



## **Chinese Food Therapy: Wood**

### **Sprouts and Fermented Foods**

Bruce K. Roff

According to Chinese Medicine, there are foods that can heal you and foods that can harm you, based on your imbalance or constitutional make up. These foods are classified by their elemental affiliation, temperature, season, flavor, and their balance. As a general rule, always eat foods that are in season, local, and never over eat one flavor.

As we age, we turn to stone: stenosis, fibrosis, sclerosis, calcifications. The body hardens, but with proper diet, exercise, and lifestyle modifications, we can reduce and or eliminate this process of rigor mortis. By following a lifestyle as close to nature as possible, and supplementing when necessary, we can live a very healthy and long life. This is the practice of Yang Sheng, the practice of nurturing life.

The spring season corresponds with the Wood Element. Spring is considered young yang, like sunrise. This is the time when nature's energy is expanding, pushing upward.

The organs that correspond with the Wood element are the Liver and Gallbladder. In Chinese Medical Theory, the Liver controls the smooth flow of Qi. It also controls the tendons and sinews. It has an important role over menstruation, and promoting a healthy circadian rhythm. The Liver regulates all functions in the body. The Gallbladder is known for being the decision maker, and has a relationship with the brain.

The sensory organ of the Wood element are the eyes. The emotional aspect is frustration, which causes congestion and stagnation of Qi. The flavor of the Wood Element is sour, which is very moving. The Wood element rules over the sinews and tendons.

Some conditions that may be due to a Wood imbalance are dry, itchy, red eyes, poor impulse control, fatigue, inability to make decisions, mental

fogginess, poor eating habits, irregular menstruation, tendonitis, loss of range of motion, sore muscles or joints, tight muscles or joint stiffness, insomnia, tinnitus, high blood pressure, moodiness, dream disturbed sleep, alternating fever and chills, neck pain and stiffness, and hip pain and stiffness, vertex or temporal headaches, PCOS, yeast infections, brittle nails, dry skin, flank pain, cholecystitis.

The spring is an optimal time to do a detox. After a dormant winter, the body needs to shed toxins that have built up from inactivity and from the body healing. The liver filters the blood in western medical theory, monitors blood composition, as well as play a role in breaking down fat (which is where we store toxins). It also helps regulate blood sugars, immune system function, and blood clotting.

As we age it becomes more and more imperative to take care of our organs, to ensure optimal health. By following a lifestyle of moderation, and by taking joy in living healthy, we may reap the rewards that come with such diligence.

## **Foods You Should Be Eating During Spring**

Leafy Greens	Lemons	Vinegars	Sauerkraut
Kimchi	Kombucha	Bone Broth	Pickles
Celery	Barley	Asparagus	Beets
Lime	Quinoa	Goji Berries	Basil
Sprouts	Avocado	Green Apple	Tomato
Liver	Broccoli	Leek	Lima Beans
Watercress	Kale	Collard Greens	Artichokes
Escarole	Parsley	Cucumbers	Alfalfa
Mung Beans	Green Lentils	Sour Cherries	Turkey

## **Kombucha: Fermented Tea**

Clears Heat, Removes Heat Toxins, Courses Qi and Blood, Harmonizes the Middle Jiao, Resolves Stagnation and Drains Dampness

**Health benefits of:** Detoxifies the Liver, prevents and treats cancer, prevents and treats all forms of arthritis, improves digestion and gut health,

fights against candida, reduces and or eliminates the symptoms of fibromyalgia, depression, and anxiety, augments the immune system, improves energy levels, improves wound healing, reduces high blood pressure, reduces cholesterol, alleviates the symptoms of diarrhea, and regulates diabetes.

### **What You Will Need:**

- A SCOBY (symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeast)
- 1 Quart Ball Glass Mason Jar (freshly rinsed and clean)
- 2 Organic Green Tea Bags
- ¼ Cup of Sugar
- ½ Cup of Starter (kombucha) or White Distilled Vinegar
- 3 Cups of Water
- 1 Chopstick, or nonmetallic stirring utensil.
- 2 nonmetallic spoons
- 1 nonmetallic knife (if making more than 1 batch)
- A paper towel or handkerchief
- 1 straw
- A room temperature storage space, that is not in sunlight

