaround.co.uk](mailto:Isobel@farmaround.co.uk)

Kind wishes,

Isobel