How to make cultured butter and buttermilk (adapted from Diane St. Claire’s book An Animal Farm Buttermilk Cookbook)
Makes about 1 1/4 pounds butter and 6 cups buttermilk

4 pints (8 cups) heavy cream (NOT ultra-pasteurized)
2 cups buttermilk (organic is best)

1.  Have on hand an instant-read thermometer, a large glass or microwave-safe container, 3 (1-quart) mason jars, and a waterproof, sturdy cooler into which the jars will fit. You will also need a stand mixer or a food processor and a fine-meshed strainer.
2.  Run the faucet in the sink to 70 degrees. (Hold the thermometer under the faucet while you adjust the temperature.) Fill the jars with the water and set them in the cooler. Now fill the cooler with 70 degree water to a level of about two-thirds up the sides of the jars.
3.  In a 2-quart microwave-safe container, gently heat the cream to 70 degrees. (1 to 3 minutes, depending on your microwave.)
4.  In a separate microwave-safe container, gently heat the buttermilk to 70 degrees.
5.  Mix the cream and buttermilk together.
6.  Remove the jars from the water bath and dump out the water. Fill them with the cream mixture. Cover them loosely with a lid or plastic wrap. Set them in the cooler in the water bath and close the lid. Leave for 12 hours, or until thick. Now you have creme fraiche with which to make butter. Set aside some creme fraiche for another use if you like.
7.  In the bowl of a stand mixer with the whisk attachment or in a food processor, pour in the cream. Beat or process for 3 to 5 minutes, or until the butter separates from the cream and clumps together.
8.  Set a fine-meshed strainer over a bowl and pour everything into it. Save the buttermilk that falls into the bowl. Pour it into a glass jar and refrigerate.
9.  Remove the butter and press it together into a mass. Rinse it under cold water, then place on a cool surface and fold it over and press it a few times to extract the liquid. Repeat a couple more times, until you have pressed out as much liquid as possible.
10.  Form the butter into a log and wrap it in parchment or plastic. Refrigerate until firm. Slice into rounds. Butter can be wrapped again in foil and frozen for up to a three months.
11.  Butter and buttermilk will keep for at least up to 2 weeks in the refrigerator.

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