

The Soul of Food

Lesson 4: The Black Belt



Photo Credit: Maya Marie Stansberry

“You can’t be afraid if you want to accomplish anything, you got to have the willing, the spirit, and above all you got to have the get up.” - *Georgia Gilmore*

Table of Contents:

Lesson 4: The Black Belt

- Alabama Food History
- [Featured Southerners](#): Georgia Gilmore and George Washington Carver

Our Crops

- [Sweet Potatoes](#)
- [Sorghum](#)

Recipes

- [Zesty Sweet Potato Sorghum Salad](#)
- [Sorghum Glazed BBQ Chicken](#)

Note: Please use this educational material with integrity.

(A Word from [Soul Fire Farm](#) about using and repurposing educational materials, which is good for us all to practice.)

Lesson 4: The Black Belt

Where We Going? Alabama

Capital: Montgomery | Population: 4.9 million

Land and Original People



Note on the Map: Many of these groups were more fluid in their locations than what a map can illustrate, but this map gives an idea of where they were generally. If you look at the maps of nearby states, you can see the location of indigenous people spread in and outside the United States border lines. However, once European colonizers arrived in the 1500s/1600s many indigenous groups were forced off their land to other areas of what is now the U.S., and state lines like those of Alabama were created to become what we see today.

Alabama is located on what was once the territory of several indigenous groups including the **Chicksaw, Koasati, Cherokee, Alabama-Coushatta¹, Choctaw, Muskogee Creek, and Biloxi**. Two of the most prominent groups in Alabama were the Alabama-Coushatta and Muskogee Creeks. Like many indigenous Southeastern groups, the Choctaw, Alabama-Coushatta, and Muskogee Creeks were descendants of the indigenous Mound Building/Mississippian culture that existed in the area between 800-1500 AD. As the name suggests these peoples centered building “large

earthen mounds”² that were used for food and non-food related rituals, as well as sacred burial sites and living quarters for high-ranking chiefs.



Like most mound building cultures, agriculture was very much integrated into daily life, and people practiced agriculture technologies that leveraged their environment. For example, some of the technologies that the Alabama-Coushatta used for hunting animals, like deer, was to clear woodland areas by setting fires during the colder seasons. Once the warmer seasons arrived tender grass would be growing for grazing animals they could later hunt.

The Choctaw, Alabama-Coushatta, and Muskogee Creeks also had farming practices that centered around cultivating corn and squash, as well as foraging nuts and other foods. This required having a relationship to the land so that they knew what would be available, what to sow, and what to store. Many of these plants and animals were also an extension of their life and beliefs. Once English and French colonizers came in contact with Alabama-Coushattas they gradually began to drive them out of the state, and today the majority of Alabama-Coushatta people live in Texas.

¹ <http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-2352>

² Moundville Cooking Pots in Alabama

https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/24712751.pdf?ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_SYC-5055%2Fcontrol&refreqid=search%3A8531e0d6ccd420feb6bbe2b28f9cb54c

Black Food and Agricultural History in Alabama

Alongside indigenous farming practices, Alabama's long history of Black and brown people's contributions to agriculture include the establishment of the Tuskegee University with Booker T. Washington. While Washington's politics tended to look down on poor and uneducated Black people, those beliefs did lead him to found the Tuskegee Institute in 1881 (formerly The Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute), where he eventually brought in George Washington Carver to lead Tuskegee's School of Agriculture.



Carver was not only interested in the academic side of agriculture, he also actively created avenues for farmers to engage with the research he did so that they could use that information to benefit their farms. This included opening the university to receiving mailed-in questions from farmers, publishing yearly bulletins with various articles on the latest research, and operating a truck to go to farmers and teach them new methods and applications for their farms on-site³. These were some of many ways that Carver contributed to supporting farmers, and advancing knowledge around the needs of popular crops like soybeans, sweet potatoes, and tomatoes that is the basis for what we know about these crops today.

Aside from agriculture, Alabama was one of the centers of the civil rights movement during the 1950s and 60s, and food was very much entangled with the events and leaders surrounding that time. One example is the well-known Montgomery Bus Boycott. The Boycotts were born from Black people like Vernon Johns and Claudette Colvin refusing to move from segregated parts of the bus in the spring of 1955. When Rosa Parks was arrested for the same action in the winter of that year, it sparked several of Montgomery's residents to boycott the buses and form the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA)⁴. The MIA was led by Martin Luther King Jr., who was a minister in Montgomery's local Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. The boycott was made possible with the fundraising support of folks like Georgia Gilmore who organized other domestic workers and cooks to sell baked goods and meals to fund the MIA in carpooling Black people as an alternative to walking.

