

CREAMY WHITE BEAN AND COLLARD SOUP

Adapted from farmflavor.com

2 Tbsp olive oil	30 oz Great Northern beans, drained and rinsed
1 small white onion, chopped	
3 cloves garlic, minced	4 c vegetable broth
3 c collard greens, chopped	1 c heavy whipping cream
1 1/2 tsp salt	1/4 c fresh basil, chopped
1/4 tsp crushed red pepper	juice and zest of 1 lemon

1. Heat a large soup pot to medium-high heat and add oil. Once hot, add onion and garlic and cook until onions are translucent, about 3-4 minutes.
2. Add collard greens, salt and red pepper flakes. Sauté for 2-3 minutes.
3. Add beans, broth, cream, basil, and lemon juice and zest. Simmer for 20-30 minutes or until collards are tender. Serve immediately.

CARROTS AND TURNIPS WITH HONEY PECANS

Adapted from ingoodflavor.com

1 lb carrots	2 Tbsp packed brown sugar
1 lb turnips	2 Tbsp honey
5 Tbsp butter, divided	1/2 c chopped pecans
1/2 tsp salt	

1. Peel and cut carrots into slices no larger than 1/2-in. Peel turnips and cut into 1-inch cubes. Place carrots and turnips in a medium saucepan and fill with enough water to cover the vegetables. Cover pan loosely and bring water to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and boil for about 15 minutes or until vegetables are tender.
2. While carrots and turnip boil, make the honey pecans. Place a medium skillet on medium heat. Add 1 Tbsp of butter and the honey. Stir gently as the butter melts. Add pecans, and cook for a couple minutes. Remove from heat and spread pecans in a single layer on a parchment paper lined baking sheet to dry out. Allow enough space between pecan pieces to prevent excessive clumping.
3. When carrots and turnips are tender, drain. Add the remaining 4 Tbsp butter, salt, and brown sugar. Mash using a potato masher. Place in a serving bowl. Break up pecan clumps and layer over mashed carrots and turnips.



Winter/Spring CSA News



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Sweet Potatoes: Store sweet potatoes at room temperature.

Refrigeration will cause them to harden and turn black when you cook them! The sweet potatoes you receive will keep for weeks or even months.

Leafy Greens: Store leafy greens in the fridge inside a perforated plastic bag. If you chop and wash ahead of time, spin the leaves dry before placing them back in the bag with a dry paper towel to absorb the moisture. Refresh limp leafy greens by plunging them into ice water.

Root and spuds (carrots, turnips and potatoes): Store in a plastic or cloth bag in the crisper bin of your refrigerator. Both root veggies and potatoes should last for weeks.

Jarred Items: It's the best time of year to include Elmwood's organic Diced Tomatoes, Ketchup, Marinara, BBQ or Salsa in your seasonal recipes—think chili, lasagna, soups, or what about as a pizza topping?

Winter Squash: The flavor of butternuts and other fall squashes intensifies over time as the sugars concentrate. Store in the pantry or on the counter; plan to use within a month or so.

The Heart of the Commonwealth

The genesis of these writings was watching people I know and love making lousy food choices, and those choices impacting our community, our state, even our Big Blue Nation. Consuming industrial foods harms the planet, which includes harm to you, the members of your household, your extended family, and neighbors. Just think, what if we all committed to good food choices? How might it impact our Commonwealth and the people we all know and love?

Each of us is a little organism running around among millions of other organisms, and collectively we form the state of Kentucky. Each of us has slightly different characteristics, but we all impact the space we call home. I have heard for years that Kentucky is reported to have a high incidence of diet related health problems. It seems to me that proper diet is the antidote for diet-related disease. The data coming out of the Kentucky Farm Share Coalition validates this statement.

Employers who incentivize their staff to eat better by offering vouchers to join an organic CSA like ours see fewer health care claims than predicted. My interpretation: the people I know and love are spending time in the kitchen eating awesome-tasting foods and have more time for fun, instead of sitting in a waiting room with other sick people. With less time out sick, wouldn't they see their productivity increase too? To me, this is just like the regenerative approach we take to building healthy soil.

We have known for centuries that new, unknown diseases can destroy an unprepared population. When Euro-Americans imposed themselves on the Native Kentuckians with their guns and steel, they (unwittingly, at first) brought insidious diseases that decimated the indigenous population. With each pandemic our world faces, including the latest, it takes a gargantuan amount of people power, willpower, and brainpower in the medical world to minimize the odds of a catastrophic toll on the world population. On the horizon, I see Big Food wielding all the power, and feeding the world with technologies evolving at breakneck speeds. But what if we all find out in a few years that there is some insidious disease that came in the cheap food Trojan horse? As a community, are we prepared to put in the effort it'll take to avoid catastrophe?

The consolidation of food supplies, just as in other industries of our economy, comes with risks. In my travels, I have seen supply chains at their finest: the efficiency at which cabbage can be turned into coleslaw and cows to burgers is remarkable. My takeaway was how fragile it is. Maybe this seemed like a Chicken Little attitude at the time, but anyone who has bought toilet paper, gasoline, grocery store eggs, or an automobile in the past four years now knows how a product we depend on can disappear due to factors far beyond our control. When it comes to food, I'm hedging my bets and sourcing local.

The disease of consolidation is control of the genetics. Vertically integrated pork and poultry industries have extremely shallow gene pools (beef is decentralized at the farm level, so it's a bit more diverse). A fistful of international vegetable companies has a grip on produce genetics, hiding behind the veil of differing catalogues. Feed grains are controlled and manipulated by one or two or three companies, depending on how you count. Thankfully, we still have access to diverse seed banks, due to the local food movement and the National Organic Standards Board.

Then, there's the financial side of the equation. Let's say 20,000 of the 325,000 people that call Lexington home spent \$10 at the Lexington Farmers Market one Saturday. That would put \$200,000 into the pockets of a handful of small farmers. Say we use that purchasing power during the ten weeks of local sweet corn season, and we're at \$2,000,000. That's two million dollars that should roll over within the local economy 4.5 times, and now we're pushing ten million dollars.

It does indeed matter whether your fingerprints are left on a pesticide jug somewhere in rural Kentucky, or alternatively, whether your fingerprints are left behind at a farmers market. Critical thinkers have the opportunity to lead their loved ones to save the planet one bite at a time. Committed consumers invest in their local agrarian footprint because, as Wendell Berry said, "Eating is an agricultural act." A decentralized food system builds strength with numbers. Just as in nature, the more diverse the ecosystem, the more stable it is. Only then do we have a healthy Commonwealth.

- Mac Stone