### **Directions:**

1. Remove lid and ring rim from the Mason jar.
2. Add the ¼ cup of sugar and 2 tea bags.
3. Droop the tea bag string with the tea bag tag on the outside of the jar.
4. Lightly screw on the ring rim making sure the tea bag tag is just below it, this will make it easier to remove the teabags later.
5. Bring your water to a boil.
6. Remove water from heat and let it cool down to where it's no longer boiling.
7. Add the 3 cups of water to the tea in the jar. Do not use boiling hot water, you will cook the tea instead of steeping it.
8. Allow tea to steep for about 10 minutes.
9. After tea has steeped, remove rim ring.
10. Using the 2 spoons, press the tea bags to remove the rest of the steeped tea from the tea bags into the jar.
11. Using the Chopstick, stir the sugar in the jar, so it evenly dissolves and isn't resting at the bottom of the jar.
12. Allow tea to cool to room temperature.
13. Add the ½ cup of Starter.
14. Add the SCOBY.
15. Cover with paper towel.
16. Screw on rim ring.
17. Place in "dark", room temperature storage area.

18. Allow brew to ferment for 7-10 days.
19. After the 7th day, you can test your batch for your desired taste preference with the straw.
20. Place your straw into the kombucha, under the SCOBY.
21. Place your finger over the open end of the straw.
22. Remove the straw and taste the kombucha that was in the straw that you removed.
23. To make more batches, simply cut your Scoby using a nonmetallic knife and add to another batch of tea.

**Note:** You can make kombucha soda, by double fermenting your brew. After your brew has matured to the 7-10 day period, remove the SCOBY, and place the lid on the jar with the rim ring. Make sure it is sealed tightly and allow it to ferment for another 30 days. You can also flavor your kombucha soda by adding a ¼ cup of fruit juice, and then allowing it to ferment for the 30 days. Do not flavor with any citrus fruits, it will kill the brew. Drink 4 to 6 ounces a day.

## **Basic Beef Bone Broth**

Builds Essence, Nourishes the Blood and Yin, Strengthens the Bones and Tendons, and Clears Heat

**Ingredients:** Serves 8-10

- A Stockpot or Crockpot
- 5 lbs. of Beef Marrow Bones (raw or cooked leftovers)
- 5 Quarts of Water
- ⅓ cup of Apple Cider Vinegar
- 1 Tablespoon of Sea Salt
- 2 Bay Leaves (optional)
- For every pound of bone, add 1 quart of water, 1 teaspoon of salt, and 1 tablespoon of vinegar.

**Prep Work:**

1. If your bones are raw, lightly roast them to increase the flavor, and reduce bitterness.
2. Preheat oven for 450°.
3. Lightly oil the bones and place them standing upright in a baking dish.

4. Place the bones in the oven for about 20-30 minutes. They will brown when ready.

**Directions:**

1. In a Stockpot or Crockpot add the roasted beef bones.
2. Add the 5 quarts of water, the 1 tbsp of salt, and the vinegar to the stockpot.
3. Soak for about a ½ hour.
4. Cover the Stockpot and bring ingredients to a boil.
5. Reduce the heat to a simmer, and cook covered for 24-48 hours in a crockpot, or 12-24 hours in a stockpot. Add water as needed.
6. Skim any film off as it cooks.
7. Strain out the bones.
8. Strain broth with a fine strainer and let it cool to room temperature.
9. Place broth in the refrigerator to cool and congeal excess fat.
10. Remove excess fat from the top layer.
11. Add salt to taste

Bone Broth can be consumed in place of coffee. Drink it for breakfast, use it as a stock, or have it as a snack. It should also be stored in the refrigerator; it will last up to a week. Bone broth can be frozen for longer storage. Drink 4 to 6 ounces a day.

**Sprouts:**

Clear Heat, Nourishes the Blood, Augments Qi

**Ingredients:** (serving size 3 ounces, about a handful)

- A wide mouth mason jar, sprouting tray, or containers
- Cheesecloth or breathable material, sprouting jar lid
- A rubber band
- Seeds, beans, or nuts of your choice
- A place not in direct sunlight
- Water
- Sieve
- A container to soak your seeds
- A container to remove the hulls
- A colander

**Note:** Not all seeds, beans, and nuts require the same amount of attention. Some seeds need to soak longer than others before the sprouting process. The amount of water needed to soak also depends on the seeds. As a general rule 3 cups of water and 12 hours of soaking is acceptable.

