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Lost cabbage

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When I left home I went and lived in Leiden, a University city, this is more than 25 years ago a lot of things have changed since then. If I went grocery shopping 25 years ago I went to the baker for my bread and the greengrocery for fruit and vegetables and good advice. As a newly independent person I had no idea how to cook most of the vegetables on offer but the greengrocer?s wife did and she loved to share her recipes. When you picture a greengrocer?s wife you probably picture her, a round woman with apple cheeks and a jolly smile complete with a flowery dress and sensible shoes. She was always cheerful and full of kind advice how to cook a cabbage or what vegetable would go nicely with fish. She would put something extra in the bag for free just so you could try out new things and next time she would ask about your attempt to cook, I´m still very grateful for her kindness and some of her advice and recipes I still use. Twenty-five years later in the same town I go and look for a red cabbage, none of the greengrocers are still in business and the supermarket does not sell red cabbage. When I ask the man, that is busy restocking the shelves with pre-prepared packages of greens, where I can find the red cabbage he kindly informs me that they don?t sell red cabbage, not even pre-prepared. When I ask him why he explains to me that red cabbages does not sell because young people don?t know how to cook it. I see two things wrong here: 1. Because young people don?t know how to cook certain produce me, old person, gets a limited choose in fresh produce. 2. We old persons have forgotten to teach those young persons out there how to cook. At first I thought this was a Dutch issue, but now I live in France and I see the same happening here, poorly stocked fresh vegetable sections in the super market and no greengrocers or jolly greengrocers wife. Now I live in rural France and most of the people here have a vegetable patch and they love their food. The butcher, even the one in the super market, offers you, with pride, locally produced meat. We have a festival of bread every year, but the oversized mushrooms and the wrinkly bell peppers come from Holland, I?m ashamed to say, and the green beans come from Morocco. There is no farmers market that offers locally produced fruit and vegetables. We too have a vegetable patch and we try to grow as many heirloom varieties of herbs fruit and vegetables. Our little patch won?t start a new French revolution any time soon but I?m hoping to start a small revolution in our five family?s village. Want to see a real food revolution please check out these links. http://www.jamieoliver.com/us/foundation/jamies-food-revolution/home [1] http://www.jamieoliver.com/jamies-ministry-of-food/ [2] More on our small revolution on http://natural-landscape-sculpture.blogspot.fr/ [3]

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