



**Monday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022**

Dear Customer,

It's still very blowy here, wet, and mild. Mud has returned after a long absence.

Is there anything better, as the clocks go back and darkness descends, than mashed swede. I think not. Our swedes have wended their way down from East Lothian, 4 miles from the coastal town of North Berwick with its long summer days and frost-free climate, a perfect vegetable growing area. The Elders have farmed these fertile, sandy soils since 1952 and went organic in 2000. They grow their vegetables on a 7-yr rotation, along with fertility building herbal leys and multi species cover crops to build soil organic matter and biodiversity. Swede is an extremely nutritious vegetable, providing a great source of vitamins C, E and B6 as well as potassium, calcium, magnesium, iron, manganese and zinc. Bon appetit.

Here are a few tasty recipes you could try this week:

#### Baked Swede

1 swede	40g margarine
2 medium onions, peeled and thinly sliced	a few sage leaves
1 small sprig of rosemary	vegetable stock, to cover

Set the oven at 200C/ Gas 6. Cut the swede into slices about as thick as a pound coin. It is easier and safer to do this by first cutting a slice from one side and using this to steady the swede as you cut. Generously grease a baking dish or roasting tin. Lay the slices of swede and onion in the dish, seasoning them with salt and black pepper and strewing a few sage and rosemary leaves as you go. Ladle over the stock so that it just about covers the vegetables - five or so ladlefuls - then dot on the rest of the margarine. Bake in the preheated oven for an hour or so, turning the swede in the stock from time to time, until the vegetables are very tender. Serve as a side dish, with some of the juices spooned over.

#### Sweet Potato and Swede Gratin

olive oil	butter or margarine
1 onion, finely sliced	1 swede, peeled and cut into batons
500g sweet potato, peeled and cut into batons	200ml organic cream
100ml organic milk	grating nutmeg
1 bay leaf	

Heat the oven to 180C/ Gas 4. Heat a little oil and a knob of margarine and gently fry the onion until it is very tender but not coloured. Add the swede and sweet potato, turn them over in the onion mix and season really well. Tip into a greased baking dish about 1.5 litres in capacity. Bring the cream and milk to a simmer and pour it over the veg, grate over some nutmeg and add the bay leaf. Bake for 45 minutes, or until the vegetables are tender and the top is browned.

#### Roasted Broccoli and Cauliflower with Garlic and Lemon

1 head of broccoli, broken into small florets	1 cauliflower, broken into small florets
3 tbs olive oil	4 garlic cloves, sliced thinly
2 lemons, sliced thinly	salt and pepper, to season

Preheat your oven to 220°C / Gas 7. Mix all of the ingredients in a large bowl until coated in the oil. Tip them out onto a baking tray and season well. Roast in the oven for 25 to 30 minutes, tossing the vegetables halfway through cooking time. Remove from the oven once they are brown and tender.

So here we are, and Sunak is now at the helm. It was excruciating watching the same old faces walking up Downing Street, summoned for their new appointments or resumption of their old. Braverman. What was he thinking. When you thought it couldn't get any worse. Gavin Williamson. Coffey. Maybe it's a well thought out ploy. Put hated, controversial, law-breaking MPs in the Cabinet to deflect attention from oneself, allowing one to go quietly about one's business in the background.

Sunak has gone weird. He has gone from public view, hunkered down with Hunt trying to work out where to inflict the pain, how to share it around. Presumably.

As for attending the COP summit, how can this be an arbitrary decision. It's dreadful that he isn't going. It's bad and it's a bad look. I see at least that the King hasn't stayed quiet for long and is hosting his own pre-COP, mini-COP reception at Buckingham Palace bringing together over 200 international decision makers, business leaders and NGO's.

It's good news for the planet that Lula got elected, though no doubt all hell is about to break loose in Brazil. And as with every democracy, he is only there for now. We are quick to criticise the goings-on in the Amazon but we also need to take a look at what we've done to this place. Every time I go out, I feel heartbroken. I look at the vast prairie-like fields where all the hedgerows have been grubbed up, every tree removed. And where there are hedges, they are cut to the bone with every leaf and berry gone – the winter food and shelter for the birds, small mammals and amphibians - gone. And for no purpose whatsoever. Our badgers and foxes are being hunted out of existence. I haven't seen a live hedgehog for years. The grouse moors which surround me are dead. There are traps of every possible description under walls, on top of walls, on wooden poles that cross streams. The only wildlife you see here is dead wildlife because the farmers and the gamekeepers make sure of it. I see the occasional live rabbit trying to eek an existence on a grass verge with traffic thundering past - but less and less. There's hardly any birdsong. Some 25 years ago I sent everyone a copy of Killing of the Countryside by Graham Harvey. It was bad then, it's a million times worse now. We talk the talk but we certainly don't walk the walk.

I hope you have a good week,

Kind wishes, Isobel