

SAGE BUTTERNUT SQUASH GRATIN

Adapted from eatwell101.com

2 lb butternut squash, peeled and sliced to 1/8" half-rounds	1 c chicken bone broth
3 Tbsp butter	1 c heavy whipping cream
1 large shallot, minced	15 sage leaves
4 garlic cloves, roughly chopped	1/2 tsp pepper
1 Tbsp all-purpose flour	1/2 tsp onion powder
	3 oz grated parmesan cheese

1. Preheat oven to 400°F and prep the squash: peel and slice into 1/8" half rounds. Remove seeds and slice, or save the hollowed end for another recipe.
2. In a saucepan, melt butter and cook shallot and garlic until fragrant, 1-2 minutes. Add flour and whisk with wooden spoon to make a roux. Whisk continuously, adding in broth progressively. Add cream, sage, pepper, and onion powder. Continue stirring sauce without boiling until smooth.
3. Grease a 9x13" baking dish. Drizzle bottom with 1/3 of the sauce, sprinkle with a bit of cheese, then arrange the squash slices in 2-3 overlapping rows.
4. Drizzle squash with remaining sauce. Cover dish with one layer of parchment paper and one layer of foil.
5. Bake 20 minutes at 400°F. Remove from oven, uncover, and sprinkle remaining parmesan on top. Bake uncovered 10 minutes until golden. Serve.

CLASSIC BEEF BORSCHT

Adapted from tatyanaeverydayfood.com

1.5 lbs organic grass-fed beef roast	1/2 tsp ground coriander
oil for frying	1/2 Tbsp sugar
salt and pepper	3 medium beets, peeled and diced
2 Tbsp butter	4 c beef broth
1 large onion, diced	4-8 c water
3 medium carrots, diced	1 c tomato sauce or puree
2 large ribs celery OR 1 farm bunch, stalks diced and leaves set aside	4-5 medium potatoes, cubed
2 cloves garlic, minced	2-4 c shredded cabbage
1/2 tsp ground cumin	2 Tbsp chopped fresh dill
	2 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley

1. Preheat large pot with oil over medium-high heat. Add beef, season with salt and increase heat to high. Cook until browned all over, 7-8 minutes. Remove beef and set aside.
2. Add butter to the pot and allow to melt. Stir in onion, carrots and celery stalks. Reduce heat to medium and cook 4-5 minutes, until onion is translucent.
3. Add garlic, salt & black pepper to taste, cumin, coriander and sugar. Add beets, broth, water and tomato sauce. Return the browned beef back into the pot.
4. Cover and bring to simmer. Reduce heat to low and cook 45-60 minutes.
5. Add potatoes and cook 15 minutes. Add cabbage, dill, parsley, and chopped celery leaves, and cook 1-2 more minutes. Remove from heat, cover, and let stand 15 minutes. Serve.



Winter/Spring CSA News



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Leafy greens: Store unwashed in original bag, or chop, wash, and dry with a salad spinner, and return to bag with a dry paper towel to absorb moisture. Always refrigerate.

Cabbage, Carrots, Winter Radishes, Beets: Store in the cold area of the fridge; these will keep a long time for you .

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

Fresh Herbs: Place in water in the refrigerator.

Sweet Potatoes: Store sweet potatoes at room temperature and they will keep for weeks or months. How many different recipes can you try for sweet potatoes?

Fall Squash (butternut, sweet dumpling, kabocha): Store in a cool, dry location, but don't let them freeze; once cut, refrigerate and use within 5-7 days.

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What it Means to be Organic

While browsing your local grocery store, you've likely noticed specific sections and products labeled "organic." You may have wondered what makes those products so special that they are separated from the others, and more importantly, you may have wondered what that word really means. When I think of the word organic, what comes to mind the most is the notion of something natural, not artificial or man-made, something from the earth or for the earth. Turns out, the way the USDA means that word is much more specific, but not too far off base.

