



High Ground Organics Community Supported Agriculture

Week 22, August 12th and 13th, 2015

Honey Bee Update, by Keith Kimes, Kimes Apiary

Keith Kimes is a local beekeeper who keeps many of his hives on High Ground Organics' two farm properties. We know that many of you are interested in the plight of honeybees worldwide, so we asked Keith for an update on his own efforts at limiting losses in his beehives.

Last week I harvested more honey from the hives at High Ground's home farm along Harkins Slough. The Harkins Slough apiary has yielded over 500 pounds of honey this year—much more than I expected in this drought year! It is not as much as we want, but compared to last year, it is wonderful. The web store is now well stocked for those of you who want to order 1 lb or 2 lb jars.

The winter of 2014 and the beekeeping year of 2015 have been much better than the previous year. You may remember that over the winter of 2013, I lost about 80% of my bees, and the 2014 season was very poor for honey and pollen because of the severe drought and the limited number of surviving hives. It became apparent that I had to make some changes in hive management if I was to do more than catch new swarms every year and watch most of them die over the winter.

Varroa mite, a mite about the size of a pin head that lives off of bee blood, has been one of my major problems. With the mites also come a number of viral diseases that bring the hives to their knees. In 2014 I learned that a new mite treatment using formic acid had been developed and approved for use as an organic treatment. Formic acid, the same acid that gives ants their smell and spinach the slightly sour taste, is the only treatment available that can be applied while the hive is producing honey. Honey already has formic acid in it and the formic acid application does not change that value much. The acid vapor kills the mites, but it is also very hard on the bees so I closely monitor mite levels in the hives and treat with the formic acid only in those hives in which the mite population is critically high.

I also started a queen rearing program raising mite resistant queens as another cornerstone to my pest management program. The approach seems to be paying off and my overall winter losses were only 40% for 2014 compared to the 80% of 2013.

I have also found that in this drought, Harkins Slough is a much better place for the bees than Lewis Rd. The edges of the slough provide a lot of food sources for the bees through most of the year. I moved as many of the bees to Harkins Slough as I could last September. It has been very interesting to see the differences between the two locations. I only lost 26% of the hives at Harkins Slough while I lost 60% of the hives on Lewis Rd. We harvested very little honey on Lewis Road this year, having to leave what there was for the bees.

Veggie Notes, by Sarah Brewer

Storage: Everything should be refrigerated, except **tomatoes**. Always rinse produce before use.

Tomatoes are a good source of Vitamin C, which is essential for metabolic reactions in both plants and animals. Oddly enough, almost all organisms produce this substance on their own. The only species that do NOT produce Vitamin C on their own and must rely on their food sources for this vitamin are: bats, guinea pigs, capybaras, and primates including humans!

Speaking of essentials, **broccoli** and **chard** both contain a high amount of calcium, a mineral that supports the growth and structure of bones, as well as heart health and nerve communication. The problem is, these vegetables that contain a lot of calcium also contain oxalic acid, which keeps the calcium from absorbing fully in the body. This catch-22 situation can be avoided by boiling the vegetables, which releases the oxalates into the water. Steaming or fermenting are other ways to increase the absorption of calcium from these veggies.

Celery and **rainbow carrots** are always great raw in your crudite platters or in salads. "Back to school" lunches are just around the corner. These items are mainstays in the boxed lunch department, especially with a side of dressing or peanut butter.

Your **lettuce** this week will be either the super-cute single-serving **Little Gems**, or the uber-stylish **Green Oak** varieties. Be well!

Cooking Notes, by Andrew Cohen

Rainbow carrots are so pretty done up as quickles or roasted whole. They also liven up dishes when cut into thin threads or coins and used to add color and crunch to salads like the **Little Gem** salad with **Celery** Dressing. Caramelized or used as a **carrot** soup garnish they would stand out as well. **Broccoli** how I love thee. Let me count the ways; steamed, roasted with **tomato** glaze (recipe below), turned into a salad

This Week

Strawberries OR Padron Peppers

Mixed Tomatoes

Broccoli

Red Chard

Celery

Rainbow Carrots

Little Gem OR Green Oak Lettuce

Mystery

Everything is certified organic. All vegetables and fruit were grown by High Ground Organics. Note: last minute substitutions may be made

or slaw, seared in a pan or even grilled. Use brightly fruity and acidic juices-lemon, orange, pomegranate for example- as foils to this crucifer's earthiness. Fatty things like bacon or sausage are also nice. **Red chard** typically is a little more delicate than **Swiss chard**, and the stalks go well with onions, **celery**, and **carrots**. Sauté these as a mélange with plenty of garlic and wine, and then very gently cook down the leaves with the mélange of stems and mirepoix. The gentle cooking keeps the leaves tender and the flavor is lighter. Add some bread crumbs, a dollop of mustard, and grated cheese to the top and put it in a hot oven for a simple gratin. **Celery** makes for some big flavored salads, or you could make it into soup both hot and cold. Sauté with onions and a potato and purée for a non-dairy "cream of **celery**" soup, or think of **celery** as cucumber and riff on gazpacho. The **strawberries** are nice with yogurt ice cream, or try grilling them and slapping them into S'Mores for twist on a campfire favorite.

