



Week of June 30, 2008 ~ Issue no. 6

IN THE BAG *tidbits from Aaron*

As all of you are hopefully aware, we have local beef, goat cheese, yogurt, bread and eggs available as add-on items to your share when you pick up. What some of you might not realize, however, is that we now have honey, too! Local beekeeper, egg co-op member and volunteer extraordinaire, Jan Cauffman is keeping four hives and a nucleus colony on Rushton Farm this summer. The honey she harvests from these bees is being sold in the barn and occasionally incorporated into the breads baked for us by Talula's Table.

While we are delighted to have the honey in the barn, we are perhaps even more delighted to have the bees on the farm. Bees are important members of the farm ecosystem, providing valuable pollination services for a number of the fruits and vegetables we grow. The European honeybee, in particular, is renowned for its pollination efficiency. These bees are systematic and thorough in their work. While a number of other native species also perform pollination work, they are rarely as meticulous or as numerous as a colony of European honeybees.

Bees have been kept by humans for centuries. Combs of honey have been found in the tombs of Egyptian pharaohs. The honey, incidentally, even after thousands of years, is still good. This is an example of the extreme care with which honeybees manufacture the product that forms the chief staple of their diet. What is honey? It is basically the nectar of flowers concentrated and slightly altered by enzymes within the bees themselves. Honey is one of two foods bees eat; the other is pollen (their source of protein).

The biology and ecology of honeybees is fascinating. One of the more interesting features of their behavior is the "waggle" dance. This is a form of communication in which one bee communicates a source of pollen or nectar to another bee. The dance involves a lot of looping turns and a good deal of rump-shakin'. In the course of this display, a bee may convey distance, direction, and even quality of a given food source.

-Aaron



THE DIRT *report from our field managers*

This weekend Aaron and I were able to get away and visit with another de Long brother who farms and operates a CSA near the Catskills. This morning we walked the Rushton fields to assess the work to be done for the week and it was amazing to see how much the plants had changed in the course of two days. Our earliest succession of tomatoes is now starting to blush, our hot peppers are bearing fruit, our beans are flowering, and it looks like we might have a decent crop of onions despite the early damage caused by onion flies. While we were away, Fred was able to direct-sow the rest of our pumpkins, winter squash, and melons. With any luck, we might be eating cantaloupe in September along with our early winter squash.

Last week you received our first succession of carrots and we hope to give them to you again as our second succession is sizing up. This week you will be getting a mix of red and golden beets. Beets are a delicious and versatile vegetable. They share the same genus species as chard (*beta vulgaris*), and their tops can be prepared similarly or thrown in with a salad mix. As members of the Chenopodiaceae ('Goosefoot') family these plants originate from coastal areas. To preserve the moisture they win from their salty surroundings, beets and other members of the Chenopod family, such as spinach, can be characterized by leaves designed to limit transpiration or the loss of water. However, what we hope you enjoy the most are the red and golden roots in your share today.

-Ashley



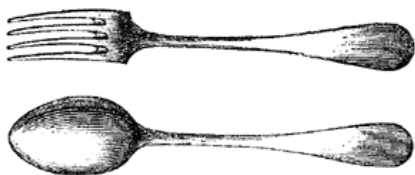
HAPPENINGS *upcoming events at the farm*

Mark your calendars! Details forthcoming here or on the web site.

July 12, 2008 - Pollination Celebration at Trust offices 10 am - noon

September 7, 2008 - Community Farm Dinner - 5:00 pm

October 18, 2008 - Final Harvest Celebration



RECIPES *what to do with those veggies*

Roasted Beet Salad

4 or 5 beets (or however many you like!)
1/4 cup diced onion (*to taste!*)
1 teaspoon olive oil
1/4 cup chopped dill or other herb such as fennel (*to taste!*)
salt and pepper to taste
fresh goat cheese (optional)

Roasting beets locks in their sweetness and flavor. Consider roasting beets to top salads, soups, or to serve alone; they also keep well in the refrigerator.

Roast whole beets (without greens but with skins) in a covered dish (or wrapped in foil) in 350 degree oven until tender enough to be pierced by a fork (1-2 hrs.). Uncover and let beets cool. When they are cool enough to be handled, rinse under cool water to slide off their skins. Once the skins are removed, slice beets into discs about 1/4" thick. Toss with diced onion, dill, and olive oil until well mixed. Season with salt and pepper. Top with crumbled goat cheese if desired.

Leslie Crane
Adapted by Elizabeth Stokes

Zucchini and Scrambled Eggs (*a savory breakfast favorite*)

2-3 zucchini, chopped into thin pieces
1-2 cloves of garlic, chopped finely
1-2 Tablespoons butter or olive oil
4 eggs
1/4 cup milk
1/2 teaspoon oregano or herb of your choice
salt and pepper to taste
hot pepper (optional)

Quarter zucchini lengthwise and then slice into thin discs (the discs will fall into quarters). Sauté zucchini with chopped garlic in large pan (with either butter or olive oil) until soft. Add oregano, salt and pepper, and any other preferred seasoning to taste. (It does not hurt to 'over-season' the zucchini, as the eggs will dilute the seasoning.) Mix eggs and milk in a separate container. When vegetables are sufficiently soft, add eggs to the pan, and cook to desired done-ness. Make sure that there is enough shortening or oil in the pan to prevent sticking. Stir mixture frequently to ensure even cooking. Serve immediately, preferably with toast!

Ted Stokes
Adapted by Elizabeth Stokes