Generally, organic farming is guided by the principles of keeping the soil and ecosystem as healthy as possible while growing and raising healthier food in the process. We do this without the use of GMOs (genetically modified organisms) in our seeds or in our livestock feed, and without the spraying of synthetic pesticides or fertilizers. The kinds of tactics used are intended to cause as little to no harm to the environment as possible; in fact, most organic farming practices are beneficial to the soil and overall ecosystem. For example, rotational grazing of livestock allows for portions of pasture to rest between grazing periods as well as get replenished by the manure left behind. And for the animals, the movement means livestock are exposed to fewer parasites and forage diversity increases too.

This is of course not to say that those pesticides and fertilizers don't work, but over the years, I've come to discover that there is more at stake when they're used. I have told this anecdote often, but before I embarked on my organic farming journey, I used the traditional sprays in my garden as I was learning to grow food for my family. The sprays come with instructions that tell you not to touch the sprayed area for a certain number of days. I was explaining this to my children to make sure they stayed out of the garden, when my 3-year old looked up at me with a bewildered look and simply asked "Daddy, why did you spray poison on our food?" It nearly stopped me in my tracks. There have been other light-bulb moments in my life: I've trudged along a pond dam with a tank of toxic herbicide sloshing around on my back, spraying invasive thistle weeds, and seen the fish "accidentally" die off. I've worked in offices where a coworker brings in their surplus of tomatoes, and I've hesitated to bring them home for my family because who knows what had been sprayed on them. A culmination of those moments brought me here, where we've been farming certified organic nearly 30 years.

Stories aside, being an organic farm involves a lot more than just saying so. Being certified organic means that we can apply the organic label to our products that we sell to you, to farmers market customers, to restaurants, and to nationwide meat customers. This is a distinction given to us by the USDA that means we meet certain standards in our farming practices and livestock raising. It's quite a stringent and lengthy process to keep our organic certification; we're required to

submit a detailed system plan annually to our designated and accredited certifier that shows how we're adhering to the standards set by the USDA. Also annually, we prove that we are maintaining those standards in an inspection, where the certifier checks our livestock's ear tags, studies our harvest records, and asks us about all our farming practices. It's hard work to keep up with all of that, but at the same time, we know that the stringency is so that customers can have complete confidence in the certified organic label when they shop. We think it's worth it.

There are other factors to consider as well when comparing organic farming with more chemical-based farming (oddly called "conventional farming"), namely that organic farming is much more costly. For example, the organic grains that we give to supplement the diets of our chickens, turkeys, and pigs are often notoriously difficult to source and come with a higher markup than what is regularly available at feed stores, due to the requirement of more human boots on the ground to produce it to required organic standards at the scale required to sell in large quantities. Then there is time and labor to consider. Remember the rotational grazing I talked about? To implement this method requires a regular moving and monitoring of panels of portable electric fencing, by hand. And when you don't spread pesticides on your crops, you spend a lot more time weeding with a hoe or a cultivator.

What it means to be organic to me though, and for all of us Elmwood Stock Farm, is knowing that we're contributing to a greater good. We're helping to leave this planet better than we found it for the generations that come after us to enjoy. And we're producing healthy, wholesome, delicious foods that you can depend on. Many of you have shared with me over the years what eating Elmwood food means to your families: you can enjoy time together over homecooked meals, you can help your children grow big and strong, you can help your spouse battle a tough disease. Your support of our work makes that ever more possible. Thank you. —Mac Stone

In addition to your weekly CSA, you can find us this winter:

- **Georgetown:** Elmwood Stock Farm, enter at 3636 Paris Pike, Monday-Friday 9am-5pm (open late til 6:30pm on Tuesday).
- **Lexington:** Lexington Farmers Market, Greyline Station, 101 W Loudon Ave, Saturdays, 9am-1pm.
- **Cincinnati:** Hyde Park Winter Farmers Market, MadTree Brewing, 3301 Madison Rd, Sundays, 10am-1pm.