BEER BRAISED CABBAGE, APPLES, AND SAUSAGE

Adapted from foodandwine.com

2 Tbsp unsalted butter
1 ¼ lb organic pork bratwurst links
1 medium onion, sliced
1 gala apple, cored, sliced
3 cloves garlic, smashed
1 ½ lbs green cabbage, sliced
12 oz beer
2 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce
1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
1 ½ tsp caraway seeds
salt and pepper
2 Tbsp chopped fresh dill

1. Melt butter in a large pot over medium high heat until hot. Brown sausages, turning once, about 5 minutes. Transfer sausages to platter.
2. Stir in onion, apple, garlic, and ½ tsp each salt and pepper, then cook 6 minutes, stirring occasionally, until onions begin to turn golden brown.
3. Place sausage back in the pot along with cabbage, beer, Worcestershire, mustard, and caraway, and bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce heat to simmer, then cook, covered, until cabbage is tender, about 20 minutes. Uncover pot and simmer until liquid is almost evaporated, about 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste, sprinkle with dill and serve.

BEET SALAD WITH FETA, CUCUMBERS, AND DILL

Adapted from 3ingredientsorless.com

3 medium beets
1 cucumber, sliced
½ red onion, thinly sliced
1 c feta cheese crumbles
¼ c fresh dill, chopped
2 Tbsp olive oil
1 Tbsp red wine vinegar
1 tsp honey (optional)
salt and pepper

1. Preheat oven to 400F. Wrap whole beets in aluminum foil and place on baking sheet. Roast 30-40 minutes or until fork-tender. Let cool, slip skins off, and cut into bite-sized cubes.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, vinegar, honey, salt, and pepper to make dressing. Adjust to taste.
3. In a large bowl, combine the roasted beets, sliced cucumbers, red onion, crumbled feta, and fresh dill.
4. Pour dressing over the salad and toss gently to combine.
5. Chill for about 30 minutes before serving, or serve immediately.

ELMWOOD STOCK FARM

Summer CSA News

USDA ORGANIC

July 14-20, 2025
Week 9 of 20
Volume 22, No. 26

Kentucky Proud

Tomatoes: Store tomatoes upside down on a plate or cutting board at room temperature. Try not to refrigerate tomatoes as cold temperatures deplete their flavor and texture.

Cabbage: They have remarkable storage capacity. Keep dry and unwashed in the veggie bin of your fridge. If the outer leaves lose firmness, remove and discard. Once cut, wrap in sealed plastic bag and continue to refrigerate; it should keep for several weeks more.

Red & Candy Onions: These fresh onions are not yet cured, so you can store on the counter or put in the fridge! Both are sweet varieties.

Yellow Onions: These yellow onions have been cured; store in pantry!

Basil: Basil is very sensitive to cold and will darken if exposed to cold refrigerator temperatures. Keep basil in a glass of water on the kitchen counter. Or, place your basil bunch in a plastic bag with air in it (like a balloon) and refrigerate. The air buffers the chilled temps.

Eggplant: Wrap unwashed eggplant in a paper towel (not plastic) to absorb any moisture, and keep it in the veggie drawer of your refrigerator. Use within a week.

hello@elmwoodstockfarm.com | 859.621.0755

Firmly Rooted

We talk a lot in these newsletters about soil microbial health, how its robustness is the foundation of our plant production program, and ultimately, our health. It takes the right ingredients, supplies, and tools to construct a sound foundation, no matter what it is you are building. The building blocks of Elmwood Stock Farm's foundation are an appropriate mix of sand, silt, and clay. Throw in some humus, add several thousand species of single-celled microbes, and sprinkle some H20 every so often, and you have the blueprints to build a solar-powered food production facility that feeds itself, and shares the bounty with us, in the form of fruits, vegetables, flowers, eggs, and meats.

We usually start with the biological aspect of things, but before there was biology, there was only geology, so we are going all the way back. The Earth as we know it is covered in things that live, move, and breathe, but it used to be just a big rock. Over time, the big rock got two important upgrades: an atmosphere and oceans. These helped pave the way for the beginnings of life. Earth's exterior began to soften, with geological processes breaking off tiny shards and chunks which could host more organisms. Then four thousand million years later, lichens, mosses, and protozoa moved in to help, and suddenly this rock could support complex vascular plants, each carving out a niche, depending where on this spinning planet they grew up. Death and decay of these plants became an advantage to still more bacteria and fungi, establishing equilibrium, which we might consider "the common good" from our human perspective.

Around here, we did have a couple of setbacks in this idyllic maturation process in the form of ice ages, which moved across the landscape, scouring everything out in their path, similar to how a volcanic eruption leaves nothing but barren rock in its wake. But re-colonization came on quickly. Fossils in the geological record recount the story once you learn to understand their language (it never ceases to amaze me how scientists have taught themselves how to figure out things that are too big, too small, too far away, or too long ago to be observed with the naked eye). So after all that, we find ourselves living on a rock that has a thin exterior layer of soil —the earth upon our planet Earth.

Worldwide, soils have been studied for their functional properties, how they might be suited for a roadway, or a skyscraper, or tilling for crops. The USDA published hardcopy maps back in the day for farmers and engineers, covering every acre of these United States, describing various soil properties to be considered before disturbing. Teams of technicians roved the country side, pulling core samples, finding commonalities, and giving them names, much as biologists do when they discover new species of life. The core samples were further analyzed as to the proportions of sand, silt, and clay, which became the basis for all soil classification.

The bedrock, or parent material of our soil, here on the banks of the Elkhorn is limestone that has weathered to be considered a Maury silt loam: a deep, fertile, well-drained soil. In other words, a good mix of sand, silt, and clay, that holds water well, but lets the excess drain away. What makes our structural foundation so special is the minerals that make up those differing sizes and shapes of rock. Maury silt loams are known to have a calcium-to-phosphorus ratio exquisitely designed to promote plant health and growth, as they are the main players involved in photosynthesis. Which in turn promotes good bone growth, which is ultimately why the horses are here, and that bodes well for our beef and sheep. It's also why bourbon was born here. The big trees are well-anchored and well-nourished here as well.

For farming purposes, the soil is easily tilled, and holds rain water well for future use without being soggy. It does not have a high erodibility factor, a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy. We have learned over the generations when these particles can be disturbed, and when they should not. If we "work" ground when it is wet, the finer silt and clay particles will stick together (make mud) and set up like pottery when dried out. By growing and incorporating plant material into the mix, we can fill the tiny nooks and crannies with humus (organic matter), a nutrient source for microbes and a holder of water. The percentage of organic matter has actually gone up under our care, which equates to soil building. Those passive-looking pastures are actually rolling out the red carpet for insects, bacteria, and fungal colonies to aggregate particles into self-sustaining structures that promote even more oxygen and nutrient transfer, for the common good. Plant roots deliver photosynthetically-derived energy and needed nutrients into the equation, feeding all the workers busily forming the foundation for the plant itself.

We are fortunate to have our roots firmly planted into the Maury silt loam soil, the true richness of horse country. The plants like the nutrients they receive, we like the way we can work it, and the animals prosper to boot. The art of farming is learning the language of the soil, and having the respect to know how and when to engage in conversation. What a story Mother Earth has to tell, and our chapter is still being written. As Wendell Berry says, "the soil is the great connector of lives, the source and destination of all." Thank you for taking part.—Mac