

SWEET POTATO POLENTA WITH CHARD AND SAUSAGE

Adapted from hermiseenplace.com

1 link sausage (try andouille or chorizo)	1 c uncooked polenta
2-3 tsp olive oil	3 c water
1 bunch Swiss chard, in ribbons	1 tsp salt
1/3 c yellow onion, diced	1 c milk
1 clove garlic, minced	1/4 tsp ground cayenne pepper
2 tsp rice vinegar	1/4 tsp smoked paprika
salt and pepper to taste	1/8 c grated parmesan cheese
1 small sweet potato, peeled, chopped	1 Tbsp unsalted butter

1. Boil sweet potato until fork tender, puree, and set aside.
2. Bring water, milk, and 1 tsp salt to a boil. Whisk in the uncooked polenta. Reduce heat to low, cover, and cook about 10 minutes or until thickened.
3. Remove from heat. Stir in sweet potato, butter, parmesan, cayenne pepper, and smoked paprika. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Adjust polenta thickness to taste with additional milk. Keep covered and warm while cooking sausage and chard.
4. Cut sausage into rounds. Brown over medium-high heat in olive oil. Remove sausage from pan. Add onions and garlic and sauté for 1-2 minutes. Stir in chard ribbons and cook additional 2-3 minutes until greens soften. Season with salt and pepper, and stir in splash of rice vinegar.
5. Divide polenta into bowls and top with sautéed vegetables. Top with sausage. If desired, sprinkle with additional cheese. Serve warm.

WINTER SALAD

Adapted from harvesttablenutrition.ca

1 small sweet potato, peeled, diced	1/4 c pomegranate seeds
4-5 baby potatoes, diced	Dressing:
1/2 red onion, chopped	2 tsp grainy mustard
1 bunch winter greens	2 tsp Dijon mustard
1/2 c bulgur, dry	2 tsp lemon juice
1 c cannellini beans, drained, rinsed	2 tsp maple syrup
1/2 c feta, crumbled	2 Tbsp olive oil
2 Tbsp pumpkin seeds	

1. Roast sweet potatoes, potatoes, and red onion. Let cool.
2. Cook/soak bulgur according to directions on package.
3. Wash, dry, and chop the winter greens. Place in a large bowl.
4. In a jar, add all dressing ingredients and shake well to combine.
5. Add bulgur, feta, roasted vegetables, and beans to the winter greens. Add dressing and toss well.
6. Garnish with pumpkin and pomegranate seeds.



Winter/Spring CSA News



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Leafy Greens: Store leafy greens in the fridge in a perforated plastic bag. If you chop and wash ahead of time, spin the leaves dry before putting back in the bag with a dry paper towel to absorb moisture. Refresh as needed by plunging them in ice water 15-20 minutes.

Carrots: Refrigerate in a plastic bag or other closed container. To freeze carrots: Chop, blanch for 3 minutes, rinse in cold ice water, drain, let dry, and pack in an airtight container.

Sweet Potato: Store at room temperature. Refrigeration will cause them to harden and blacken when cooked. Check weekly and use any that may soften, most will keep for weeks or months.

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

Onions: A staple of many kitchens, onions can be used in all its forms. The dried bulb that we often see this time of the year is popular, but also we can use any green sprout that comes out of that onion (yes, it's where we get green onions!) For longer storage, a dried onion can be stored in the refrigerator as long as it's a dry location without moisture.

hello@elmwoodstockfarm.com | 859.621.0755

Common Wealth

Occasionally we are asked, “Why would I join your CSA if I already like to shop at the farmers market?” In a word, symbiosis: a mutually beneficial relationship. By prepaying for your season of eating, you can feel you’ve made a wise investment for your wellbeing and for the local food economy. Our relationship with shareholders goes well beyond numbers on a spreadsheet. The true value is almost immeasurable.

The seasonality of cropping systems in the Central Bluegrass calls for large cash outlays in late winter and early spring; these funds bring the greenhouses and fields back to life after the winter. Seeds, rhizomes, potting media, propane, diesel, irrigation supplies, and the hands to manage all the moving parts must be paid for long before the farmers markets become vibrant again. And market farmers like us look very different in the eyes of agricultural loan officers, compared to traditional commodity corn and soybean farmers. By investing in our farm, our shareholders provide firm financial footing to begin the season. More than 20 years ago when we started our CSA program, our loan request may have been met with skepticism, snickers, and a cold relationship over money. Not only do we avoid the interest payments of a loan, we avoid the hassle, documentation, and headaches of servicing a loan. Instead, we have a warm, sincere relationship with our investors. We grow the food with each of you in mind, and that thought gets us through many workdays in sub-zero temps and downpours.

With the awkward financial part out of the way, we can focus on growing the food for you. We can lay in supplies ahead of the busy season, and we can ensure we have enough hands on deck. The responsibility to fulfill our end of the bargain is ever present in the form of pride, from the trust our shareholders show in us. Likewise, you can relax about where your food will come from. You get to revel in the anticipation of what each week might bring. Knowing your kale, or your tomatoes are being tended to, awaiting just the right time to be harvested and delivered to you. Chances are, you will be paying more attention to the weather since your little plants are out there in it.

You also might find that your lifestyle and foodways change for the better. You might become a more seasonal eater; you might start looking for organic first when shopping; you can experiment with new recipes; you can learn to “play with your food” in a new way. Seasoned shareholders have learned to keep it simple and let the freshness and flavors speak for themselves.

The most valuable part of our contract with shareholders is the shared relationship with food for health. One reason people join the Elmwood Stock Farm

CSA is to learn more about how food is grown, not just who their farmer is. By investing in us, you can avoid genetically modified organisms lurking in the picture perfect sweet corn and/or squash and zucchini, or avoid food grown with the release of systemic pesticides into the environment, much less those toxins being applied to the food itself. We open our doors for customers to see, feel, and smell how we grow their food. You can eat in peace because we are diligent about organic!

Data from a recent U of Ky. survey show CSA subscribers spend less time in a doctor’s office, and lots less on pharmaceuticals than the average Kentuckian. We partner with several companies and institutions that subsidize a CSA share with us, to promote healthy eating, and by extension healthy lifestyle, for their employees, figuring it will pay dividends in the long run. Rarely does a weekend market morning go by that a customer doesn’t tell us “My doctor told me to start eating what you have for sale.” Let the food be thy medicine.

Your investment is placing a stake in the ground, literally and figuratively. By uniting with other investors, there can be a shift in the local food economy. You do not want your dollars supporting GMO technologies, or enabling chemical dependency in foods. Essentially, all of the top preventable causes of death are diet related. Be it sugar, bad fat, preservatives and additives, or residual toxins, you have sworn them all off. Collectively voting with your food dollars this way is spurring better research, access to equipment and supplies, and economies of scale to produce food the way we do. The influence of your dollars reaches well beyond the farm gate. It is a self-fulfilling prophecy, a paradigm shift in the making. These days, it seems like each news cycle is an all-you-can-eat buffet of things to worry about. But your local food system is one thing you can actually do something about. And as CSA members, you are doing something about it. We hope you feel empowered by your food choices.

John has the greenhouses cleaned up, with tiny transplants raring to go. Expensive boxes and bags of seeds are being delivered daily. Your financial and moral support puts a little pep in our step, and it seems like a mutually beneficial symbiotic relationship to us. What’s good for Mother Nature is good for everybody.

Thanks for being our partner and helping us be better farmers. Please come see for yourself what I mean on one of the tours this year (more on this soon), and in the mean time, make sure you have secured your CSA subscription for the Winter/Spring season, and the upcoming Summer 2025 season. — Mac Stone