³ Freedom Farmers by Dr. Monica M. White

⁴ <https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/civilrights/al7.htm>

Georgia Theresa Gilmore

Nurse, Midwife, Cook, Activist

Born: February 5th, 1920 | Montgomery, Alabama

“Some colored folks or Negroes could afford to stick out their necks more than others because they had independent incomes, but some just couldn’t afford to be called ‘ring leaders’ and have the white folks fire them. So when we made our financial reports to the MIA officers we had them record us as the money coming from nowhere. ‘The Club from Nowhere.’” - Georgia Gilmore



- Grew up on a farm in Montgomery with seven siblings.
- Coordinated “The Club from Nowhere” with other women in Montgomery to sell baked goods and food to Black people at nearby shops, from their homes, and also during mass boycott meetings. Georgia was the president of the westside branch of the Club from Nowhere.
- The Club from Nowhere served food on Monday and Thursday night mass meetings during the Montgomery Bus Boycotts in 1955-56. The group collected anywhere from \$500-\$600 per week to go towards supporting boycotters who needed to carpool and other expenses.
- Georgia also started a catering business from her home in 1956 after her lunch counter job fired her for testifying in defense of Martin Luther King Jr. when the city tried to sue him.
- Raised six children of her own.



Learn More:

- **Overlooked No More** by Klancy Miller
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/31/obituaries/georgia-gilmore-overlooked.html>
- **Interview with Georgia** https://americanarchive.org/catalog/cpb-aacip_151-gm81j9838j
- **Meet The Fearless Cook Who Secretly Fed — And Funded — The Civil Rights Movement** by Maria Godoy
<https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2018/01/15/577675950/meet-the-fearless-cook-who-secretly-fed-and-funded-the-civil-rights-movement>
- **The Potlikker Papers** by John T. Edge (Ch. 1)

George Washington Carver

Farmer, Scientist, Inventor, Herbalist, Cook

Born: 1864 | Missouri

“Let farmers’ institutes be organized, and all the methods of nature study be brought down to the every-day life of the masses. Let us become familiar with the commonest thing about us.”



- Carver was born a slave in Missouri, but was kidnapped and separated from his mother and siblings at a young age. When he was returned back to his slave owners, George and Susan Carver, they taught him how to read and learn about medicinal herbs.

- Later went on to study botany at Iowa State University for his bachelor's and master's degrees, graduating in 1894 and 1896 respectively.

- In 1896 he was invited by Booker T. Washington to lead Tuskegee University's emerging agricultural department.

- At Tuskegee he created a newsletter (bulletin) for farmers detailing how to optimally grow tomatoes, soy beans, sweet potatoes, peanuts, and tons of other crops based on the experiments and trials he did at the university.

- He established a traveling farm school, called the Jesup Wagon, that would later become the Tuskegee Agricultural Extension service for local Alabamian farmers who couldn't come to the university.

- Carver also started an educational farm for students interested in learning farming methods.



Learn More:

Freedom Farmers by Dr. Monica M. White (Chapter 1 focusing on Booker T. Washington, Carver, and W.E.B. Du Bois)

Alabama in Fourteen Foods By Emily Blejwas (pg. 156-59)

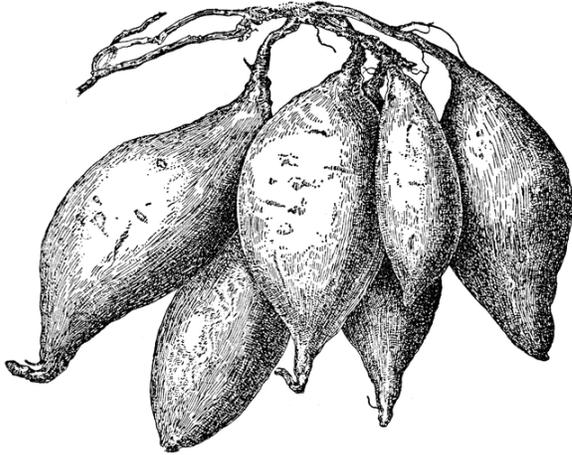
Missouri Agriculture Profile <https://agriculture.mo.gov/gwc.php>

Live Science Profile <https://www.livescience.com/41780-george-washington-carver.html>

Sweet Potatoes

Kumar (Quechua) - Aho (Creek) - Ipomoea Batatas (Latin) - Ñame (Spanish)

PLANT ORIGIN AND NAME HISTORY



The sweet potato is native to South and Central America, with the earliest domestication happening over 5,000 years ago⁵. There's a lot of debate among researchers as to which country in South or Central America sweet potatoes are native to, but there's also a lot of evidence that point to the tubers to having most likely originated in Peru⁶.

