



CSA News

October 25-31, 2021

Fall CSA Week 4

Volume 18, No. 37



Log in to your CSA account online to find a customized list, photos and descriptions for your share.

Farm Share Storage & Use Tips:

- Beets, radishes and hakurei turnips: Remove the root from the greens and store separate in plastic bags in the fridge.
- Brussels sprouts: Store them unwashed in their bag in your fridge's veggie bin for 1 to 2 days.
- Celery: Recut and stand the stalks in a jar of water in the fridge.
- Ginger and turmeric: Keep baby ginger and turmeric in a closed container in the refrigerator. No need to peel. They freeze well.
- Green beans: Store unwashed beans in a perforated plastic bag in the veggie bin of your fridge.
- Garlic and onions: Leave on your countertop or in your pantry.
- Leafy greens (arugula, kale, spinach, mizuna, tat soi, bok choy, lettuce mix, etc.): Store in your fridge in perforated plastic bags.
- Leeks: Loosely wrap unwashed leeks in a plastic bag, and store them in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator.
- Okra: Keep in a paper bag in the fridge. Wash just before use.
- Peppers: Wrap, unwashed, in a paper towel to absorb any moisture, and keep it in the veggie drawer of your refrigerator.
- Potatoes: Refrigerate in a perforated plastic bag.
- Sweet potatoes and fall squash: Keep on the counter or in a pantry.

Thinking About Trees

As our leaves are changing, our attention is drawn more toward the towering trees on the farm, away from the crops growing in the ground for just a moment. Trees of all types and sizes do more than adorn the landscape at Elmwood Stock Farm. From wildlife habitat to firewood, from shade for livestock to soil stabilizers, these determined creatures of the plant world have shaped our farming systems.

Tree management is foundational to our land-stewardship principles. It is also integral to our organic way of living within an ecosystem, not forcing our will upon the land we have been entrusted with.

Looking around Elmwood Stock Farm, one thing that may catch your eye is the huge trees, randomly scattered in a pasture or near dwellings. These are the venerable, or pre-colonization trees, unique to the region we farm. Some of our favorites are oaks, chinquapin oaks and blue ash trees.

The North Fork of Elkhorn Creek is the farm's Southern boundary, and the riparian area adjacent to the creek is host to some truly spectacular sycamore and walnut trees, which with others, have vital stream-bank protection properties.

Trees in Fencerows

Really big trees often act as anchors of fencerows, even being named in deeds of properties. Fencerows are an active part of the farm's management schemes and provide a host of resources. Not only do they provide shade or a windbreak for livestock and crops, the microclimate they form has an impact on the wildlife they foster. Obviously, the birds seek refuge there, and those same birds forage on insects, which helps keep the populations in check. Birds also eat weed seeds, of which we have our share.

Trees damaged by wind or struck by lightning are often left to naturally decompose, and they become a host for more insects or nesting sites. We hear various species of woodpeckers working for food, which aids in the decomposing process. Raptors and buzzards like the exposed, larger branches, high above the ground, to scout their prey or to rest.

Additionally, fencerows with a good diversity of plant species are the over-wintering habitat for the many beneficial insects we cohabitate with.

Underneath all of this, fencerows are like highways for wildlife, such as raccoons, foxes, coyotes, skunks and the like, to access water from

Elkhorn Creek. There are countless dens or homes for many of these mammals tucked under tree-root systems, in hollowed-out cavities in logs—either standing or fallen—and in any barn or shelter that sees minimal farming activity.

Invasive plant species, such as bush honeysuckle and spotted hemlock, are threatening the diversity of many fencerows in the region. We fight them back a little every year.

Trees for Livestock

Since cattle seek the shelter and security of trees in herds, they can compact the soil under these trees, if allowed to congregate over long periods of time. The roots are starved of oxygen in these conditions. The quick rotational-grazing management plan we employ allows smaller plants to regrow under the trees between grazings, which loosens up the soil again.

Adequate shade for livestock is an important aspect of good animal husbandry. We are conscious of the shade potential for each field as we move the herds around the farm. Providing protection from the strong afternoon sun has been shown in research studies to keep body temperatures in check, which in turn stimulates a greater grazing habit, which leads to more meat or milk production in hot weather.

Our interaction with the trees is considerable within our farming business. Each spring, or often after big summer storms, we have to cut up fallen limbs, if not whole trees. Some of the wood piles from those events provide more housing for wildlife and insects. The damaged trees provide firewood for one greenhouse and for our homes, but the clean-up—essential though it may be—takes a lot of time that could be used for other projects or jobs on the farm.

We feel a strong sense of responsibility for these trees, as they have watched over many changes on this land. We want the growth rings to reflect how respectful we are of them.

Watch for the variable shapes of the trees as you drive through the countryside. With the fall colors coming on, it is easier to detect just how many different species abound in Central Kentucky. Be careful walking under black walnut and Osage orange trees this fall, as their fruits are plentiful this year. —Mac Stone

THANKSGIVING IS LESS THAN ONE MONTH AWAY!

Preorder your organic, pasture-raised holiday turkey online at ElmwoodStockFarm.com/Turkeys. We can drop it off with your CSA share, deliver it to your home or ship it across the country.

Recipes

Sloppy Joe Sweet Potato Fries

Adapted from First & Full

1 lb. ground beef	1 T. maple syrup
1 small onion, diced	salt & pepper, to taste
1 bell pepper, diced	1 lb. sweet potatoes, cut into wedges
1 c. catsup	1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. mustard powder or 1/2 tsp. mustard	1/2 tsp. pepper
1 tsp. garlic powder	1/2 tsp. paprika
1 T. tomato paste	1 avocado, chopped

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.

Brown ground beef in a skillet. Set aside, reserving drippings in the pan.

Sauté onion and bell pepper until tender, about 5 minutes. Add ground beef back to the pan. Add catsup, mustard powder, garlic powder, tomato paste and maple syrup. Let simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. If mixture thickens too much, add a tiny bit of water. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Roast sweet potatoes for 25 to 30 minutes, until tender, flipping halfway.

Place sweet potato wedges on a platter, and top with sloppy joe mixture. Serve with avocado on top.

Ginger Soy Hakurei Turnips

Adapted from Nourished Simply

2 tsp. olive oil	1 bunch hakurei turnips, roots and greens chopped separately
1 clove garlic, minced	1-2 T. soy sauce
1 tsp. fresh grated ginger	

In a sauté pan, heat oil over medium heat. Add garlic and ginger, sauté for 1-2 minutes, stirring constantly. Add turnip roots, and cook until slightly brown for about 3-4 minutes. Add greens and soy sauce. Cook until greens begin to wilt, 1-2 minutes.