



The Nibbler

Your source of CSA News 2011

Week 4 /16



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What's the Buzz?

Again this year we have contracted with Charlie and Lucy Wellhausen from the Ohio Honey Company to place their beehives at Covered Bridge Gardens. Their brightly painted hives are buzzing with lots of activity. Last year we started with two hives. An average hive will produce 75 pounds of honey. Our two hives produced over 300 pounds last year. This year Charlie brought us a third hive. They are already filling the cells and Charlie is adding more suppers. Those are the extra boxes on top. We do see an increase in pollination at harvest time. Did you know that bees will travel up to five miles to find food? We hope they just cover our 160 acres. They certainly have found the peas at the other end of the farm. Charlie comes out regularly to check on the bees to make sure they are getting along fine. Did you know that bees guard at the door of the hives to make sure only that hive's bees get in? On a hot day they will be out on the porch fanning their wings to cool off the hive.

Above are some photos taken as Charlie is tending the bees. 1. A close up of the front entrance to the hives. 2. A look inside. 3. Charlie trimming the grass around the hives to give them a clear flight path. 4. Charlie smoking the bees to calm them down while he checks the suppers. He does get stung a lot. 5. The arrival of our third hive. Notice they are right under the cell tower too. Kind of puts to rest that myth.

To learn more about bees visit their website at www.ohiohoney.com and see some great pictures. Charlie and Lucy also sell their honey at the North Union Farmer's Markets like the one on Saturday at Shaker Square. I hope in a year some of the honey you buy there will come from our fields. I love her honey in my teas in the morning.

The bees will help pollinate:

peas, beans, watermelon, cucumbers, winter squash, pumpkins, sunflowers, zucchini, summer squash, blueberries, raspberries, tomatoes, peppers, musk melons, and many more.

Katie's Question

Do you have any horses?

No we don't. We did have cows at one time. The only animals on the farm now are three cats and our dog. The cats are good hunters and keep the mouse population down.



Covered Bridge Gardens

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Ingredients: *You will find more tips and recipes at our website.*



Zucchini

Zucchini Fritters

Ingredients:

- 4 or 5 medium zucchini (about 1 ½ LB)
- ¾ tsp. salt
- 4 eggs
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¾ cup flour
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 TBSP. finely chopped onion
- Ground black pepper
- Sour cream (optional)

Preparation:

1. Trim and coarsely shred zucchini (4-5 cups). In a bowl toss zucchini with salt. Place zucchini in colander and place plate on top; weight with cans. Drain 15 minutes; discard liquid.
2. In a bowl, beat eggs and garlic. Stir in flour, cheese, onion, and pepper until just moistened (batter will be lumpy). Stir in zucchini until just combined.
3. For each pancake fritter, spoon one heaping TBSP. of batter on medium-hot, lightly oiled (PAM) skillet. Spread to 3inch circle. Cook over medium heat about 3 minutes each side or until golden brown. Keep pancakes warm while cooking remaining pancakes.
4. Serve topped with sour cream or cool, layer with waxed paper in container or Ziploc and freeze up to 3 months.

To reheat, preheat oven to 425 degrees. Place frozen pancakes in single layer on greased sheet. Bake uncovered 10 minutes.

This recipe contributed by a CSA member

Tip: The Science of Honey: An easy way to measure honey for a recipe is to remember that one 12-ounce container of honey equals one cup. But not all liquids have the same measure. One cup of water equals eight ounces. This is because liquids such as honey contain solids and are more “dense” than water.

Summer Squash

This broad term can be used to describe several of the squash we grow. The first question most people have is, “What is the difference between summer and winter squash?” I simply tell them that summer squash you can eat the skin and winter squash you don’t. Think of how you grate up a whole zucchini but don’t eat the skin of an acorn squash. Summer squash are fast growing and can almost grow in front of your eyes. Winter squash are planted in early summer and grow slowly until early to mid-September when they reach their full size. Well, back to summer squash.

Zucchini: The most popular of the squash, zucchini has whole recipe books about it. This green, grey (light green) or yellow squash grows long or round like a ball. The ball-shaped are great to bake and use the shape as a natural bowl. The yellow just adds color variety but tastes the same. Actually I think zucchini has a mild flavor that allows it to be used with other vegetables that have dominant flavors. You can substitute zucchini for apples in most recipes.

Patty Pans: This dish shaped squash with a scalloped edge has more squash flavor and less moisture than zucchini. Either green or yellow can be used in any zucchini recipes. When frying or grilling add a little more oil. This is my favorite.

Yellow Straight Neck: Now we’re talking flavor. This little teardrop shaped squash carries the most flavor of the group. Try it in salads, stir-fried or casseroles. It will perk up any “zucchini recipe”.

Even though I have mentioned the difference in flavors as the season goes along you should have a chance to try them all and make up your own mind. Don’t forget to freeze some for winter meals. Cut into chunks for casseroles or grate and have ready to make a fresh baked loaf of squash bread.

Note: we try to pick these wonders with tender skins and small seeds. The smaller the squash, the smaller the seeds. As they grow the skin can become tough and needs to be peeled as well as remove the seeds. Removing the center around the seeds also can reduce a lot of the moisture for firmer bread.



Cucumbers

Cucumber and Snap Pea Salad with Mint

In a large bowl, whisk together 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, 2 teaspoons white wine vinegar, and one tablespoon Dijon mustard. Season with coarse salt and ground pepper. Add cucumbers, peeled and thinly sliced and snap peas, trimmed (strings removed if necessary) and sliced on the diagonal into ½ inch pieces. Toss to combine. Stir in 1 small bunch mint leaves (about ¾ cup), torn, just before serving.

Snow peas work for this also.
I recommend peppermint or lemon mint.