

AOVS URBAN FARM NEWSLETTER



MAY 2019
ISSUE 10

Farm Update MAY

We are grateful for the sunshine this month. The spells of dry weather have given us the opportunity to flip beds of spring veggies that have run their course (ex: radishes) to summer crops (ex: peppers). We have also added 7 more beds to the growing space on the farm where we will plant purple hull peas this week.

We have also been making a lot of headway in the Wellness Garden at the north end of the Ball Rd property. Last week, we purchased 50 pollinator plants from the Lichterman Nature Center to attract birds, bees, and butterflies. The flower beds underneath the 16 newly planted trees are almost ready to be planted to be seeded with wildflowers.

DID YOU KNOW?

In order to produce 1lb of honey, hive worker bees will have flown a collective 55,000 miles and gathered pollen from 2,000,000 flowers.



From left to right: Sylvester Flowers, Jesse Jenkins, Becca Hart, and Garth Knutson at the Bemis Honey Bee Farm to pick up nearly 15,000 bees for the farm.

Bees

At the end of April, a group of us traveled to Little Rock, AR, to pick up more bees for the farm so we now host two beehives in the field.

Each hive is composed of three types of bees. Worker bees only live for 20-30 days and spend their time constructing comb, guarding the hive, taking care of baby bees, and foraging. Drone bees are for mating only and die shortly thereafter. The third type of bee is of course the queen, but each hive only has one. She lays up to 1,500 eggs a day and lives anywhere from 3 to 7 years.

Bees usually only forage in an area around two miles from the beehive which is why we try to provide lots of blooms on the farm. When a worker bee has identified food (pollen and nectar from flowers), they notify the others about the location. The scout worker bee does a "bee dance" to communicate the distance of the food from the hive as well as the angle of the food to the sun. Unfortunately, things like pesticides can impair a bee's communication abilities- just another reason we don't use chemicals on the AOVs Urban Farm.



Featured Vegetable

KALE



You may think of kale as an unfamiliar vegetable, but farmers and homesteaders have been growing kale in the south for a hundred years. Kale is in the same family as cabbage and collards, and can be used very similarly, but does not need to cook nearly as long.

Previous to the kale boom, Pizza Hut had been the largest kale customer because they used this green to garnish their salad bars. Now, however, all sort of people seem to be excited about kale. And in fact, kale is among the most nutrient-dense foods on the planet.

Kale is loaded with vitamin C (good for your immunity), vitamin K (important for bone and heart health), and can help lower cholesterol. But if you are taking a blood thinner, talk to your doctor before going kale crazy!

Featured Recipe

KALE STUFFED CORNBREAD

I use Bob's Red Mill Cornbread Mix for this recipe. Affordable and easily found at area grocery stores, like CashSaver.

- 1 package Bob's Red Mill Cornbread Mix
- 2 cups water
- 1/3 cup melted butter or vegetable oil
- 2 large eggs
- 2 bunch AOVs Urban Farm kale, washed and dried

Preheat oven to 350. De-stem kale and finely chop. Mix first four ingredients in a large bowl until wet; add in chopped kale. Spread in greased cast iron skillet and bake for 25 to 30 minutes. Use a clean knife to test if done; if you see batter on knife, keep baking a few more minutes until the test knife comes out clean.

Yum yum gimme some! -Dusty

Faron Levesque, Community Kitchen Coordinator



Questions about the AOVs Urban Farm?

Contact Becca Hart, Community Garden Organizer
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Memphis Tilth has partnered with AOVs to build an urban farm and garden project in an effort to serve, educate, and empower AOVs residents. Memphis Tilth is a nonprofit collective housing like-missioned initiatives for land, food, people, and place.
memphistolth.org

