

CSA Package Contents:

- 2 lbs salted butter
- 1 lb Berkshire breakfast sausage links
- 1 lb carrots
- 1 lb broccoli sprouts or brussel sprouts
- 1 dozen eggs
- 8 oz grassfed Windsor cheese, cheddar style
- 1 lb grassfed ground beef
- 1 lb spinach
- 4 lbs organic whole wheat pastry flour
- Mixed Winter Squash, 3 pieces
- Quarter peck of cameo apples

- 3 cups kosher or sea salt
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 2-3 tablespoons whole peppercorns, slightly cracked under edge of knife or a pot
- 3 medium onions, quartered
- 3-4 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
- 2-3 tablespoons each of dried thyme, rosemary, savory, and sage (you may omit what you don't have). 6 bay leaves

You may omit the brown sugar. I like it in all my brines to add a hint of sweetness to the meat and caramel color to the skin.

In a stockpot, combine all ingredients except the ice. Bring the mixture to soft boil or simmer. Essentially, when it starts to steam you can likely have all the salt and sugar dissolved and the onions should be softer. Stir the mixture frequently to ensure that the salt dissolves.

In your brining vessel, likely a medium sized cooler, pour the brine and add the ice. Stir the ice around until the brine cools. Place your bird in the brine breast side down. Force the bird to the bottom; if needed, weigh it down any way you can! You want the bird to stay completely submerged in the fluid for 16 to 24 hrs.

Place the cooler outside where the cool outside weather will help keep the ice from melting completely. You want to make sure the water stays below 40 degrees for food safety purposes. Add more ice as needed. If you know in advance that your cooler is going to require additional ice or fluid to cover the bird (such as larger coolers), you should proportionally increase the recipe.

How to tell? Maybe put your bird in the vessel first and add one gallon of fluid at a time until it is covered. This will show you how much fluid is needed. 10 lbs of ice is approximately a gallon of fluid.

To reduce the amount of fluids needed, you can do this in a plastic bag. My biggest problem has been finding a large enough, non-scented bag. Trash bags often have a Lysol fragrance that is completely undesirable in your meat! The advantage of a plastic bag is that you can use less fluid then just place the plastic bag in a cooler with ice and not worry about diluting the brine!

Turkey Aromatics

When roasting the bird, some chefs like add aromatics to the cavity of the turkey to add flavor to the meat. I've never done this. For me, it is traditional to stuff the cavity with stuffing; my family would give me grief if I didn't do it. *I recommend not stuffing the cavity to allow for quicker, more even cooking.*

The advice I've received is to simply add herbs and vegetables to the cavity that you like. For example, apples, carrots, onions, rosemary sprigs, thyme, sage, and bay leaves. First, place the quartered or chopped fruits and vegetables with the herbs in a shallow sauce pan or skillet. Bring to a soft boil with some water to open up the aromas. Then, place the aromatics in the cavity of the turkey. The cavity does not need to be stuffed full!



Roasting Your Turkey

Preheat your oven to 450 degrees. Remove one rack and place the remaining rack near the bottom.

An hour before roasting, remove your turkey from your brine and rinse with cold water. Pat turkey dry with paper towels or make it do a funky dance to drip dry! Sorry, turkey gets me really excited and I can't help but make my turkey have character.

Add your aromatics to the cavity. Place the turkey in a large roasting pan. Your pasture raised, brined turkey will be juicy. You will need lots of room for the turkey to drip without flooding your oven.

In the roasting pan, place 3 or 4 quartered onions, shallots, carrots, roasting potatoes, and any other root vegetables you prefer. Think gravy. These will be tasty side veggies as well as add flavor to your gravy. For really large birds, you may want to add the potatoes and carrots half way through, coated in olive oil, to keep from over-cooking.

Place the bird on a rack in the roasting pan, breast side up. Slice the skin along the breastbone and pour melted butter under the skin. Rub melted butter, olive oil, or canola oil all over the bird. Pin the skin back together or cover with cheesecloth, moistened in melted butter. I've seen some cooks cover the entire bird in butter-doused cheesecloth and have excellent results.

