

- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup shredded carrot plus 1/4 cup, divided
- 1/2 cup diced pineapple
- 1/4 cup golden raisins
- 1/4 cup chopped toasted pecans
- 1/4 cup toasted unsweetened coconut flakes
- Carrot greens for garnish

Directions

1. Whisk cream cheese, honey, vanilla, cinnamon and salt in a medium bowl until combined. Stir in 1 cup carrot, pineapple and raisins.
2. Coat a large piece of plastic wrap with cooking spray. Scoop the cheese mixture onto it. Using the plastic wrap to help you, form the cheese mixture into a ball, then completely wrap in plastic. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour and up to 2 days.
3. Just before serving, combine pecans, coconut and the remaining 1/4 cup carrot in a small bowl. Turn the cheese ball out onto a serving plate and form into a carrot shape. Coat with the pecan mixture. Garnish with carrot greens, if desired.

*****From EatingWell.com*****

Chickpea and Eggplant Salad

Ingredients

- 1/2 a small red onion, finely sliced
- 1 large eggplant, cut in half lengthwise and sliced into thin half moons
- A good glug of extra virgin olive oil
- Juice and zest of 1 lemon
- 2 (13.5-ounce) cans of chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 large fresh tomatoes
- 1 bunch of fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 teaspoons garlic-infused olive oil
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- Slivered almonds, to serve

Directions

1. Cover the onion with water and set aside for half an hour—this reduces the harshness of its taste when eaten raw.
2. Next prepare the eggplant. Spread the half-moon slices out on a baking sheet and brush them with olive oil. Place on a high rack under the broiler for 5 minutes, then take out and brush again with a mixture of olive oil and lemon juice—you can make it quite wet, as the eggplant will absorb all the liquid. Place back under the broiler until the edges of the slices are slightly blackened and the flesh is soft. Set aside in a large bowl.
3. On the same baking sheet, spread out the chickpeas and broil until they're golden. Add them to the bowl of eggplant.
4. Dice the tomatoes into small cubes and add to the bowl along with the parsley, drained red onion slices, garlic oil, cayenne pepper, remaining lemon juice, zest, salt and pepper and mix well. Serve warm, with a sprinkling of slivered almonds



Sisters Hill Farm

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Comments from Apprentice Breezy Mehringer

If the opportunity ever arises to peek inside a beekeeper's hive, take it. Within the simple wooden boxes lies an incredibly intricate and beautiful world that few get to see. Lift out a frame and you will be surprised by the weight of it. Many of the hexagonal cells glisten with honey, but some contain pollen, or eggs and larvae in all stages of development. The comb is covered in a thick layer of bees, all of them busy building or feeding or storing. Thousands of bees make up a colony, and every bee has a job. Worker bees are all female, and their jobs range from creating comb, to foraging for and gathering honey, to tending the brood, to guarding the hive. Drones are all male, and their sole purpose is to mate with a queen. The queen bee is the only bee in the hive that lays eggs.

I recently had the privilege of seeing inside a hive during an important transition in a bee colony. Helen, a farm member, volunteer, and friend, keeps two beehives and invited me over to lend a hand with some hive maintenance. Adorned with veils and gloves for protection and a can full of smoking pine needles to calm the bees, Helen and I gingerly entered the hive. Helen explained that she suspected the hive was without a queen, so she introduced a new one. We searched the hive in hopes of seeing the new queen, but could not find her. We also replaced some frames with new ones, and checked on honey production and brood development. During my time with Helen and her bees, I learned about the queen's maiden flight, the only period in her life when she mates and from which she is prepared to lay eggs for the rest of her life. I learned about propolis, the sticky, gummy substance the bees create for use as a glue or sealant. I learned about the brood, and how the worker bees can make a queen by feeding the larvae royal jelly. The whole experience was fascinating and eye opening, and it left me hungry to learn more.

The next morning I received a message from Helen. A bear had broken into the enclosure where the hives are kept and had rummaged through the hive with the new queen. It was heartbreaking to see pictures of the hive in pieces, and to think of all the hard work destroyed. I asked Helen what the colony will do now that their hive is damaged. She said that if they do not leave, they will try to rebuild. I was struck by the tenacity of the little honey bees. Everything they do is for the perpetuation of the colony. The honey bee only thrives when the entire colony does. Their beautiful, little world is only made possible by their synchronized efforts along with the guidance of a beekeeper. And it could all be destroyed in a single incident.

