



In the Share

Green and Yellow Beans, 1 bag
Sugar Snap Peas, 1 bag
Cauliflower, 1 large & 1 small head
Shell Peas, 1 bag
Fennel, 1 bulb
Summer Squash, 3 pieces
Cucumber, 1 piece
Lettuce, 1 head
Chard or Collards, 1 bunch
Choice of Herb, 1 bunch

This week marks the transition from spring to summer crops. These are the last of the peas for the year. You have both shell peas and sugar snap which can be difficult to tell apart, so take a look at last week's newsletter if you need a reminder. You also have a bit of lettuce. None of these crops are in their prime anymore so you will find blemishes on the peas, and the lettuces are a mere shadow of the large and lovely heads we had earlier. The flavor on both is still quite good, however.

The cauliflower is also more of a spring/cool weather crop, but it is certainly in its prime this week – lovely and delicious. I believe this is our best cauliflower year ever.

Meanwhile, the summer crops are now moving into their heyday. We harvested just over 300 pounds of beans for this week and they are all both beautiful and delicious. You have a full pound of green beans and a half-pound of yellow beans in your share. If you cannot eat up that many in one week, blanch the rest (steam or boil for 2 minutes and then plunge into cold water to stop the cooking) and freeze them for winter.

I wish I had more cucumbers to offer, but they are struggling this year, unfortunately. The fennel is lovely again this week, and you will see one final bulb next week along with cabbage, and possibly the first salsa baskets. The chard is new and lovely. Check out my polenta pie recipe for a great use of chard at: <http://www.troygardens.org/pdf/Urban%20Roots%202005/Urbar>

Claire's Comments

Gallons of Honey

I just wrote about the bees a couple weeks ago and I don't want to drone on about them too much, but I have more news I thought you would want to know. We did our first honey extraction for the year on Tuesday evening. It turned into a very sticky late-night affair, but we now have 7 gallons of beautiful amber honey waiting to be bottled. Very exciting!

As you already know, we have 4 hives at the farm (though actually it is five now. Cinderella made a new queen last week and the old queen tried to swarm away. She did not get very far as she happened to have a clipped wing that makes it impossible for her to fly. We found her and her cluster of bees clinging to the underside of the hive and moved her into a fifth hive which we named Drizella – the name of Cinderella's sister from the fairy tale.) Sarah and I also have a very active hive in our backyard. All these hives have been making honey so fast that we ran out of boxes – called supers - to give them for their honey storage. That meant we had to extract some honey to give them extra space. We took a total of 29 frames of honey off of the hives on Monday; extracted the honey on Tuesday; and gave them back the empty honeycomb on Wednesday. By Wednesday evening they were cleaning up the empty comb and already starting to fill it with fresh nectar. There is a reason they are called "busy bees!"

The extraction process itself went much better this year than last. In the past we have always done the extraction on my driveway. It is great to do it outside where there is plenty of space and it is easy to clean up. But last year was the first year that Sarah and I had a hive in our backyard, just a short flight over the house from the driveway. Within minutes of starting to uncup the honeycomb, our bees figured out what we were doing and came over to reclaim their stores. We had literally hundreds of bees flying around us, landing on the honeycomb, diving into the extractor, and even drowning themselves in the growing pool of honey. We made it through and had beautiful honey in the end, but we lost many bees in the process. It was a nightmare we did not want to repeat, so this year we moved into the garage and the backyard hive was never the wiser.

I did the uncapping – scraping the new, white wax off of the mature honey to release it from the comb; and Sierra ran the extractor. The extractor is a hand-cranked centrifuge with baskets to hold the frames of honey. It takes a bit of practice to figure out how long and hard to turn the extractor so that it spins out all the honey but does not damage the delicate wax honeycomb. Sierra got the hang of it fast and we were done spinning out all 29 frames within about an hour and a half. By then we were sticky with dripping honey and had had our fill of sampling this incredible crop. But still we had to filter out all the bits of wax that had made their way into the honey in the extraction process.

