

ASPARAGUS, GOAT CHEESE AND TARRAGON TART *Adapted from NYTCooking*



1 cup soft goat cheese, at room temp
1 large egg lightly beaten at room temp
1 large garlic clove, minced
1½ tbsp chopped fresh tarragon leaves,
plus more for serving
½ tbsp finely grated lemon zest
½ tsp fine sea salt, plus more for
sprinkling
Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
1 cup crème fraîche, at room temp

All-purpose flour, for work surface
1 sheet/square all-butter puff pastry,
thawed if frozen
8oz asparagus, minus woody ends
Extra-virgin olive oil
2 tbsp grated Parmesan
Freshly ground black pepper
Red pepper flakes (optional)
1½ oz shaved Parmesan

1. Heat oven to 425°F. In medium bowl, use a fork to combine goat cheese, egg, garlic, tarragon, lemon zest, salt and nutmeg until smooth. Switch to a whisk and beat in crème fraîche until smooth.
2. On lightly floured surface, roll out puff pastry into 13-by-11-inch rectangle about ⅛-inch thick. Transfer dough to a parchment-lined cookie sheet. With a sharp knife, lightly score a ½-inch border around edges of the puff pastry.
3. Spread the crème fraîche mixture evenly inside the scored border. Line up the asparagus spears on top. Brush them with olive oil. Sprinkle salt and the grated Parmesan over asparagus.
4. Bake until the pastry is puffed and golden, 25-30 minutes. Let cool on cookie sheet for at least 15 minutes, up to 4 hours before serving. Sprinkle black pepper, red pepper flakes (if using), shaved Parmesan and tarragon leaves. Drizzle a little oil on top.

BBQ PULLED PORK SWEET POTATO NACHOS

Adapted from Hungry Blonde

Nacho Ingredients

1 large sweet potato sliced into rounds	1 jalapeno pepper, sliced & seeded
2 tbsp olive oil	½ cup shredded cheddar cheese
salt & pepper	diced avocado
½ cup black beans, drained & rinsed	sour cream

Pulled Pork Ingredients

1.5lb Boston Butt Shoulder Roast
1/2 of an onion, minced
2 garlic cloves, minced
1/2 cup of your favorite BBQ sauce
dash of hot sauce (optional)

1. Place Boston Butt in slow cooker with onion, garlic, BBQ sauce and hot sauce, evenly mixed. Cook on low for 6-7 hours or high for 3-4 hours, or until meat is has reached internal temperature of 195° to 205°F. Pull pork apart while warm.
2. Preheat oven to 400°F. Toss sweet potato rounds in olive oil, salt & pepper. Spread evenly on baking dish and bake for 20-30 minutes. Flip midway.
3. Top cooked sweet potatoes with cooked BBQ pulled pork, black beans, jalapeños and cheese. Broil for 5 minutes or until cheese is melted. Top with diced avocado and sour cream before serving.



WINTER + SPRING 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, HAKUREI, AND BEETS

Store in the cold area of the fridge; these will keep a long time.



WINTER SQUASH

Store in a cool, dry location, but don't let freeze; once cut, refrigerate and use within 5-7 days.



JARRED ITEMS

Favorites like Honey, Marinara, BBQ Sauce, Kvass, Ferments, or Salsa can round out your pantry and complement your meats and veggies.



FRESH HERBS

Place in water in the refrigerator.



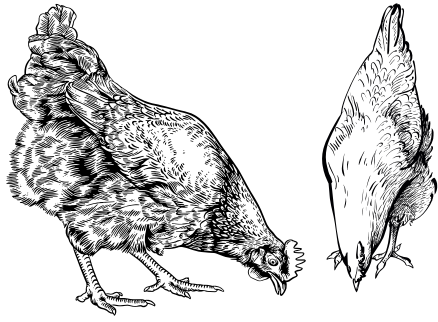
RHUBARB

Store in a food-safe plastic bag in the fridge. Use within a few days.



SWEET POTATOES

Store sweet potatoes at room temperature and they will keep for weeks or months.