Yet the rewards of beekeeping outweigh the risks. Small-scale beekeeping helps keep the honey bee population alive and healthy, and the bees keep us alive and healthy by pollinating our plants so that we can have food. Despite the risk

of periodical loss, beekeepers continue their work because they see the value in it.

This is so true of small-scale farming as well, and why community supported agriculture is so important. There is always a risk in farming, but knowing that there is a community of people who want to see the farm thrive enables farmers to take that risk each year. In many ways, the community here at Sisters Hill Farm is much like the beehive. People play many different roles, yet everyone has a vital place in the perpetuation of the farm. From volunteering with us, to participating in events such as the garlic harvest, to the smiles you bring to pick-up days, I am so encouraged by this community. Together we can make something beautiful, just like the bees and their honey.

A Note from Sister Mary Ann

As you know from a previous newsletter, Farmer Dave has been suffering with back problems for some time. He had surgery this week and is doing well. We send our best wishes and prayers to him for a speedy recovery.

The farm is doing well. We are blessed with three wonderful apprentices trained so well by Dave, who are taking over in his absence. With Dev at the helm they have taken over with great energy and enthusiasm. I am grateful. Please stop in at the farm if you have some extra time. They can always use some help.

******From FineCooking.com******

Grilled zucchini & cheese sandwiches

Ingredients

- 2 medium zucchini (10 oz.), sliced lengthwise into 1/4-inch-thick planks
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 8 thin slices sourdough bread
- 2 cups sharp Cheddar cheese, grated
- 2 medium tomatoes, thinly sliced
- 4 tsp. mayonnaise

Directions

1. Prepare a high (500°F to 600°F) gas grill fire, or heat a large grill pan. Season the zucchini with salt and pepper and grill, flipping once, until just tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove the zucchini, and reduce the heat to medium high (400°F to 475°F).
2. Assemble 4 sandwiches with the sourdough, Cheddar, tomatoes (seasoned lightly with salt), and the zucchini, layering the cheese under and over the vegetables. Spread about 1 tsp. mayonnaise on the outside of each sandwich. Grill, flipping halfway through, until the bread is toasted and the cheese is melted, about 2 minutes per side.

******From FineCooking.com******

Shaved Squash Carpaccio with Capers, Thyme, and Ricotta Salata

Ingredients

- 3 medium yellow summer squash or zucchini, or a mix (about 1 lb.)
- 1 Tbs. fresh lemon juice
- 1 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 oz. ricotta salata or Manchego
- 1 Tbs. brined capers, drained and chopped

Directions

1. Using a vegetable peeler, shave off long strips of squash, rotating the squash in your hand as you work around the seed-filled center. (Stop when it becomes difficult to shave, and discard the seedy centers.) Arrange the strips on a large platter, overlapping them slightly.
2. Drizzle with lemon juice and olive oil. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Use a vegetable peeler to shave the ricotta salata over the squash. Top with the capers, and serve.

******From EatingWell.com******

Green Bean Salad with Feta Dressing - 6 servings

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 pounds mixed green and yellow string beans, trimmed and cut into thirds
- 1/4 cup buttermilk
- 3 tablespoons crumbled feta cheese
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill or 2 teaspoons dried
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 1 scallion, cut into thirds
- 2 teaspoons cider vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1/3 cup halved and very thinly sliced red onion

Directions

1. Place a large bowl of ice water by the stove. Bring 1 inch of water to a boil in a large saucepan fitted with a steamer basket. Add beans, cover and steam until tender-crisp, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer the beans to the ice water to cool. Drain and pat dry.
2. Combine buttermilk, feta, mayonnaise, dill, parsley, scallion, vinegar, salt and pepper in a mini food processor. Pulse until almost smooth.
3. Transfer the beans to a large bowl, add onion and the dressing; toss to coat.

******From EatingWell.com******

Carrot Cake Cheese Ball

Ingredients

- 8 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese (Neufchâtel), softened
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon