



The Nibbler

Ohio Honey's Bees Love our Flowers

Covered Bridge Gardens
CSA Newsletter
Week 7 of 16



WINE & WALLEYE FESTIVAL

August 24, 25 & 26, 2012
Historic Ashtabula Harbor
Bridge Street



What's the Buzz?

For our fourth year we have contracted with Charlie and Lucy Wellhausen from the Ohio Honey Company to place their beehives at Covered Bridge Gardens. Their three brightly painted hives are buzzing with lots of activity. An average hive will produce 75 pounds of honey. The rain last year kept the bees in and production was average. This year 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 sunflowers just outside their hive doors. 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. In the extreme heat they will cover the outside of the hive and all fan their wings.



Keep Dancing
Just a note: We did not get any of the rain last week. We have gotten only a little over 2 inches since mid-May.

Kate's Question

What kind or bugs do you have on the farm?

This question comes while Kate has been attending a nature summer camp. Her favorite new bug is the damselfly. They look like a dragonfly and are thought to eat mosquitoes.

Here on the farm we have lots of bugs. It's no place to be if you are afraid. Some bugs are harmful to a farmer's profit. We have miller moths that come with having popcorn. Out in the field we have cabbage moths, cucumber beetles, tomato worms, corm worms and flea beetles that try to eat our crops. We encourage some birds that eat some varieties but the ones that scratch open the corn will do more damage than the worm inside. The warm winter allowed many varieties to survive and thrive in the hot dry summer.

Then we have good bugs like spiders that trap bugs. There are spiders both in the barns and in the fields. We often see praying mantis around the barns. Above you see we get help from bees too. Then there are butterflies just to pretty up the place.

Sorry I don't have more photos. I guess I need to take some more this summer.

If you are a bug collector, bring your net on your farm visit.

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



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Ingredient Highlights: *You will find more tips and recipes on our website.*

We have just picked our shallots. They seemed to have liked the dry weather. Please note the following tips on how to use and store. We include just a small amount at a time. It's the sugar content of them that makes them a little more difficult to store over a long time than onions. Chopping and freezing sounds best.

Most cooks buy only as many shallots as they will need for a particular recipe. To keep for a longer time, store them as you would any allium in a cool, dry, dark place with plenty of air circulation. Knot them in clean pantyhose, hang from the ceiling in a dry garage, cellar or closet, and they can last up to 2 months. If they sprout, you can still use them. Remove the bitter green sprouts if you don't want a strong onion flavor. Many cooks choose to include the sprouts and use them much like chives.

Shallots may be chopped and frozen up to 3 months. However, when thawed, they will have the texture of a lightly saute'ed shallot, so do not expect any crunch. This may actually be a time-saver in many recipes. The younger (smaller) the shallot is, the milder the taste. Large shallots will smell and taste more like their onion and garlic cousins.

Shallots work particularly well in dishes using wine.

- Although shallots caramelize like onions, it is important to saute' them gently. Browning over high heat is likely to turn them bitter, much like garlic.
- Roast shallots in their skins until soft. Then peel, puree, and use as a flavoring for soups or sauces.
- Shallots do not give bad breath like garlic or onions, and are more easily digestible.
- Leeks, onions, and scallions may be substituted for shallots, but expect a stronger onion flavor.
- Refrigeration is not recommended for shallots as cold temperatures tend to encourage sprouting.

Shallots



Green Tomatoes

Over the years we have always included green tomatoes in your bags. You don't have to be a southern belle to love them. If you have never tried them, you are missing out on a sweet delight. Believe me this is one taste experience that you must try. I have suggested several ways to try them so let me know what you think.

Fried Green Tomatoes

Source: Family Circle (11/1/02)

Directions:

Core three large green tomatoes; slice $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick. Drain slightly; season each with a pinch of salt. Place $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of flour in a shallow bowl; 2 beaten eggs in a second bowl; and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cornmeal, 2 tablespoons Parmesan Cheese, $\frac{1}{8}$ -teaspoon cayenne, and $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt and $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon black pepper in a third. Dredge slices in flour, then eggs, then cornmeal mixture; fry in vegetable oil over medium heat about 3 minutes per side or until golden brown.

Baked Tomatoes

Baked whole or cut tomatoes in shallow baking dish in 350 degrees oven 20 to 20 minutes. If desired, top with dots of butter, thin slice of onion, crushed cracker crumbs, and grated cheese. Try with green and red tomatoes. Maybe the shallots too.

Variation:

Oven Roasted Green Tomatoes
Prepare the tomatoes the same. Line the bottom of a roasting pan. Drizzle with olive oil and back at 350 degrees until tender.