




GARDEN GAZETTE

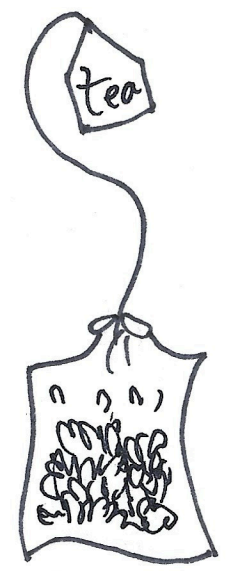
Today's Topic: Medicinal Herbs

Monday, June 24



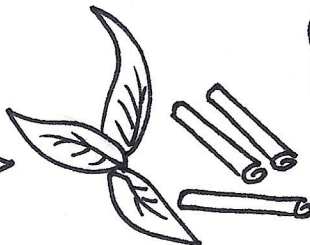
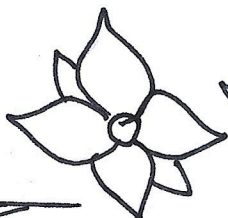
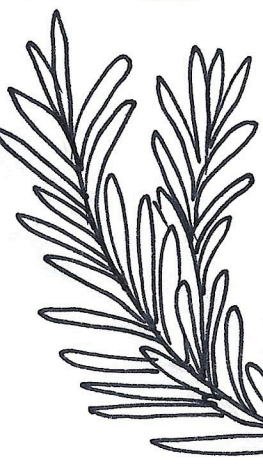
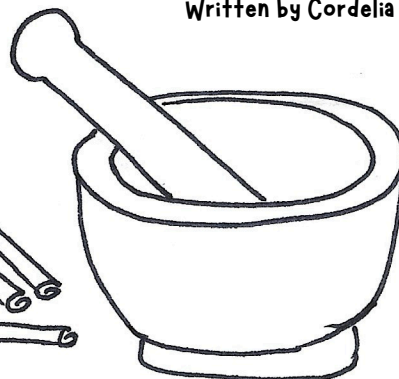
Our farmer today was Sasha Sigetic! Sasha owns a farm named the Black Locust Livestock and Herbal located in Meigs county close to the town of Snowville. She raises milk and meat goats, has chickens and grows a small garden for medicinal herbs and vegetables. She runs a small raw milk herd share, which is where folks can buy into her herd and then get a monthly share of the goat milk they produce. She also sells several herbal products through word of mouth or posts on social media. She can be found here on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/blacklocustlivestockandherbal/>



Sasha has a Permaculture Design Certificate. According to the website Midwest Permaculture says permaculture is a "training that provides a clear understanding of how we as humans can live fully and abundantly well, for ourselves and for others, while also leaving the planet in better condition BECAUSE we were here on it." Sasha has a variety of methods she uses to keep her farm as sustainable as possible. Her farm runs on water catchment, she mulches with cardboard and wood chips to keep weeds down, adds carbon to her soil, uses her composted goat manure in her gardens, and makes sure to use no harsh chemicals on her plants and crops. Sasha also leaves a lot of forest and open space on her farm and her goats help her get rid of all her invasive plants such as autumn olive, multiflora rose, and honeysuckle.

Written by Cordelia Lockard



Fun Facts from Sasha

If you were an animal or insect in a garden or farm, what would you be?

A wild bird because it would be really cool to fly over the whole farm, eat bugs and seeds, and raise chicks there.

Sasha knew she wanted to be a farmer when she was 25 and she took the Permaculture Design Course and realized she could help others and herself by growing healthy foods.

What is something that you would like kids to know about when it comes to plants or just farming in general?

Two important things:

1. Eat healthy and try medicinal herbs first and you will become healthier.
2. You do not have to grow up being a farmer to become a farmer.

