



HIGH ALTITUDE HARVEST

Community Supported Agriculture

October 21, 2015 —

Can Farming Save the Climate?

by Elizabeth Powell of Five Foot Farm

National Geographic's recent coverage of climate change got me thinking about what a fascinating time we live in. The greenhouse gases that we've pumped out since the industrial revolution have landed us in the middle of the Big Bertha of all science experiments. Within our lifetimes we may very well witness rising sea levels, stronger storms, increased extinctions and huge changes to our economy as a result. And the looming question on everyone's minds is... can we get ourselves out of this pickle?

Well, we might as well *try*. And one way we can create positive change is by becoming small-scale farmers (like me) or by eating food grown on ecologically based farms (like you).

Wait...really? Doesn't agriculture create 14% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions? Yes, but that figure is for all ag combined. It depends on what type of ag we're talking about—industrial or ecological.

First, one reason ecologically based farms provide a carbon benefit is because of what we *don't* do. We don't transport food thousands of miles on fuel guzzling airplanes, nor do we use synthetic pesticides and fertilizers whose manufacturing produces nitrous oxide, a potent greenhouse gas. And, thank goodness, we don't keep our animals in confined, methane belching factory farms.

But it turns out that one of the

best things that small farms do for the climate is right under our feet: sequestering carbon in the soil. The all-natural process of plant photosynthesis conveniently takes carbon out of the air all on its own. When we farmers use ecologically-based growing practices like cover cropping, minimizing tillage, and making compost, that carbon gets stored in the soil in the form of stable organic matter.

The great part is that building soil organic matter is good for everything on the farm—it increases the fertility and water holding capacity of soil, and it improves our soil structure. Carbon sequestration (aka, saving the planet!) is just a bonus prize.

But how much difference can we actually make? A lot, apparently. The Rhodale Institute's white paper, "Regenerative Organic Agriculture and Climate Change," forecasts that the equivalent of over 100% of the world's current CO2 emissions could be sequestered and the greenhouse effect could be reversed if all crop and pastureland was converted to sustainable management practices. That's a tall order, for sure, but maybe it's a strategy that the world will come to embrace in the face of such big climate consequences.

And more tangibly, by growing local we're building a food system that will hopefully serve our community through whatever climate challenges come our way. As we face an uncertain future together, at least we'll still be able to have our kale smoothies from the neighborhood farm.

Full Share

Apples (2 lbs)
Slicer Tomatoes
Bok Choy
Pie Pumpkins or Kabocha Squash
Head Lettuce
Leeks
Carrots

Half Share

Delicata Squash
Dino Kale
Apples (2 lbs)
Head Lettuce
Leeks

What Grows Where

FIVE FOOT FARM

head lettuce, dino kale, bok choy, leeks, carrots, pie pumpkins, kabocha squash

GREEN CEDAR FARM

apples

SASQUATCH FARMS

delicata squash, black krim tomatoes

As global temperatures rise and weather patterns become more erratic, the intersection between climate change and agriculture is crucial to understanding the role agriculture plays in contributing to and mitigating global warming. Carbon sequestration, lower-input of fossil fuel dependent resources, and use of renewable energy all present opportunities for organic agriculture to lead the way in reducing energy consumption and mitigating the negative affects of energy emissions.

- Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Leek & Delicata Squash Soup With Caramelized Apple Croutons

“This velvety soup pairs the gentle flavor of sautéed leeks with sweet, roasted squash. Topped with a dollop of sour cream and a few caramelized apple croutons, it embodies everything cozy about autumn.” You can also play with substituting other types of winter squash in this soup.

INGREDIENTS

2 1/2 pounds delicata squash	3/4 teaspoon salt
2 1/2 tablespoon unsalted butter	1/2 teaspoon fresh ground pepper
2 large leeks, white and tender green parts, chopped	sour cream, if desired
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme	1 tart green apple
2 1/2 cups vegetable broth	1/4 cup light brown sugar

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350. Place the squash, cut side down, on a baking sheet and bake until tender, about 40 min. Let cool slightly and gently scrape or cut squash away from skin (delicata skin is edible, but not tasty in this dish). Set aside. Melt butter in saucepan over low heat. Add leeks and thyme and stir occasionally until soft and brown, 10-15 min. Stir in the stock and the squash and simmer over medium heat for 20 min. Using an immersion hand blender, puree the soup directly in the pot until smooth. (Alternatively, puree the soup in batches in a standard blender or food processor). Season with salt and pepper & top with sour cream and caramelized apple croutons.

To make croutons: Peel and core apple and halve lengthwise. Using a mandoline or a very sharp knife, cut apple into very thin slices. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and spread one layer of apple slices on top. Sprinkle with brown sugar. Bake slices for 20 min at 350 degrees until crisp. Transfer to cooling racks and let cool completely.

Source: www.food.com

OH MY SQUASH! Over the recent years we farmers have become used to having heaps of winter squash after the harvest, enough for markets as well as eating all winter long. This year, however, many of our farmers don't have the supply they were expecting. We're still getting some nice squash into the shares, just not in the quantities we were expecting. The great thing about having a slim harvest is that it makes you appreciate the good years even more!

Cider Baked Apples

The author of this recipe says, “The aroma wafting through the kitchen right now is *in-sane*. Six petite heirloom apples currently roast away, bathed in vanilla-infused, fresh apple cider and filled to their brims with a cinnamon-brown sugar-hazelnut crumble. This recipe could alternatively be titled ‘How to Make Your House Smell Amazing, for Serious.’”

INGREDIENTS

2 cups apple cider (1 cup reduced)	1 Tbsp all-purpose flour
1 tsp pure vanilla extract	1 tsp ground cinnamon
6 firm baking apples (look for smallish, sweet/tart varieties such as Liberty, Empire, Cortland, Braeburn, Pink Lady etc.)	1/2 tsp fine sea salt
1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice (optional)	2 Tbsp unsalted butter, cubed
2 Tbsp (packed) dark brown sugar	1/4 cup chopped hazelnuts (or almonds, walnuts or pecans)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 375. Add the apple cider to a skillet and bring to a gentle boil. Turn the heat down to medium, add the vanilla, and continue to simmer until the cider has reduced by about half, 10-15 minutes. Remove from the heat and set aside. Meanwhile, cut the tops off the apples, set the tops aside, and use a sharp knife to remove the core. Leave a bit of the bottom intact, about 1/8 -inch - enough to keep the filling from spilling through. Place in a pie pan or baking dish. Drizzle with the lemon juice.

Make the filling: Stir together the brown sugar, flour, cinnamon, and salt in a bowl until combined. Use the back of a fork to mash the butter into the sugar mixture until incorporated. Add the nuts, and use your fingers to crumble the mixture together.

Fill each apple core with the crumble mixture, and top with the apple tops. Pour the reduced apple cider into the bottom of the baking dish and bake until the apples are cooked through, about 40-50 min, depending on size and variety. Baste a few times with the cider while baking. The crumble filling will nearly dissolve into a thick, gooey sauce, studded with hazelnuts. Serve the apples warm with the reduced cider sauce along with a scoop of vanilla ice cream, or pair the leftovers with yogurt for a breakfast treat.

Source: www.forkknifeswoon.com

