In the Share

Spaghetti Squash, 1 piece
Beets, 1 bag
Carnival Squash, 2 pieces
Pie Apples, 1 bag
Leeks, 1 bunch
Choice of Sprouts, 1 bag
Choice of Herb, 1 bunch
Garlic, 1 bulb
Green Tomatoes, see signs

Claire’s Comments

The Swarm Lives!

I heard from many of you saying that you enjoyed the swarm story of a few weeks ago. I thought it might be a good time to give you an update on the swarm and on the apiary in general. The bees are such interesting little creatures!

Right after I wrote that article three weeks ago, I went out to the backyard to see if we had indeed captured the queen along with her bees. It was only two days after the capture, but the bees had already drawn out a good-sized area of comb. When I hived the swarm originally, I included a frame of honey from another hive so that the swarm would have some food to get started. Bees produce wax by eating honey and then secreting wax flakes through glands on their abdomens. It takes 6 to 8 pounds of honey to make 1 pound of wax, so the new hive needed plenty of honey to make new comb. And they needed comb so that the queen would have a place to lay eggs.

The queen’s only job is to make babies. Since bees only live about 35 days in the summer, the queen (who can live for years) is responsible for constantly renewing the hive population. In a crowded hive it can be very difficult to find the one queen bee among thousands of worker bees. The queen is longer and fatter than a worker and fairly easy to recognize once you see her, but finding her can be like looking for a needle in a haystack most of the time. The easiest way to see if you have a queen is to look for eggs. Even though the swarm had only been in the hive for a couple of days, I expected to see plenty of eggs in that newly drawn comb. There were none. Which meant there was no queen. Sadly, I closed the hive up and decided to let them draw out more comb and gather some nectar before recombining them with the hive they swarmed from.

This past weekend Sarah and I did an inspection of all our hives and started getting them ready for winter. We began the season in April with 7 good hives, and almost 100 pounds of honey to sell. Not bad.

The sad news from our inspection was that 2 of our hives were queenless and had no stores of honey or pollen to get them through winter. We had to kill both of those hives (thus the reduction from 7 to 5). Though it is always difficult to make the decision and then to actually follow through with it, we have learned through experience that it is much better to kill a dying hive than to let it die slowly. When a hive is weak, other bees get into the comb to steal the honey and thus bring diseases and parasites home to infest their own healthy hives, making the total hive death toll much higher. We were sad to say goodbye to Gertrude and Jolene, but any clean comb that they drew this summer will give real boost to new hives in the spring.

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The unexpected good news from the inspection was that the swarm lives! It turns out that the queen was in that cluster of bees we captured out of the tree. She just had not yet started laying eggs when I (continued on the back)
Our new passive solar greenhouse is nearing completion! One of the last things we have to do is move soil and compost into the growing beds. Then we will be ready to plant our winter herbs.

Please join us on

Saturday, October 2nd

9 AM to 3 PM

to help move some soil and to have a close look at this innovative structure

We will provide:
• hot soup
• cold drinks
• shovels
• wheel barrows

Please bring:
• gloves
• a bowl and spoon for soup

If possible RSVP to Claire at claire@troygardens.org so we know how much soup to make.

(continued from Claire’s Comments)
did that initial inspection. The Fern swarm now has eggs and capped brood and is slowly growing her population. She is one of the 4 nucs with new queens that we will try to overwinter on top of full-sized hives. If the Fern swarm and the other nucs survive (including one with a Minnesota hygienic queen), they will grow into strong honey-producing colonies in the spring. And the cycle of queen rearing and honey extracting will continue.

I will soon be posting information on buying honey from our hives. We often hear from people that it is the best honey they have tasted, so keep an eye out for that info in the next few weeks.

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Gini Knight was an intern at our farm in 2008 and 2009. She started her own small farm outside Madison this year and now serves her first 10 CSA members. We are so proud of her!

Her newsletter this week included the recipe below, which was perfect timing for our green tomato delivery. Gini is a southerner and a big fan of fried green tomatoes. This recipe comes from her CSA member James Burnham who is also from the land of fried green tomatoes.

**Fried Green Tomatoes**

**BATTER**
- Flour and cornmeal (equal parts; 1 cup each should be sufficient for 6 small tomatoes)
- Black pepper (enough so that you can see it in the dry mix)
- 2 tsp salt (or more if you want)
- 3/4 cup milk
- 1 egg
- Canola or Peanut Oil

Mix dry and wet ingredients separately. Slice tomatoes 1/4” thick. Dunk in egg/milk and drop into dry mix, coat both sides. In a 9” skillet (cast iron, preferably), get enough oil for it to be ~1/8” inch deep in the pan. Use a higher-temperature oil (canola usually, but peanut is better) and get it hot, almost ‘till it’s smoking. Reduce the heat to medium/medium low, toss in the prepared tomato slices and watch ‘em. Cook ‘em ‘till they’re golden brown on both sides and soft in the middle. Don’t mind the bits of batter that come off in the pan. Adjust heat as needed and drain ‘em on paper towels/newsprint when they’re done.

**DIPPING SAUCE**
- 1 tbs. mayo
- 2 tbs. mustard of choice (Koop’s horseradish-deli worked superbly)
- 1 dash of sesame seed oil
- 4 tsp chipotle hot sauce

Mix all sauce ingredients together and dip. Enjoy!