Recipes from Today

Basil Lime Sugar Cookies

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- zest from one lime
- 3 tbsp very finely chopped fresh basil leaves
- 1 3/4 cup all purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt

Instructions

1. Pre-heat the oven to 375 and line cookie sheets with a silicone mat or parchment paper.
2. In a stand mixer (or hand-held mixer) cream together the butter and sugars until light and fluffy.
3. Mix in the egg, vanilla, zest, and basil. Mix together until fully combined.
4. In a separate bowl sift together the flour, baking soda, and salt. Then mix into the butter mixture until combined.
5. Scoop cookie dough using a 2" cookie scoop. Place dough balls about 1 inch apart on the cookie sheets.
6. Bake 8 to 12 minutes, depending on the size of your cookies/oven.
7. Allow to cool on a cooling rack for a few minutes

CFI Discovery Kitchen Fresh Tomato Salsa

Ingredients

- 3 fresh tomatoes, diced
- 1/2 red onion, diced
- 1 jalapeno pepper, minced (or cayenne pepper, to taste)
- 1 clove fresh minced garlic
- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup cilantro (optional)
- salt and pepper to taste
- pinch of sugar (optional)
- 1 pinch dried oregano (optional)
- 1 pinch ground cumin (optional)

Instructions

1. Combine tomato, onion, chili pepper, and garlic in a bowl. If you have a food processor and prefer a smoother salsa, you can pulse these ingredients in a food processor a few times.
2. Add vinegar, cilantro if using, salt and pepper, sugar if using, and oregano/cumin if using. Taste and adjust salt/sugar/vinegar/heat. Allow the salsa to sit for an hour (room temperature or chilled) for these flavors to combine.
3. Serve with chips, tacos, eggs, beans, roasted veggies, or pretty much anything! The salsa will keep refrigerated for up to 5 days.

Suggestion: Try this salsa with locally made Shagbark chips!



We look forward to seeing all of the campers again tomorrow!!!



GARDEN GAZETTE

Today's Topic: **Beekeeping & Pollinators**

Tuesday, June 25

Our farmer of the day is Tobey Witschey! She is a local beekeeper who owns a farm on Locust Lane in Athens, Ohio. With anywhere from 10 to 20 hives at a time, Tobey and her hardworking bees create a variety of products that she sells mainly through social media, Whites Mill, and local craft fairs. These products include: honey, beeswax lip balms, soaps and is now trying out a new item- comb honey! Comb honey is honey that is straight from the hive, still in its honeycomb instead of in a jar.

Tobey harvests honey around four times a year to allow for the different flavors in honey, because what bees have been eating changes the flavor and color of the honey! For example, in the spring, the honey is a light color with a wildflower flavor. In the summer, the honey has a red and robust (this means strong) flavor made from Tulip Poplar trees. Tobey's bees forage up to two to three miles! She also grows blueberry bushes and hot pepper plants and uses these to infuse some of the honey.

Tobey is environmentally friendly by making sure that she uses no harsh chemicals. This way her bees can stay healthy while also being considerate to the environment around her. She uses natural methods and is always cautious with what she uses. All her hives are honey bees, but Tobey also tries to attract some other pollinators as well by growing native plants to Ohio, like milkweed, culver root and tulip poplars. These plants help to keep all her pollinator friends happy and well fed!

Artwork by Norah House

Written by Cordelia Lockard

Fun Facts from Tobey

What is something you want kids to know about bees and pollinators?

Sometimes people are afraid of bees because they do not know about them. They also won't try things like fruits or vegetables for the same reason. I want kids to be willing to try to not be afraid to try new things.

What is the hardest thing about being a farmer?

The unpredictable weather.

Tobey grew up on a dairy farm and always knew she wanted a small-scale farm. And she has chickens!

Today's Recipe

Zucchini Muffins

Ingredients

- 1 cup all purpose flour
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 baking soda
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 eggs, whisked
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/3 cup vegetable or canola oil
- 2/3 cup honey or agave nectar
- 1 1/2 cups zucchini, shredded (about 2 small zucchini)

Instructions

1. Pre-heat the oven to 350.
2. Place the first 6 ingredients in a large bowl and whisk to combine.
3. Place the remaining ingredients in a separate bowl and whisk to combine.
4. Pour the wet ingredients into the flour mixture and stir just until the ingredients are combined.
5. Pour the zucchini mixture into large or small muffin cups.
6. Bake 15 minutes for small muffins and 20 minutes for large ones.
7. Cool and serve.

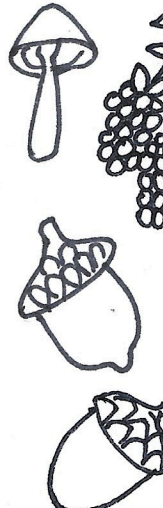




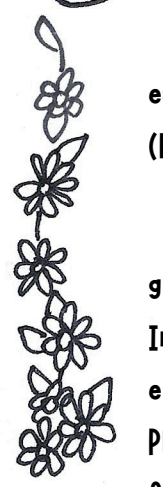
GARDEN GAZETTE

Today's Topic: Native Plants & Trees

Wednesday, June 26



Our farmer of the day is Weston Lombard! Weston owns a farm/business in Dover Township named Solid Ground Farm located at 13262 Liars Corner Rd. He has 17 acres there. At Solid Ground Farm, Weston grows all kinds of native and naturalizing fruit and nut trees. According to the website Huron River Watershed Council, "The term "naturalized" is used in botany to refer to plants that have successfully established and reproduced in a new environment." The farm has a special interest in mulberries. The farm also grows vegetables, mushrooms and raises a flock of chickens!



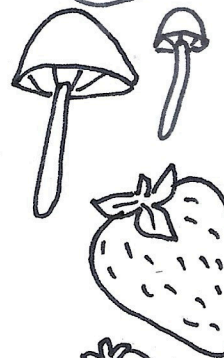
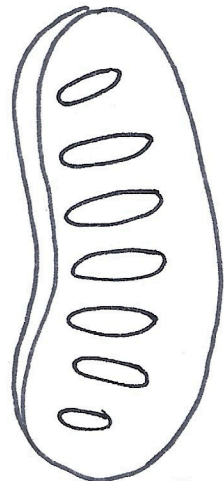
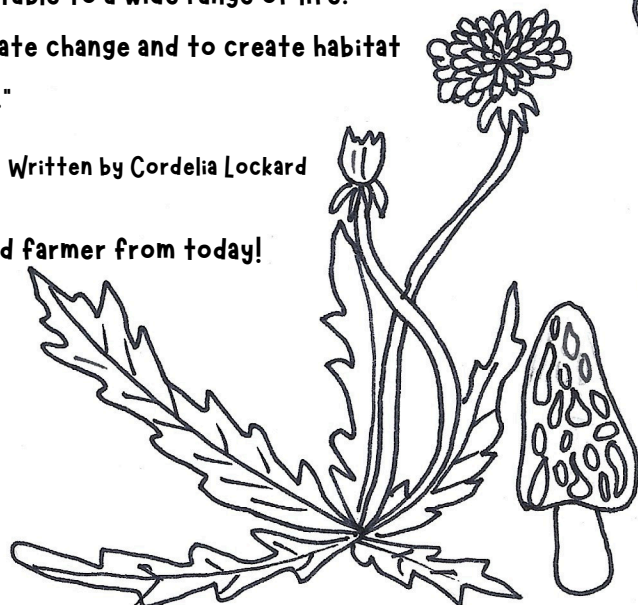
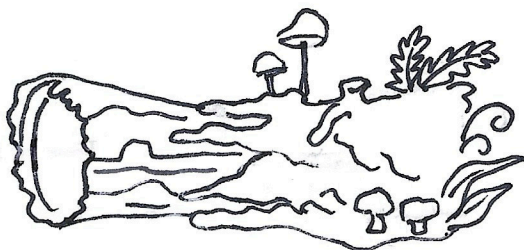
Weston occasionally sells produce at a stand at his farm. But mostly the produce is eaten by participants in the farm programs and, also by campers at weekly RAW camps (Rising Appalachian Warriors) and the Solid Ground School.

Weston is passionate about agroforestry and forest gardening. He believes "that growing relationships with trees can provide a lot of benefit to us in our environment. In addition to food, fuel, building and craft materials, trees provide a multitude of ecosystem services that make the environment hospitable to a wide range of life. Planting trees is one of the best ways to combat climate change and to create habitat for other life and we are into planting trees full time."

Illustrations by Norah House

Written by Cordelia Lockard

Flip to the back for information about our second farmer from today!



Today we learned from two farmers!

Our second farmer today was Corey Beck, an Associate Professor of Instruction at Ohio University, where he teaches Chemistry classes to 250 students at a time! He's always been passionate about blending the worlds of science, art, and sports in his life. He completed a chemistry degree with a minor in mathematics at Metro State University in Denver in 2004, and a PhD from Ohio State in ice chemistry in 2012. He has also worked as a fuels chemist for the Department of Defense. There, he got to work on several satellite launches, including the notable Titan IV rocket. He also enjoys art and loves to combine science, art, and food to show students the fun side of chemistry.