In my opinion the filtering is no fun. Luckily, Sarah got home from work just in time to help us with this last step. We opened the honey gate on the extractor and watched a beautiful stream of honey flow out and into

(continued on the back)

Recipe

It's another fennel recipe this week. I have to admit, I am not a big fennel fan. However, I loved this dish. Sarah made it for brunch over the weekend and I knew I wanted to print the recipe for all you fennel doubters. Fennel seed is a key spice in most sausage (or fake sausage) so its combination with fennel bulb seems natural.

Zucchini, Fennel, and Andouille Pie

This recipe comes from the Madison Area CSA Coalition's cookbook From Asparagus to Zucchini. Sarah used yellow summer squash and patty pan squash along with the zucchini. And since we don't eat meat, she used the ground sausage style Gimme Lean soy sausage.

½ Tbs. butter, softened
3 Tbs. breadcrumbs
1 Tbs. olive oil
¾ cup onion, diced
¾ cup fennel bulb, diced
1 tsp. garlic, minced
2 cups zucchini, diced
1 link (4 ounces) andouille sausage (or Gimme Lean)
½ tsp. fennel seed, crushed
salt and pepper
3-4 ounce Swiss cheese
3 large eggs
½ cup milk
for garnish: diced roasted red pepper, chopped black olives, or chopped fennel leaves

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Generously grease a pie plate with the butter. Sprinkle breadcrumbs over buttered areas. Heat olive oil in skillet over medium flame. Add onion, fennel, and garlic; sauté until vegetables are partially tender, about 5 minutes. Raise heat to medium-high; stir in zucchini, andouille, fennel seed, and salt and pepper to taste. Sauté until zucchini is tender, 3-5 minutes. Spread mixture on platter; cool 10 minutes. Meanwhile, grate cheese; sprinkle two-thirds of it into pie pan. Beat eggs with milk in bowl. Stir cooled vegetable mixture into egg mixture; pour into pan. Sprinkle remaining cheese on top. Rim outer edge of pie filling with garnish of choice. Bake until set, about 30 minutes. Cool 10 minutes before serving. Makes 6-8 servings.

If you would like a copy of the Asparagus to Zucchini cookbook, please let me know. The retail price is \$20, but you can get it from the farm for \$15.



Savor The Summer at Troy Gardens



Tour the Gardens,
Farm and
Natural Areas
See What's
Happening at Troy

Activities for Kids
SLIPPY SLIDE!
Crafts & Games

FREE HAYRIDES
Meet & Greet
the Horses!

Music & Entertainment

West African drums, Black Star Drum Line & more!

Saturday, Aug. 1
3pm-7pm
Family Fun!

FREE GARDEN FEAST
WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

A GREEN FESTIVAL
Bring Your Own Picnic,
lawn chairs & blankets to sit on

(continued from "Claire's Comments")
into our mesh filter. Then a (much slower) stream of honey came out from below the filter into a final storage bucket. The filtering process is very slow, made all the slower by having to stop and clean the wax out of the filter periodically. By the end we were all tired and sticky from head to toe. We were also very proud of our healthy and productive bees!

Based on the state of the hives today, we expect to be able to harvest another 5 to 7 gallons of honey at the end of summer. Then we will bottle it and be able to offer it to you with storage shares for the winter. We are hoping to harvest and sell enough honey this year to raise money to buy our own honey extractor. We have been able to borrow extractors from generous friends and bee mentors in the past but as our hives produce more, that arrangement becomes more difficult to sustain. The bees don't know it, but they are certainly doing their part to earn us an extractor!

On Wednesday I was up in front of Troy by the co-housing. You may have noticed the tremendous number of white sweet clover blossoms up there. On my way by I stopped to take a close look at the flowers. To my delight they were buzzing with our honeybees! It was such a thrill to see them out working the flowers. Usually I never know where they go. Given the number of sweet clover blooms available right now, I would not be surprised if we had more full honey supers by next week!

Troy Community Farm

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