Place your cool but not completely refrigerated turkey in the oven at 450 degrees for approximately 30 minutes. You want to watch it carefully. This is simply to allow the skin to crisp up and lock in the moisture. Once the skin has browned moderately, reduce oven heat to 325 or 350 degrees and roast slowly. For big birds, I recommend the 325. If the skin continues to cook too much, apply a layer of aluminum foil tented over the bird to keep it from burning.

Roast your turkey for approximately 12 minutes per lb. After 2 or 2.5 hours at the lower temperature, check bird frequently. You want an internal temperature in the breast meat or thigh meat of 160 degrees. The turkey will continue to cook when removed from the oven...so don't keep cooking "just to be safe." You can always put it back in!

Thanksgiving Packages: see

confirmation printout.

Thanksgiving is perhaps the most traditional food-related holiday. Many of you have your own traditional recipes. So in this newsletter, we'll focus on tips to maximize the flavor of your Fresh Fork Thanksgiving.

For the regular subscribers in the CSA, I focused this week's selection on breakfast choices and shelf stable products since I'm sure the excess of Thursday's meal will carry over well into next week!

Turkey Brining

Brining is a method of soaking meat in a salt-based solution to tenderize the meat, infuse flavors, and help the meat retain moisture while cooking. The additional moisture in the meat also reduces the cooking time.

There are no standard "best" brines. It is all a matter of personal taste. There are a few guidelines though. First, is the salt content. Every brine starts with a salt-based solution. The general guideline is 1 cup of kosher salt or sea salt per gallon of liquid.

How much liquid will you need? Well, it kind of depends on the size of the turkey and your brining vessel. A 14 to 16 lb turkey will fit in a five gallon bucket. You will likely need less than 2 gallons of fluid to cover the bird. If you are doing a larger turkey, such as a 20 lb or heavier bird, you will likely need a cooler or large plastic tote that will require greater volume of liquid to cover the bird.

As for liquid, this may be water, fruit juice, or vegetable stock. For pork, apple cider, in my opinion, is by far the best. I can't attest to that for turkey though...I only get to experiment once per year!

Below is a brine recipe that won't require you running to the grocery store a half dozen times! This is already portioned out for a 20 lb bird in a larger vessel (most of your turkeys).

Ingredients

- 1 gallon apple cider (not apple juice)
- 1 gallon vegetable stock
- 10 lbs ice

T-Day Tips from Parker Bosley

Make turkey stock a day early

The day before you roast the turkey, use the neck and the first two wing joints to make a stock. Chop the wing joints and the neck into one inch pieces. Brown these in some butter with chopped onion, celery and carrot. Cover with water and bring to a boil. Skim the stock. Add some thyme and a bay leaf. Lower the heat and simmer for several hours. Strain, cool and refrigerate overnight. Use the stock when making the stuffing or add it to the gravy.

Make a good stuffing using turkey stock from above

Here's a novel thought for good stuffing. Use good bread! Most commercial breads don't have the structure to become good stuffing. Purchase some bread from Lucy's Bakery (included in the Fresh Fork Thanksgiving package), Blackbird Baking in Lakewood, or On the Rise in Cleveland Heights. Heavier breads are easier to work with.

Dice onion and celery. Soften them in butter with dried sage over medium heat. You don't want to evaporate the butter.

Next, tear your bread into approximately ½ inch cubes. Then, either toast the bread on a cookie sheet in the oven or toss the bread in the skillet with the onion and celery to partially cook. Remove and transfer to a mixing bowl. You may add salt, pepper, and other herbs, particularly parsley and thyme, as you prefer.

Moisten the stuffing with the turkey stock. You may also add an egg or two to help hold it together. One egg per loaf of bread is generally good. Work the bread with your hands, adding stock as needed to moisten the stuffing. It is really a matter of preference. You may have a soupy stuffing if you like it very moist as a final product; or a dry stuffing to get a crispy final product.

Stuffing has endless variations. You may add some chopped walnuts and apples or sausage. First, partially cook those ingredients before adding.

Sweet Pot., Apples and Banana

This is a tasty recipe that can be done with or without the banana.

Ingredients

- 4 sweet potatoes
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 3 apples
- 1 banana
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- Salt and pepper, your choice of cloves, nutmeg, or cinnamon

Using a fork, pierce the sweet potatoes several times.

Bake them in 350 degree oven until they are very soft. Remove from the oven and set aside to cool. Peel and slice the apples and the banana. Melt the butter in a saute pan and add the apple and brown sugar. Gently saute the apple until soft. Add the sliced banana. Remove from the heat. Set aside.

Pell the sweet potatoes and add them to the apple and banana mixture. Puree the mixture in the food processor or through a food mill. Season to taste with spices and salt and pepper. You can refrigerate and then bake the next day.

Braised Red Cabbage with Jelly

Begin a day or two before you intend to serve the cabbage.

- 1 head red cabbage, shredded
- 4 TBS lard or butter
- 1 cup diced onion
- 3 apples, peeled and chopped
- ½ cup Balsamic vinegar
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 2 cups water
- ½ cup currant jam or grape jelly
- ½ tsp dried thyme
- 1 bay leaf

Melt the butter or lard in a heavy bottom pan and add the onions. (Make sure the pan has a lid that fits tightly.) Cook the onion over medium heat for about 5 minutes. Add the apples, brown sugar and vinegar. Cook while stirring for about five minutes and then add the cabbage. Add the bay leaf and the thyme.

Continue cooking and stirring for about 10 minutes. Add the water and currant jam. Lower the heat as low as possible and cover the pot. Let the cabbage cook very slowly for about 2 hours. Stir from time to time. Make sure heat is kept very low.

After the 2 hour cooking, remove the cabbage from the heat. Season it with salt and pepper and let it cool. Refrigerate overnight and return to the heat the next day. Let the cabbage re-warm very slowly.

Cook until the cabbage is very soft. Taste and re-season with salt and pepper.

Pumpkin, Coconut, and

Coriander Soup

This is a recipe from Chef Matthew Anderson at Umami Asian Kitchen in Chagrin Falls. If you haven't tried it yet, go in, peak in the kitchen, and tell him Trevor sent you! Order whatever he recommends. Matt is a genius!

Ingredients:

- 4 shallots, unpeeled
- 4 c. winter squash, cut into ½ inch cubes
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil

- 2 cups canned coconut milk
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup loosely packed coriander leaves
- ½ tsp kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice and lime zest
- Fresh ground black pepper
- ¼ cup minced scallion greens

In a cast iron skillet or gas grill, dry roast or grill the shallots, turning occasionally until softened and charred. Peel and cut the shallots lengthwise in half and set aside.

In a large stock pot, heat the oil until just smoking. Add the pumpkin/squash cubes and shallots and cook for about 5 minutes, just until the pumpkin begins to soften. Add the coconut milk and water and bring to a boil. Add the salt and simmer over medium heat until the pumpkin is tender, about 10 to 15 minutes. Puree the mixture in a blender.

Stir in the lime juice and cook for another 2 or 3 minutes. Adjust the seasoning using additional lime juice if needed. Garnish with black pepper, coriander, scallions and lime zest.

About your turkeys



Your turkeys are broad breasted white turkeys. They have been slow raised in Ashland, Ohio by Pete Gafney and Jon Raber. They are raised on organic pastures and eat a natural diet of grass, bugs, and grains.

Turkeys cannot survive entirely off of grass. Cattle, sheep, and deer are all ruminant animals. They have "forestomachs" known as a rumen that allows them to digest grass, most notably cellulose. This rumen is essentially a fermentation tank that uses enzymes to break down the leafy matter. They then regurgitate their food (cud) and reswallow to extract the nutrients from it. Turkeys are not ruminants and cannot live entirely off of grass; about 30% of their diet may come from grass.

Your turkeys were raised in "chicken tractors." (see photo above) These are mobile pens that ensure that the turkeys are foraging on grass and the bugs in the soil while protecting them from predators. This high-density grazing method promotes a healthy diet for your bird and enhances the soil fertility through even distribution of manure. Beyond grass, your turkeys have enjoyed a custom blend of locally milled grains, including corn, legumes, salt, seaweed and fish meal. They have not received any anti-biotics or hormones. They were harvested Monday, Nov 22nd at an age of approximately 18 weeks, about twice that of commercial birds.