Sweet potatoes are in the plant family *ipomoea batatas*, with ipomoea being Greek for "worm like"⁷ and batatas being the Taíno word for potatoes. The placement of "potato" in the name sweet potatoes is due to colonizers from Spain combining the Taíno name for potatoes, "batata", with the Quechua word for potato, "papa", resulting in the word

"patata" for potatoes. Although, the Quechua word for sweet potatoes is actually kumar⁸, but I digress. Over time the word patata evolved to what we know now as potatoes, and the addition of "sweet" is due to the taste of most sweet potatoes' flesh.

All of that being said still doesn't explain why sweet potatoes are often called yams here in the United States by both sweet potato manufacturers and people who eat sweet potatoes. The word yam comes from the "Mandinka word *nyambi*, with *nyam* meaning 'food' or 'eating'", and that word was eventually shortened to just yam. The Mandinka language is native to West African countries like Senegal and Ghana where many varieties of yams are native to, therefore, when enslaved Africans were introduced to sweet potatoes both in their home country and the Americas they saw that the two vegetables shared similar characteristics and called them yams⁹.



However, using the terms sweet potatoes and yams interchangeably wasn't common until the 1930's when Louisiana sweet potato producers were trying to distinguish their sweet potatoes from the rest of the U.S. as being the sweetest in taste and most orange in color¹⁰. Other producers took note of this distinction and also began marketing sweet potatoes as yams. To this day you'll see that candied yams and regular yams in the produce aisle and canned goods

⁵ Sweet potato origins: Biodiversity International - GeneFlow 2009

<https://books.google.com/?id=QU3qxpHf4S4C&pg=PA21&dq=Sweet+Potato+Peru+domesticated#v=onepage&q=Sweet%20Potato%20Peru%20domesticated&f=false>

⁶ The Sweet Potato: its Origin and diseperal Patricia J O'Brien https://www-istor-org.proxy.wexler.hunter.cuny.edu/stable/671520?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

⁷ <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/ipomoea>

⁸ <https://books.google.com/?id=QU3qxpHf4S4C&pg=PA21&dq=Sweet+Potato+Peru+domesticated#v=onepage&q=Sweet%20Potato%20Peru%20domesticated&f=false>

⁹ In the Shadow of Slavery by Judith Carney (pp. 139, 113)

¹⁰ <https://www.lsuagcenter.com/NR/rdonlyres/D5909B57-260D-4F74-A0C1-56464F7CF1F8/58316/LouisianaAgriculturespring2009web.pdf>

section are still marketed as yams, but if you look at the fine print you'll see it says that they're actually sweet potatoes.

SWEET POTATO'S MIGRATION TO OTHER LANDS

Although sweet potatoes are native to South and Central America, they can be found in Japanese, Chinese, and Filipino dishes as well as in the dishes of many West African countries. In addition to all those cuisines, sweet potatoes are very deeply associated with the Southern United States, however, how they got there is debatable. Some historians credit the global spread of the sweet potato, and its eventual arrival in Southern states, to Spanish colonizers like Christopher Columbus.

Journal recordings state that Columbus found the tubers growing in Haitian and Taino villages during the Columbian Exchange and subsequently dispersed them around the globe starting in the late 1500s¹¹. However, other historians say that the sweet potato was already being cultivated by indigenous people in Louisiana, South Carolina, and Georgia throughout the 1600s¹². In fact, a Creek village in Georgia had expertise in cultivating sweet potatoes, and they called them Aho. Recordings of sweet potatoes being cultivated in North America prior to the arrival of European settlers, implies that indigenous South, Central, and North American peoples were already making exchanges with each other. It also implies that sweet potatoes might also be native to North America, and research is being done to verify that.

Either way, the history of pre-European sweet potato cultivation in North America is important to note because it goes to show that indigenous civilizations were moving about the world and sharing food with other regions long before the violent interventions of European colonizers. It also disrupts the common narrative of Columbus and other Europeans having invented the concept of trade and exchange between continents. All of this is to say that the sweet potato had made its way to the South prior to the period of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, and were being cultivated mainly on the coasts and along the rivers of states like Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, and North Carolina.

Most enslaved Africans were familiar with yams, a tuber native to West Africa, and saw the sweet potato as a substitute upon arriving to the U.S. colonies¹³. Other enslaved Africans may have already interacted with sweet potatoes since the Portuguese had brought them to African countries like Angola in the late 1600s as slave provisions. In both cases when sweet potatoes were introduced into the diets of enslaved Africans, they identified it as a tuber similar to yams and would use it to create familiar and new dishes in the United States during and after slavery.

In the United States, most enslaved Africans' diets included salted pork and corn meal rationed out by their owners. However, if they were allowed to have subsistence gardens, they could grow a greater variety of edible plants including sweet potatoes. A food like sweet potatoes would provide them with complex carbohydrates from the tubers, as well as vitamins and minerals from the leaves. States like Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina were areas of the South where sweet potatoes were most popularly grown by enslaved Africans, and today sweet potatoes are still in high production in some of those states as well as Mississippi¹⁴.

¹¹ The Sweet Potato: Its Origin and Dispersal by Patricia O'brian

<https://www-jstor-org.proxy.wexler.hunter.cuny.edu/stable/pdf/671520.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Acf2833126e39c04f067af8091800cf70>

¹² Rae & Thornton (2013) *The Apalache Chronicles; History of the American Indians (1775)* James Adair

<https://peopleofonfire.com/could-the-aho-indigenous-sweet-potato-have-supported-advanced-cultures-in-the-southeast.html>

¹³ *Hog and Hominy* by Frederick Douglass Opie

¹⁴ <https://ncsweetpotatoes.com/sweet-potato-industry/>

BOTANY AND CULTIVATION OF SWEET POTATOES

Regardless of sweet potatoes being called yams due to marketing, yams and sweet potatoes are two very different foods, and neither of them are botanically related to potatoes:

Plant	 Potatoes	 Yams	 Sweet Potatoes
Family	Solanaceae	Dioscoreaceae	Convolvulaceae
Plant Siblings	tomatoes, peppers, and tobacco	tacca	water spinach, morning glory, and bindweed

1. **Potatoes** are in the *Solanaceae* family with tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants.
2. **Yams** are in a plant family all their own called *Dioscoreaceae* alongside *tacca*¹⁵, one of the many plants that are used to make arrowroot.
3. **Sweet potatoes** are in the *Convolvulaceae* family along with water spinach, morning glory flowers, and bindweed.

Also, potatoes and yams are propagated by planting cuttings of their tubers. Sweet potatoes are propagated with “slips” which are created by placing sweet potato vines in water until they develop roots and then planting them¹⁶. Sweet potatoes are “root” tubers whereas potatoes are “stem” tubers. Stem tubers have all of the components needed to create buds and photosynthesize while root tubers don’t¹⁷, thus the differences in propagation methods.

A final note on the botanical differences between yams and sweet potatoes is that if you were to go to the market and hold them side by side, you’d see that yams have a hairy exterior while sweet potatoes have a much smoother skin. Indigenous people of South and Central America originally grew a large variety of sweet potatoes. Some were sweet and purple while others were starchy, fibrous and white. However, the Spanish, and other European colonizers, weren’t as interested in that diversity as they were in growing a ton of the sweet kinds, and it was the sweeter varieties of the sweet potato which were cultivated and saved over time while the other varieties became less available in the U.S and to this day are hard to find at markets.

¹⁵Tacca <https://ntbg.org/database/plants/detail/tacca-leontopetaloides>

¹⁶ https://hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/duke_energy/ipomoea_batatas.html
<http://www.southernexposure.com/sweet-potato-growing-guide-ezp-163.html>

<http://www.southernexposure.com/blog/2014/03/how-to-sprout-sweet-potatoes-for-slips-green-shoots-for-planting/>

Step by step guide to growing sweet potatoes <https://www.theartofdoingstuff.com/want-to-grow-sweet-potatoes-nows-the-time-to-start/>

<https://www.johnnyseeds.com/growers-library/vegetables/growing-tips-sweet-potatoes-from-slips.html>

