



July 31, 2013 —

**Buzz**

There are certain moments on the farm when it feels like everything is right with the world. Even when life generally feels more difficult than not, during these certain moments you get quiet, and see some piece of the farm working, and it just feels like everything is as it should be.

One of these moments is watching the pollinators. When you walk up to a great bee plant like lavender or buckwheat or flowering cilantro, at first you just see a few insects cruising from flower to flower. But the longer you look, the more of them you see, until you realize that the whole plant—or whole row or field—is literally swarming with bees. You can hear their collective buzz, the sound of wingbeats and pollen shaking.

They seem tireless, these bees, moving constantly from one flower to the next, collecting pollen like maniacs and never stopping for a breather. Maybe that's why they don't live long; honeybee workers last just 6 weeks during the summer season (but their worth ethic is inspirational nonetheless).

Of course, it's not just honeybees doing all the heavy lifting with pollination. Butterflies, moths, wasps, ants, flies and all sorts of native bees

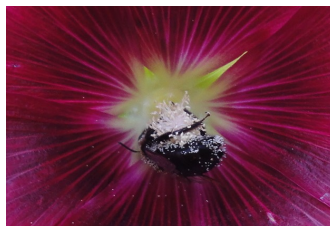
pollinate crops and native plants alike, each with their own niche and habitat needs.

They work for good reason, to stockpile pollen and nectar for food. But even though the bees are in it for themselves, they provide us with a service that is virtually invaluable. As they forage they're distributing pollen from one flower to the next, mixing up the crop's gene pool and making fruit and seed production possible.

Some parts of China experienced a honeybee die-off in the 80's, which forced them to pollinate by hand. This method is so much slower and more costly, it's estimated that it would cost the US \$90 billion each year to hire human pollinators. With the tight profit margins of most small farms, losing the bees is not an option.

Colony Collapse Disorder hit the headlines big time a few years ago, but soon faded to back page news. The saga continues though; CCD has wiped out about 10 million beehives over the past 6 years. Scientists are narrowing in on a cause for this mysterious phenomenon, and now suspect that the cocktail of agricultural chemicals used in industrial farming weaken the bees, making them more susceptible to parasites and disease, and ultimately hive collapse.

Maybe it's so satisfying to watch pollinators because we know that our small, chemical-free farms provide some hope for the bees. But it also runs deeper, the feeling of playing a role in the farm ecosystem where the pollinators stay busy at their work, seeds grow into plants, earthworms cruise the compost piles, microbes multiply in the soil, and the farmer tries to keep them all happy.



A bee digging into a hollyhock flower at the Dawn Garden

*Full Share:*

- Sunflower Sprouts
- Blueberries
- Spring Mix
- Kale
- Peaches
- Summer Squash
- Onions
- Apples
- Carrots

*Half Share:*

- Summer Squash
- Peaches
- Onions
- Basil
- Garlic
- Cabbage

*What Grows Where:*

**DAWN GARDENS**

summer squash, kale, basil, apples, garlic

**GRASSFED GARDENS**

sunflower sprouts, cabbage, summer squash

**SIERRA VALLEY FARMS**

spring mix, carrots

**GREEN CEDAR FARM**

blueberries, peaches

**THE STUMP FARM**

onions

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*Bread Share Flavor:*

**Mushroom and Cheese**

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## Caramelized Onions

Caramelized onions add a sweet and savory flavor to any dish they top. They go great on pizza, grilled cheese sandwiches, tacos, grilled chicken... the list goes on. The trick to this one is patience; the long, low-heat cooking process makes for soft, amber colored onions with an intense flavor.

### INGREDIENTS

2 or more onions      Oil      Salt

### DIRECTIONS

1. After slicing the onions in half, cut out the root end, so that all the layers easily separate from one another. Then cut thin, even lengthwise slices.
2. Start with a hot, thick-bottomed pan. Add enough fat to give the onions a glossy coat. Use any kind of fat you'd like: olive oil, bacon fat, butter. Since butter browns easily, though, it's a good idea to blend it with oil. Once the fat is hot and shimmering, stir in the onions and a good pinch of salt.
3. As the onions sweat, they soften and release water. You can see the steam rise from the pan. As long as you are stirring frequently, you can keep the heat on medium. Once they are sweated (after about 5 minutes), turn the heat low and stir occasionally. If the pan gets dry, add a little more oil. After almost 10 minutes, you can see the first hints of amber color.
4. If brown bits start to form, deglaze the pan. Do this only when the onions are well-sweated—before that, you want to focus on getting liquid out, rather than adding it back in. Pour in a tablespoon or so of broth, water, wine, or a few drops of vinegar and loosen the bits from the bottom of the pan. You can turn the heat up momentarily to encourage the liquid to evaporate. The flavorful brown bits, now dissolved, will get soaked up by the onions.
5. Remove your onions from heat when they reach the desired color, between 30 and 45 minutes.



Source: [www.seriousseats.com](http://www.seriousseats.com)

## CROP Updates

As we round the bend into August we're starting to transition to some more hefty crops. We'll soon have some of the hotter season produce coming in... tomatoes and blackberries, anyone?

**Potatoes** — We thought the first potatoes were going to be ready from Grassfed Gardens this week, but we were jumping the gun. Maybe next week, gophers willing.

**Apples** — We have some early apples from the Dawn in this week's full shares. It's hard to believe that it's apple season already!

### Wash It!

All of our produce is fresh off the farm. Please wash before using.

## PEACH PANCAKES!

If you're not hip to this one yet, take note: peaches are the best thing that ever happened to your pancake breakfast. If your pinched for time just throw cubed peaches into pancake batter from a mix, but if you have a relaxed Saturday morning to spare, try out this recipe from scratch.



### Ingredients

2 eggs, at room temperature	1 teaspoon kosher salt
2 ½ cups buttermilk, at room temp	¼ teaspoon cinnamon
4 tablespoons oil	¼ teaspoon ginger
2 ½ cups flour	Pinch nutmeg
2 tablespoons sugar	Pinch ground cloves
2 teaspoons baking powder	2 cups ripe, peeled, diced peaches
1 teaspoon baking soda	

### Directions

Blend egg, milk and oil. In a separate bowl blend dry ingredients together. Add dry ingredients to wet ingredients and stir until just combined. Gently fold in peaches. Let sit 5 minutes. Batter will be lumpy. Heat griddle until drops of water sizzle. Grease lightly if needed. Drop large spoonfuls of batter onto hot grill and smooth out slightly. Flip pancakes once pancakes puff and bubbles have formed, but before bubbles break. Turn and brown on the other side, pressing down gently to make sure batter cooks evenly around the fruit. Serve immediately with powdered sugar, butter, warm syrup, peach butter, or topping of your choice.

Source: [likemotherlikedughters.com](http://likemotherlikedughters.com)