Note: We can't print them all, but Chef Andrew's recipes are always available in full at highgroundorganics.com.

Roast Broccoli with Tomato Glaze, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

Roasting the tomatoes with a little sugar intensifies the tomato flavor, and brings out their fruitiness. The glaze can be used on cauliflower, squash, fish, chicken, or pork and beef. Add a dollop to braises or a stew of squash, onions, and eggplant.

4-6 medium tomatoes, seeded, all liquid reserved, cut into 1 inch wide wedges	1 medium brown or white onion, finely diced
1 TBS fresh marjoram or oregano, finely chopped	1 small clove garlic, minced
Sugar as needed, around ½ to 1 TBS	Salt and pepper to taste
Olive oil, preferably milder and fruity tasting, as needed	Water as needed
White balsamic or cider vinegar if needed	6 cups, roughly thereabouts, broccoli florets cut into 1 to 1½ inch pieces
1 lemon, Meyer preferred, for juice	

Heat oven to 350°F. Lightly oil the tomato wedges and the season with salt and pepper, and a little sugar. Place on a sheet pan with a lip and then roast for 15-20 minutes. Check and see if the tomatoes should cook a little longer. You want the wedges dried out a little and a bit charred and colored here and there. The tomatoes should smell roasted and fruity. Remove from the sheet pan and pour the liquid into the container with the other liquid. Set the wedges aside to cool.

Heat a medium/10 inch sauté pan over medium to medium-high heat. When hot, add a little oil, heat up, and then add the onions. Cook gently until very soft and turning brown. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant and broken down.

Chop the tomato wedges into small pieces, then add all the tomatoes, including the liquid from seeding and then cooking them. Season with salt and pepper and then scatter some sugar over the contents of the pan. Add the herbs, stir in, and add a couple tablespoons of water. Cook over gentle heat, stirring occasionally with a wooden spatula to prevent scorching, and to break down the tomatoes and onions into a slightly chunky paste/jam. Add water as needed to keep things from burning and to aid in breaking down the vegetables.

Taste the glaze from time to time. It should take on a sticky, fruity, and sweet flavor with perhaps a little tartness. If the glaze tastes a bit flat, you might want to add a few drops of vinegar to help balance the flavors. You can put a little of the glaze into a small cup and drop a few drops of vinegar in and then stir it together before tasting to give you an idea of what is needed. When the glaze tastes right, if it is too wet, cook a little longer to dry it out, or add a little water to get it looser. Reserve, and keep warm without cooking it more.

To make the broccoli; when you start with the tomatoes, squeeze half the lemon juice over the broccoli and toss to coat. Allow to sit. After you are done roasting the tomato wedges, turn the oven heat to 425°F.

Twenty minutes before the glaze is done, drain the liquid from the broccoli, and then toss it with just enough olive oil to coat lightly but thoroughly over all. Season with salt and pepper and place on a foil covered sheet pan, sliced sides down. When there is around 10 minutes time left on the glaze, or when it is done if you are not sure of the timing of everything else going on, put the broccoli into the oven and roast 10 minutes. Then use tongs to turn the florets so other parts of the florets come in contact with the pan bottom for browning. Cook another 5-8 minutes, or until the broccoli is tender all the way through, and browned or even a little charred elsewhere, like the floret top. Drizzle with the juice from the other half of the lime and toss to evenly coat. Remove from the pan to a platter and use a spoon or brush to paint the florets with the glaze. Serve hot. Serves: 4

Little Gem Lettuce with Celery Dressing, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

A crisp salad with lots of crisp flavors. Serve with tuna or grilled cheese sandwiches.

6-7 cups Little Gem lettuce, washed, spun, and torn into bite-sized bits	3 carrots, preferably different colors, cut on a Ben-Riner or mandolin into thin 1½-inch long threads
¾ cup finely diced celery	¼ cup finely diced brown or white onion
1 tsp. Dijon style mustard	2 TBS white balsamic vinegar
6 TBS soft and fruity flavored olive oil	Salt and pepper to taste
½ tsp. fresh thyme, minced	1 pinch sugar

Put the vinegar, thyme, some salt and pepper, and the sugar into a non-reactive bowl. Allow to macerate for 10 minutes. Add the mustard and whisk together. Slowly drizzle in the oil in a thin steady stream, whisking hard all the while to emulsify the dressing. When all the dressing is in, taste it. It should be balanced and not overly tart. If it is still quite tart, add more oil.

Once the dressing is made, add the celery and onions and mix well to combine all the ingredients. Wait 10 minutes, then taste the dressing for balance. You may wish to add a little more sugar or oil as the celery can taste salty on its own.

To serve; lightly dress the lettuce with just enough dressing to moisten and distribute the lettuce over 4 plates. Put the carrot threads into the lettuce bowl and rub the threads around in the bowl to pick up a little dressing. Scatter the threads over the salads. Use a spoon to dollops blobs of dressing over the salads, and scatter with some roasted sunflower seeds if you wish. Serve cold. Serves: 4