¹⁷ <https://ask.extension.org/questions/216966>

(A Few) Types of Sweet Potatoes



(From [Sage Garden](#))
Beauregard



(from [Southern Exposure Seed Exchange](#))
O'Henry



(from [Miami Fruit](#))
Okinawa and Stokes

Growing Sweet Potatoes

"Sweet potatoes generally need at least 4 months of frost-free growing. Even early varieties need at least 90 days from when the slip (young plant) is transplanted until the full size tubers can be harvested. . . Sweet potatoes prefer loose, well-drained soil. If you have clay soil or drainage problems, work in lots of compost and make raised beds or planting ridges 8 to 12 inches high. It's important to plant your slips quickly after they arrive, but wait for warm, settled weather before planting outside. If the weather is still too cold or your garden is not ready, heel in the slips (loosely plant them) in a temporary location (in a flat or nursery bed) for transplanting later. Don't worry if your slips don't have roots, with good care new roots will develop rapidly. Transplant your slips into the ground outdoors 2 to 3 inches deep, with the leaves above the ground, 10 to 18 inches apart in rows at least 3 feet apart (to make room for the sprawling vines). Transplant in the evening and water immediately. Keep the soil moist for the next few days as the plants get established." - *Southern Seed Exchange Growing Guide* (<https://www.southernexposure.com/sweet-potato-growing-guide/>)

Other Growing Guides

The Art of Doing Stuff: Start to Finish Guide to Growing Sweet Potatoes

<https://www.theartofdoingstuff.com/never-grow-sweet-potato-slips-this-way-again/>

Johnny's Selected Seeds

<https://www.johnnyseeds.com/growers-library/vegetables/growing-tips-sweet-potatoes-from-slips.html>

Sorghum

Sorghum Bicolor, Poaceae (Latin) - Sorghi (East Indies) - Sorgo (Italian) - Syricum (Syrian) - Jowari (Yoruba)



PLANT ORIGIN & NAME HISTORY

Sorghum is a plant in the Poaceae plant family, along with corn, rice and other grasses. It's native to the West African Savannas of Chad and Sudan, where it was first domesticated over 3,000 years ago. Although it grows very similarly to grasses like corn, sorghum leaves are thinner, and its bushy heads are filled with hundreds of seeds that can come in orange, red, pink, white, and brown colors.



Being a drought tolerant plant, Sorghum doesn't require a ton of irrigation to grow, and even in poor, salty soils it produces nutrient dense grains that can be used for flour or eaten

whole. On top that the leaves from sorghum can actually improve a soil's quality, especially when intercropped with nitrogen fixing legumes like field peas, which is something that West Africans would traditionally do when cultivating these crops. With all of the conditions that sorghum can endure while still reliably producing grains, sorghum has been an important crop throughout all of Africa for centuries.¹⁸

SORGHUM'S MIGRATION TO OTHER LANDS (CULTURE)

Considering this, it makes sense that sorghum was a crop that many enslaved West Africans would bring with them when they were stolen from their land and forced to labor in the Americas and Caribbean. They would grow sorghum in their subsistence plots along with other nutrient rich vegetables to supplement their rations which were often just cornmeal mush and fat back. West Africans would also use the same agricultural methods for cultivating sorghum that they had back home. Food historian Judith Carney describes them carrying sorghum " seeds in the African bottleneck gourd to the fields. A hole was made in the ground into which the seeds were dropped; a sweep of the foot across the soil covered the planted area. At harvest time slaves protected the exposed seed clusters by scaring away flocks of birds."

SOUTHERN FOOD CULTURE AND SORGHUM

Alongside its ability to grow in different types of climates and soils, sorghum is also versatile in its culinary uses. The large heads of sorghum contain seeds that can be eaten as a whole grain, and some varieties produce stalks that make a molasses-like syrup. In fact, prior to sugar's prominence in the United States, sorghum was the main source of sweetener, particularly in states containing the Black Belt and Appalachia. The stalks of sorghum would be pressed to

¹⁸ In *The Shadow of Slavery* by Judith Butler pp. 144

release its green juice that was then cooked down to a dark, amber syrup to be poured on cornbread, fritters, and pancakes or used in drinks.

Back in Africa, sorghum is one of the top grains used as the foundation for many African meals in the form of “porridges”. In the cooking traditions of other cultures these porridges would be known as polenta, dumplings, or bread. An African porridge made up of sorghum would be prepared by pounding the unhusked grains with a mortar and pestle into flour. Then it would be mixed with hot water and thickened, and served with beans, okra, or leafy greens. It could also be formed into dumplings, fermented, and wrapped into plantain leaves to be steamed.