**Directions:**

1. Soak "seeds" before the sprouting process by placing the desired amount of seeds into a container with about 3 cups of water. In most cases when sprouting, a teaspoon and half are the amount sprouted at one time. Soak the "seeds" for 8-12 hours.
2. After soaking the seeds, rinse the seeds in a sieve.
3. Place appropriately measured seeds into the Mason jar.
4. Cover lid with cheesecloth, and place a rubber band securely around the cloth and rim, or fasten the sprouting lid.
5. Fill the Mason jar halfway with water.
6. Place the jar at a 45°, mouth down, in a place the jar can drain freely.
7. Twice a day, fill the jar so it overflows to remove waste produced by the sprouts.
8. After rinsing, replace the jar at a 45° angle, allowing the excess water to drain away.
9. Allow allotted time frame for sprout maturation.
10. To harvest the sprouts, remove the hulls by placing the sprouts in a container in the sink.
11. Fill the container with water and gently agitate the sprouts with your fingers.
12. The hulls should shed and rise to the top of the container.
13. Scoop out the hulls and discard.
14. Gently scoop out the sprouts and let drain in the colander.
15. Transfer sprouts into a clean glass Mason jar, or plastic Ziplock bag, and store in the refrigerator.
16. Well drained and hulled sprouts will keep for about 7-10 days.

**Health benefits of:** Detoxifies and improves liver function, prevents and treats cancer, prevents and treats all forms of arthritis, improves digestion and gut health, fights against candida, reduces and or eliminates the

symptoms of fibromyalgia, depression, and anxiety, augments the immune system, improves energy levels, improves wound healing, reduces high blood pressure, reduces cholesterol, excellent source of protein, fiber, and dietary nutrition.

## **Pickled Beets**

Nourishes Liver Blood, Courses Liver Qi, Clears Heat,  
Calms the Shen

### **Ingredients:** (makes 6-8 servings)

- 12 medium beets (about 2 lbs.)
- Salt (to salt the water)
- 2 cups of white vinegar
- 1 cup of sugar
- 2 tablespoons of non-iodized salt, or finely ground sea salt, (to be boiled with the vinegar)
- 1 teaspoon of allspice berries
- ¼ teaspoon of cloves
- ½ cinnamon stick
- 1 medium onion, peeled and sliced.
- Water
- A large pot

### **Directions:**

1. Remove all but an inch of the beet greens.
2. Wash and scrub the beets.
3. In a large pot, add water (enough to cover the beets, but don't put the beets in yet.)
4. Add the salt to the water and bring the water to a boil.
5. Add the beets to the salted, boiling water and simmer until tender (30-60 minutes).
6. Allow beets to cool, and then peel off the skins.
7. Slice the beets in a generous size.
8. In the large pot, bring the vinegar, sugar, salt, and spices to a boil.
9. Add the beets and onion to the pot and cook for about 1 minute.
10. Remove from heat and allow mixture to cool.
11. Then refrigerate and eat within two weeks.

## **Braised Broccoli with Garlic and Wine**

Courses Liver Qi, Augments Qi, Nourishes the Blood,  
Warms the Body

### **Ingredients:** (serves 4)

- 3 Tablespoons of olive oil
- 1 Teaspoon of minced garlic
- 1 ½ lbs of broccoli (trimmed and cut up)
- 1 cup of dry white wine
- 1 Large, deep skillet with cover
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

### **Directions:**

1. Place the oil in a large, deep skillet.
2. Cover and heat oil at a medium heat.
3. Add the garlic to the skillet, and stir occasionally.
4. Cook until the garlic turns color, 3-5 minutes.
5. Add the broccoli to the skillet and cook, stirring for about 3-4 minutes.
6. Add the wine and let it bubble for about 2 minutes.
7. Cover skillet, turn the heat to medium-low, and cook for 2-3 minutes.
8. Uncover the heat and return heat to the medium, and cook until most of the wine has evaporated and broccoli is tender, for about 5 minutes.
9. Season to taste with salt and black pepper.
10. Serve hot or at room temperature.

## **Sauerkraut**

Harmonizes the center, Clears Heat, Removes Heat Toxins,  
Disinhibits the Bowels, Clears Phlegm



**Note:** Sauerkraut was carried on European ships to prevent scurvy due to its high levels of Vitamin C.

**Ingredients:** (servings: 2 quarts, fermentation period: 2 to 6 weeks)

- 1 small head of fresh white cabbage (about 2 lbs.)
- 1 Tablespoon of Juniper Berries (optional)
- 1 ½ tablespoons of finely ground sea salt (as long as there are no additives)
- A wide mouth, ½ gallon Mason jar, or 2 quart mason jars.
- A clean handkerchief, paper towel, or cheesecloth.
- A large plastic or glass bowl.
- A Glass weight or clean stone.