A COOP FOR MY CHICKENS

The laying hen population at Elmwood Stock Farm did not always look the way it does now.

In the early days, showing up at the farmers market with six or eight dozen eggs for sale was nearly causing food fights from our customers: cutting line, waiting for us as we got there, and then pre-ordering, which meant we were showing up with only one or two dozen for sale. Having just a few dozen eggs was hurting our business more than having none at all. We knew we could sell more eggs if we had more.

When I was fishing for some funds to build a laying-hen house on wheels capable of generating 10 to 12 dozen eggs a day, Ann pointed out we had enough materials around the farm to piece something together. I knew she was right, and this way of doing things prompted a good challenge at that. If we spent a bunch of money on building supplies, there wouldn't be much in it for us.

Ann and I each independently made a list of necessary components of a good laying-hen house. The comparison looked like this: Mine consisted of tier rails, 2x4s,

roofing tin, milk crates, protective screening or plastic or plywood end walls, screws and nails. Hers was shade, security from wildlife, wind breaks, roosting space, and secure and clean nest boxes. I went with hers, since my materials list was what I could find anyway.

Not only did I never go to the big-box hardware store, I also chose to not use a tape measure, either. Our plan was to slap this one together as a prototype for our plan, then make a real one later in the year.

We gathered eggs from that house for six or eight years. When we decided to convert it into a heritage turkey breeder house, I drove it through a narrow gate to knock off the egg boxes. Worked like a charm. Jethro Bodine's got nothing on me. We move the laying hens' Beverly Hillbilly-looking houses once a week or so to spread the nutrients left behind by the chickens across the pasture. Repositioning the houses is not random, but it looks like it is. You have to move them far enough so the high-traffic area around the house, including the feed troughs, does not overlap with the footprint you're moving away from.

Having the tractor and house stopped on the pasture contour makes for much easier and safer, hitching and unhitching—no need to depend on wheel chocks and parking brakes. We figured out a long time ago that there is no need to keep the tires aired up since the chicken houses only move so far, once a week, at about 1 mile an hour. This also makes the tires self-chocking,

which can be a pain in trying to line up the drawbar on the tractor with the tongue on the wagon hitch: It won't swivel to line up because so much weight is on a dead-flat tire. Some of those spoked wheel pneumatic tires have 80-year-old air in them. Wonder what a microbiologist might discover in there? Maybe I ought to let out a little every so often to inoculate our piece of the planet with clean air.

The architectural elements of a laying-hen house should be aligned with chicken ergonomics, be able to withstand storms, and ultimately keep hens safe and happy enough to lay lots of eggs. Shade-tree construction skills lead to overbuilding based on "what if," because "what if" can go bad quickly out here. The mobile houses have no floor so the birds' droppings fall straight to the ground they're meant to fertilize. The birds instinctively go up inside at night to roost, drop down before daylight (hence the saying "up with the chickens"), and venture out to start eating and contemplate laying an egg.

The nest boxes nestled up under the eve of the metal roof offer a quiet, secluded, safe place to lay eggs, which 80 to 90 percent of them do every day. The water drinker hangs off the back, a quarter-inch black plastic umbilicus of water trailing behind. A pan of free-choice oyster shell resides under one corner, and the feed troughs radiate out, not far away.

Twice a day, every day, we bring their feed. Splitting their daily ration like this keeps the hens interested and keeps the wild birds off the gravy train. Drinkers get checked, and the

electric-fence barricade verified. It does not take very long to do these chores for each group. In the afternoon, eggs are gathered and counted. Egg counts are important to monitor bird productivity, which is info we want to know and is required for our organic certification. It's not bad work.

Somehow, doing so makes the best eggs around. Otherwise, why would people scramble to get them? The birds are happy, the eggs are good for you, and no synthetic chemicals were released into the environment in their making. Maybe this summer I can trick out the old houses with roll-out nest boxes, the last thing on Ann's list, some 25 years later.

Mac Stone

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&
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ON US**



 Learn how to refer someone to our CSA & get a gift in your share.

ElmwoodStockFarm.com/Refer-A-Friend-2026