GROWING SORGHUM

(A Few) Types of Sorghum



(From [Truelove Seeds](#))
Coral Sorghum



(from [Truelove Seeds](#))
Sugar Drip Sorghum



(from [Southern Exposure Seed Exchange](#))
Black Amber Cane

Growing Sorghum

“Needs full sun and thrives in warm climates. Direct seed 1/4" into well-drained soil once the danger of frost has passed. Chelsea Askew has seeded this several ways: by hand; using an Earthway seeder with a spinach plate; and using a tractor mounted Covington single-row planter with a sorghum plate. All methods require thinning. Thin to 8"-12" in row. Best to harvest cane for molasses when seed head has turned from the milk stage to soft dough and the external color from green to an amber red.” - Truelove Seeds Growing Tips (https://trueloveseeds.com/products/sugar-drip-sweet-sorghum?_pos=1&_sid=a73860d2f&_ss=r)

Other Growing Guides

Seed Savers Exchange <https://www.seedsavers.org/grow-sorghum>

Zesty Sorghum & Sweet Potato Salad

Yield: 6 servings

Ingredients:

2 medium	Sweet potatoes, washed, peeled and cut into medium (½") dice
1 tbsp.	Salt
1 cup	Sorghum grains, uncooked and soaked overnight
3 tbsp.	Olive Oil
¼ cup	Orange juice
2 tbsp.	Balsamic Vinegar
2 tbsp.	Fresh Ginger, peeled and minced
2 tbsp.	Honey
1 clove	Fresh Garlic, minced
1 bunch	Parsley, minced
3 medium	Scallions, minced

Directions:

1. Place sweet potatoes in a large pot, fill with enough water to cover sweet potatoes completely, season with 1 teaspoon of salt and bring to a boil. Cook potatoes for about 15 minutes or until just tender. Drain potatoes in a colander and allow to cool for about 15-20 minutes, then place in a large bowl.
2. While sweet potatoes are cooking, heat a small pot over medium-low heat. Add the sorghum and toast for a few minutes until there's a slightly nutty smell, shaking the pan as it toasts. Add in 2 cups of water and a pinch or so of salt. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer, cover, and let cook for about an hour, checking periodically to see if grains are tender, but chewy. Add more water as needed.
3. To make the dressing, in a small bowl whisk together oil, orange juice, vinegar, ginger, garlic, and remaining salt. Stir in parsley and scallions.
4. Add sorghum to the large bowl of sweet potatoes, and pour dressing over everything and toss with tongs or a fork to combine. Serve as is or with a main dish.

Sorghum Glazed BBQ Chicken

Yields: 4 servings

Ingredients:

Roasted Chicken Wings

3-4# Chicken, cleaned, washed and patted dry
1 tablespoon salt
1 tsp. Black pepper
1 tsp. Onion powder
2 tsps. Smoked Paprika
1 tsp. Garlic Powder
½ tsp. Chili Powder

Sorghum BBQ Sauce

3 tablespoons	Vegetable oil
1 medium	Onion, diced small
2 cloves	Garlic, thinly sliced
1 teaspoon	Kosher Salt
1 teaspoon	Black pepper
¼ teaspoon	Cayenne Pepper
1 tbsp.	Tomato Paste
½ cup	Apple Cider Vinegar
1 cup	Ketchup
¼ cup	Worcestershire Sauce
½ cup	Sorghum Syrup, Molasses or Brown Sugar

Directions:

For the chicken

1. Heat oven to 350F. Stir together the spices and toss with chicken, then bake the chicken wings for 30-45 minutes or until they register at least 165F. Remove chicken from the oven.
2. Increase the oven temperature to broil, then brush ½ - 1 cup of the BBQ sauce over the chicken. Place back in the oven and allow to broil for 15 minutes until browned and crispy.

For the Sauce

1. Heat oil in a saucepan over medium-high. Add onions, tomato paste, and spices, and cook, stirring often, until softened, about 5-8 minutes.
2. Next add in the apple cider vinegar, ketchup, worcestershire sauce, and sweetener of your choice. Stir to combine and cook, stirring occasionally, until the mixture reduces slightly and is thick enough to coat a spoon, about 15 minutes.
3. Let stand for 30 minutes before serving or use immediately on your chicken. Store any leftover sauce in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks. Makes about 2 cups.