THE BEST ZUCCHINI BREAD

Adapted from Spend with Pennies

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ cups granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3 large eggs
- 2 cups grated zucchini, about 2 small
- ¾ cup vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 ½ cups chopped walnuts or pecans

1. Preheat oven to 350˚F. Grease two 8×4-in loaf pans or line with parchment paper.
2. In a medium bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt with a whisk. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl, beat the eggs. Add the grated zucchini, oil, and vanilla. Mix well to combine.
4. Add dry ingredients and walnuts to zucchini mixture. Gently stir just until combined.
5. Divide the batter evenly over the prepared pans and bake for 50-60 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.
6. Cool in the pans for 5 minutes, remove from the pan, and cool on a wire rack.

ONE-POT LACINATO KALE & QUINOA PILAF

Adapted from Food52

- 2 cup salted water
- 1 cup quinoa
- 1 bunch lacinato kale, destemmed, chopped into 1" lengths
- 1 lemon, zested and juiced
- 2 scallions, minced
- 1 tbsp toasted walnut or olive oil
- 3 tbsp toasted pine nuts
- 1/4 cup crumbled goat cheese
- Salt and pepper

1. Boil water in a covered pot. Add the quinoa, cover, and lower to a simmer for 10 minutes. Top with the kale and re-cover. Simmer another 5 minutes, then turn off the heat and let steam for 5 more minutes.
2. Take large serving bowl and combine half of the lemon juice (reserve the other half), all of the lemon zest, scallions, walnut oil (you can substitute olive oil if you desire), pine nuts, and goat cheese.
3. Check the quinoa, the water should have absorbed, the quinoa will be tender but firm, and the kale tender and bright green. If the quinoa still has a hard white center, steam a bit longer (adding more water if needed). When done, fluff the pilaf, and tip it into the waiting bowl with remaining ingredients. As the hot quinoa hits the scallions and lemon it should smell lovely. Toss to combine, season with salt and pepper, and the remaining lemon juice if needed.

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ELMWOOD STOCK FARM

SUMMER CSA NEWS

FENNEL
Separate greens (fronds) from bulb if present; store bulb in the crisper in the fridge for several weeks.

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.

RADISHES & TURNIPS
Store in the cold area of the fridge; use the greens soon; roots will keep a long time.

WINTER SQUASH, POTATOES & ONIONS
Store in a cool, dry, dark location. Once cut, refrigerate and use within 5-7 days.

CUCUMBERS & CABBAGE
Refrigerate immediately, unwashed. Wrap loosely in a bag and store in the crisper of your fridge. Keep dry.

FRESH HERBS
Place in water in the refrigerator.

GARLIC
Store in the pantry area of your kitchen; remove a clove or two for your recipes; the remainder keeps for weeks.

SQUASH, ZUCCHINI, & KOHLRABI
Store unwashed and dry in the crisper of your fridge. Keeps for 10-14 days.

RECYCLE ME

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EVEN THE SOIL
HAS A SOUL

The foundation Elmwood Stock Farm is built on is a soil called Maury Silt Loam.

This is a type of soil that is considered fertile with good structural components. How well plants perform is based on the physical and chemical properties associated with each type of soil and the wildly complex biological interactions happening among the microbial community in the soil, out of sight.

The Science
Looking at the soil, you wouldn't think there's much to it. It's just a bunch of dirt, after all. But the science behind it all is impressive.

Structural components of the soil are classified by the combination of sand, silt and clay particles that make up dirt:

- Sand is like big boulders that have big gaps between them, allowing water and air to pass between them easily.
- Silt would be comparable to pebbles that fit between the boulders.
- And clay particles are tiny, flat structures that stick together and fill in remaining voids. Less clay in the soil means more voids that allow roots to penetrate more easily and air and water to reach them.

The sub-soil tends to be more clay-y in the Bluegrass Region. Lots of flat clay particles will stick together, which can form impenetrable barriers to roots, air and water.

How well roots can spread throughout the soil directly impacts the plant's ability to be well anchored and reach the nutrients it needs for optimum growth. A good mixture is considered a healthy soil, which we are blessed with on Elmwood Stock Farm.

The chemical properties of soils are important and are directly related to the structural components. Reaching back to high-school chemistry, the particles have positively and negatively charged properties called cations and anions.

Like magnets, a strong positive charge will hold a negatively charged anion in place. This is the action that holds available nutrients—like calcium, magnesium, sulphur, etc.—in the root zone. We monitor the Cation Exchange Capacity (CEC), which is an indicator of how well the soil battery is charged, revved up and running.

Plant roots and their symbiotic mycorrhizal fungi mineralize these nutrients for plant growth, but only when the soil particle is willing to give them up. Our relatively high CEC numbers—determined by a laboratory test—demonstrate healthy exchange of nutrients.

The biological properties of a soil bring all this to life. There are tens of thousands of species of bacteria, fungi, and microscopic “insects” that colonize the soil.

The more diverse these colonies are, the more likely they are to foster good plant growth. This microscopic ecosystem is called the soil food web. The microbes and microscopic insects, along with earthworms and larger insects, align the structural components to form little havens—even structural houses—called aggregates. Within these aggregates are chambers that are beneficial in holding water to feed the microbes and the plant roots that encounter them. As these microbes prosper, they release nutrients to feed the plants and re-charge the CEC.

We are partnering with researchers from the UK College of Ag to monitor the diversity and populations of the components of our soil food web. The preliminary data indicates that with our crop- and livestock-rotation plan, we can harvest vegetables three years in eight while maintaining a vibrant soil food web. We have no need for off-farm fertility fixes to feed our plants. (Sometimes we feed the soil with rock dust to add minerals and trace elements, but not very often.)

The Art
All that is the science: now for the art of soil management. From decades of sound farming practices, our soils are like Olympic decathletes. The sand, silt, and clay particles have been managed by us, the plants, and the diverse array of microbes to be able to perform in all conditions.

Too much rain, and they drain the excess away efficiently. (Good farmers know not to handle the soil when too wet, as it will destroy the structure, which is why sometimes your veggies are not always available when you expect them.)

Too little rain, and they hang on to all the moisture they can. A little disruption from cultivation, and they easily reform their colonies.

We are quite proud of the soils we have built here at Elmwood Stock Farm. When put all together, these soils would be considered not just healthy, but rich. Thank you for appreciating the quality of the produce they produce.

-Mac Stone

SUMMER FARMERS MARKET SCHEDULE

CINCINNATI
Hyde Park ..... Sun, 9:30am - 1pm

GEORGETOWN
Pavilion ..... Sat, 8:30am-12:30pm

LEXINGTON
Downtown ..... Sat, 8am-2pm
Southland ..... Sun, 10am-2pm
National ... Tues & Thurs, 8am-12pm