**Prep work:**

Remove a couple of the outer leaves of the cabbage, and set aside for later use.

Split the cabbage into quarters.

Remove the cabbage's hard inner core.

Thinly slice the cabbage into shreds about ¼ of an inch thick.

**Directions:**

1. Place the shredded cabbage and juniper berries (optional) into a large glass or plastic bowl.
2. Massage the salt into the cabbage, mixing it evenly through the cabbage.
3. Allow salted shreds to sit for 5-10 minutes, until the cabbage starts to weep juice.
4. Once the cabbage has softened and juice has gathered at the bottom of the bowl, pack the contents of the bowl into the wide mouth ½ gallon Mason jar, or 2 quart jars.
5. Make sure to pound the cabbage down firmly to fit all of it into the jar(s).
6. Place one or two of the outer leaves from before on top of the salted cabbage. This weighs down the cabbage and creates a barrier.
7. Weigh down the cabbage with a glass weight or clean stone. The object is to immerse the cabbage and to release more brine through pressure.
8. Cover the jar the cloth and store at room temperature, away from direct sunlight.
9. Within 24 hours the cabbage should be covered in its own brine.
10. Check the cabbage daily and if any scum appears on the surface, skim it off immediately with a plastic, wooden, or glass utensil. Be sure to rinse off the weight as well when there is scum.

11. After 2 weeks, begin to check the sauerkraut for taste, which is completely dependent on temperature. Fermentation is complete when the bubbles stop rising to the top.
12. Once you've reached your desired taste, seal the jar tightly with a lid, and store the sauerkraut in the refrigerator.

## **Soothing Spring Tea Recipe**

Resolves Stagnation, Harmonizes the Middle Jiao, Boosts Qi,  
Strengthens the Kidneys, and Moistens the Lungs

**Ingredients:** (serves 2)

- 1 whole piece fresh ginger (about 6-9 grams), peeled and cut into 1/16-inch slices
- 10-15 shelled walnuts, crushed
- 50 pieces of goji berries
- 2 whole sliced lemons
- 3 cups of water
- Honey (optional)

**Directions:**

1. Combine the ginger, walnuts, lemon, water, and goji berries in a medium-size pot and bring to a boil.
2. Lower the heat and simmer, covered with lid slightly ajar, for 10 minutes.
3. Strain the herbs through a piece of cheesecloth or a fine-mesh strainer (you may have to clean out the strainer during the process if the herbs clump).
4. Add honey (optional) to taste.

## **Thai Tendon Soup**

Nourishes the Sinews, Builds Essence, Strengthens the Bones and  
Tendons, and Clears Heat

**Note:** The key is in the broth, which gets simmered for a minimum of 6 hours.

**Ingredients:** (serves 4)

- ½ pound of tendon
- 1 teaspoon black peppercorns
- 1 slice fresh ginger
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 4 cups water
- 4 cups low sodium chicken broth
- ½ pound rice noodles
- ½ onion thinly sliced
- 1 chopped fresh cilantro leaf
- 1 quarter sized piece of lime
- 2 scallions sliced
- 1 bunch of mint leaves
- 4 cups fresh bean sprouts
- 1 bunch Thai basil
- A dash of olive oil
- 1 large stock pot
- 1 sauce pan
- 1 large pot
- 1 colander

**Directions:**

1. First, bring a small pot of water to boil. Blanch tendons for about 2-3 minutes. Drain and rinse off the scummy residue from the pot. Rinse tendons, too, if necessary.
2. Using a sharp knife, slice each tendon into pieces about 1 inch wide.
3. Return tendon pieces to the cleaned pot and use enough filtered water to cover the tendons by about ¾-1 inch.
4. In a large stock pot, add 4 cups water and 4 cups chicken broth.
5. Bring to a boil, and then reduce heat to a simmer on very low.
6. Add tendons, onion, scallions, and ginger into the stock pot and cook for 6-10 hours.

**Directions:**

7. After, strain the broth into a saucepan and set aside.
8. Place rice noodles in large bowl filled with room temperature water.
9. Allow the noodles to soak for 1 hour.
10. Bring a large pot of water to a boil, and at the same time bring stock to a simmer.
11. Place the noodles into the boiling water for 1 minute.
12. Remove noodles and strain excess water.
13. Divide noodles among 4 serving bowls
14. Top with sirloin, cilantro, and green onion.
15. Pour hot broth over the top.
16. Serve with bean sprouts, thai basil, lime wedges, chili-garlic (optional).

Bruce K. Roff

Sophia Natural Health Center

(230) 740-9300