

**Monday 7th May 2012**

Dear Customer,

May already ! Organising the bags is a tricky business through the 'hungry gap'. I received Royal Oaks's availability list and was bewildered by the choice. Beetroot in a 5 kilo box or beetroot in a 10 kilo box. Usually they have pages of products – everything that can be grown in Britain, they grow. Elsewhere Jonnie Watson has a few new salad bags. A row of new radishes came and went. Duncan Gielty managed some pak choi and is still keeping us going with some English potatoes and his last onions but that's about it. We've had the rain, now we need some warmth to bring our crops on. But that's fine, the sunny Mediterranean is keeping us going.

Here are some delicious recipes you can try with this week's bags:

**Savoury Coconut Rice with Pak Choi**

300g basmati rice	400ml water
400ml coconut milk	2 handfuls chopped pak choi stalks
1 red chilli, chopped	1 tsp salt
5 tbsp chopped coriander	

*Place the water, coconut milk, basmati rice, chilli, salt and pak choi in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Simmer for 10-12 minutes or until the rice is tender, adding more water if necessary. Drain then stir in the coriander. Quick and delicious.*

**Broccoli, Almond and Lemon Penne**

300g dried penne pasta	400g broccoli, cut into florets
110g butter or margarine	75g flaked almonds
50g white breadcrumbs	1 lemon, juice only
Parmesan to serve (optional)	

*Bring a large pan of salted water to boil. Add the pasta and cook according to packet instructions. Meanwhile, bring a separate pan of salted water to the boil. Add the broccoli and boil for 2-3 minutes, until just tender. Drain the broccoli into a colander. Heat a frying pan over a medium heat. Add the butter or margarine and fry until it melts and begins to turn golden-brown. Add the almonds and breadcrumbs and heat until the breadcrumbs are golden-brown. Add the broccoli and stir well to coat in the almonds and breadcrumbs. Add the lemon juice and season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Add the cooked pasta and mix well together. Serve with grated Parmesan.*

**Broccoli Gratin with Cashew Nut Couscous**

110g cashew nuts, crushed	400g couscous
400ml vegetable stock	6 tbsp fresh coriander
10 cherry tomatoes, chopped	head broccoli, cut into florets

*Blanch the broccoli for one minute in boiling water. Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4. Place the crushed cashews and couscous into a hot pan and dry-fry for 1-2 minutes, or until slightly golden. Transfer to a bowl and add the vegetable stock. Cover with cling-film and allow to soak for 5-7 minutes, or until all the liquid is absorbed. Fluff up the couscous with a fork, then stir in the coriander and tomatoes. Arrange the blanched broccoli in the bottom of the gratin dish and sprinkle the couscous over the top. Bake in the oven for 7-10 minutes or until the couscous is golden-brown. Serve*

Well it's Sunday morning and you will notice I didn't quite manage the French elections ! I guess this is the last of Sarkozy. I guess it could also be the end of his marriage . ' Bonjour Hollande'. I wonder what will become of Europe now with this new configuration.

We finally went live with the new website on Friday. It has been a long time coming. We are still working on it so if you do come across any flaws, please let us know and we can correct them. I hope you find it easy to navigate and functional. But if you're not clear, please ring Diane and she will happily talk you through it. I have my own account set up so gave it a whirl. It was a little disconcerting how quickly and easily I could whip things out of future orders and add in others.

Well done here to Diane who spent many laborious hours putting all our account details and orders on and setting up the shop items. And to Chris who wrote the software. We have added quite a few new groceries so please have a look to see what we are now offering. We finally have a site which we can manage ourselves so we will be much more proactive with it and there is more to come.

Staying with my brother recently, his cupboards and fridge were full of jars of jams, chutney and sauces – some opened maybe a month ago, some, maybe 10 years or more. I decided to have nothing on toast. No way of knowing. At least in my fridge I know which things must never, ever be opened again.

It's a beautiful morning here in Richmond and I have to head south to Sussex for a meeting and to see our hens. You do realise you have saved their lives ! A team of men in white suits were due to arrive on the 10<sup>th</sup> May, stuff them into crates, build the crates into pallets and be lorried from Bognor to Hull to meet their maker..... gruesomely. But 1650 lives have been saved thanks to you. They will stay where they are and live happily ever after. One box of eggs a week really does save the life of one hen and we want to start on batch number 2. A lot of organic eggs are now £2.15 in the supermarkets and we remain at £1.99, so this is very good.

In a couple of minutes I'll be able to cross this – 'write newsletter' – off the list. All that remains will be 'buy fishfood', 'pack', 'fill green bin', 'make Ernest come and treat a few lame sheep'. Then I can go.

I hope you have a lovely Bank Holiday,

Kind wishes,

Isobel