Corey helped us do an experiment today where we learned about pH. Red cabbage can be used as a natural pH indicator due to the presence of anthocyanins, which are pigments that change color based on the acidity or alkalinity of a solution. When red cabbage is boiled, the anthocyanins are extracted into the water, creating a pH-sensitive indicator solution. This solution changes color in response to different pH levels: it turns red in acidic environments, purplish in neutral conditions, and green to yellow in alkaline settings. This makes red cabbage an excellent and accessible tool for conducting simple pH tests in educational and home experiments.

We used red cabbage juice to test the relative pH of various common household foods. We also allowed the students to create their own experiments by using materials they found in the garden. Knowing the pH of garden soil is crucial for successful gardening because it directly affects the availability of nutrients to plants and the overall health of the soil ecosystem. Soil pH determines how well plants can absorb essential nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. Most plants thrive in slightly acidic to neutral soil (pH 6.0–7.0). If the soil is too acidic or too alkaline, nutrient uptake is hindered, leading to poor plant growth and reduced yields. Regularly testing soil pH allows gardeners to amend the soil appropriately, ensuring optimal growing conditions and promoting a healthy, productive garden.

Recipe of the Day: Simple Smoothies

Ingredients (per serving)

- 1/2 cup mixed berries
- 3/4 – 1 cup plain or vanilla yogurt
- honey to taste (optional)

Today we used yogurt from Snowville Creamery, blackberries from the Athens Farmers' Market, and blueberries from the OU student farm! The Farmers' Market and Chesterhill Produce Auction are two great sources of locally-sourced foods that support farms in our area.

Directions:

1. Combine ingredients in a blender and blend to desired texture.

Suggestions:

1. Experiment with your smoothie ingredients! Bananas and berries are particularly popular with kids, but you can use any fruits you enjoy.
2. Some people like to add juices or other liquids for a thinner smoothie texture.
3. You can even add greens and protein sources! Some of our campers tried kale, harvested from the school garden, in their smoothies today.





GARDEN GAZETTE

Today's Topics: Seeds and Sustainable Farming

Thursday, June 27

Campers enjoyed visits from two farmers today! Our first farmer is Chris Monday. Chris's farm, Veggie Vision Farms, is located just outside of town but in city limits, along the bike path at 10011 Armitage Rd. He grows a variety of veggies organically. Some of his crops include snap peas, potatoes, corn, peppers, carrots, berries, and herbs. Chris uses no-till/low till techniques and rebuilds the soil using his own garden debris and compost from other sources. He makes sure not to only organic, safe products for pest control, and says he is toward finding the right balance without having to rely on outside products. Chris currently sells bags of produce to customers weekly. Chris shared some fun facts:

If Chris could be an insect or an animal in a garden or farm, he would like to be a toad!

Chris says the hardest things about being a farmer are crop failure and lack of funds for needed materials.

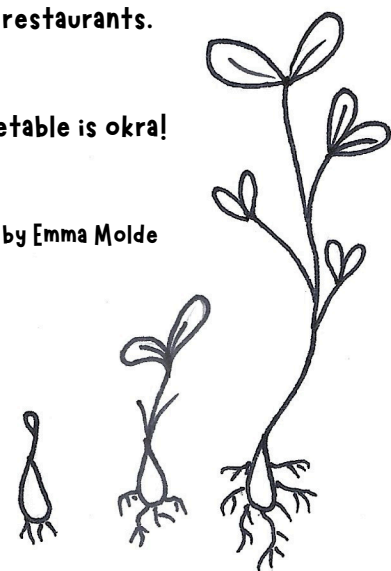
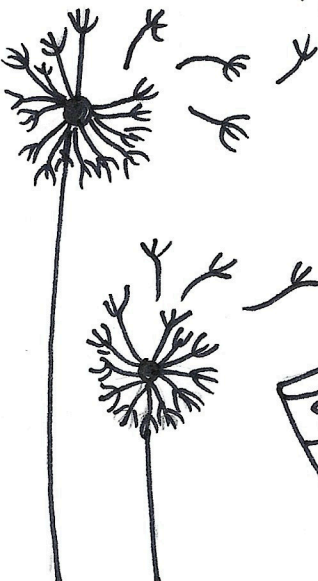
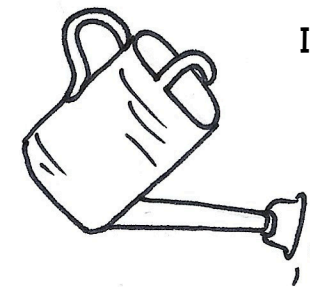
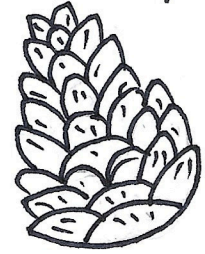
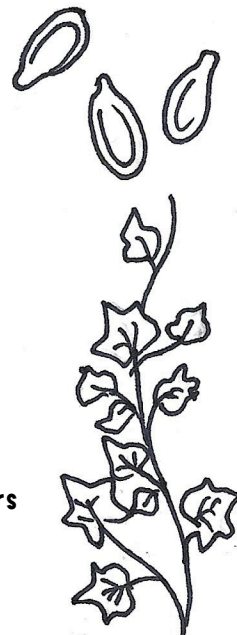
Our second farmer is Rhonda Clark of Blackberry Sage Farm in Amesville. She specializes in growing various veggies, berries, and fruits. She uses sustainable agriculture techniques like seed saving and low mechanization! Along with selling to AFM she also sells to Avalanche Pizza, the Village Bakery, and a few other restaurants. Here are some fun facts Rhonda shared:

Rhonda knew she wanted to be a farmer when she was working at Rural Action and learned that farmers are heroes.

Rhonda's favorite vegetable is okra!

Written by Emma Molde

Illustrations by Norah House



Today's Recipe: Trail Mix Buffet

Ingredients:

- Raisins
- Banana Chips
- Dried Cranberries
- Rolled Oats
- Almond Slices
- Pumpkin Seeds
- Sunflower Seeds
- Chocolate Chips



Directions:

1. Mix and Enjoy!!

Garden Trivia!

How are
cranberries
harvested?

Fill in the blank:
Raisins are dried

Where do oats
come from?

What do plants
take out of the
air?

Do bananas grow in
Ohio?

What do plants
release into the
air?

What kind of plant
does chocolate
come from?

What kind of plant
do almonds come
from?





GARDEN GAZETTE

Today's Topic: OU Student Farm, flowers, soil

Friday, June 28

Campers got to learn from three farmers on our last day of camp.

Our first farmer of the day was Tony Noble. He runs the Ohio University Student Farm, located at Ohio University in Athens. They sell their crops to five restaurants, one grocery store, and to food services on campus. They also sell food at a market on campus for staff and students. They keep the farm sustainable and environmentally friendly by following USDA organic standards. Farm staff care a lot about the environment and neighbors, so they work hard to keep it beneficial for people and wildlife. Tony has learned many techniques over his years as a farmer. He likes to experiment and play to understand the dynamics of the farm and says the farm workers aren't afraid to make mistakes. Here are some fun facts from Tony:

Tony thinks the best thing about being a farmer is being outside most of the time.

He also thinks the hardest thing about being a farmer is being outside most of the time.

If he could be any type of animal or insect in a garden or farm, Tony would choose to be a cat.

Tony would like kids to know that the pay isn't high, but there are many perks to being a farmer. Being able to grow special things that are not available elsewhere is great. He is much healthier than if he worked in an office.

Illustrations by Norah House

Interviews written by Maggie Guseman



Our second farmer of the day was Margaret Hoff! The name of her farm is The Flowering Farm. They are located on McDougal Rd, in between Athens and Amesville. She sells her flowers in a CSA or Community Supported Agriculture -- this basically means that she sells her flowers to people who sign up to get a weekly or biweekly bouquet for the summer.

They work very hard to make sure that they are as environmentally friendly as possible. They only sell flowers in the summer, so that they do not use plastic for continuing the growing season like a lot of flower farmers do. They also do not use plastic for weed control. Instead, they use a lot of mulch, including leaves and wood chips. They make the wood chips themselves out of an invasive plant, Autumn Olive. This way, they eliminate the invasive while creating a soil-enhancing mulch for the farm. To start seeds in the winter, they use the Winter Sowing method, which reuses plastic 1 gallon jugs. When they pick flowers, they use buckets that are also reused buckets from a local floral supplier. Also, they only use organic fertilizer and organic bug control (if absolutely necessary). They have goats and chickens which help make compost and fertilizer. They also use a lot of native plants in their bouquets in order to help the pollinators and the whole ecosystem. Margaret says being a farmer is great, and it is really fun to do with a family. Her daughter helps in the garden and she also helps make bouquets -- she is 13 years old and has been helping Margaret make bouquets since she was 10. They have a lot of fun doing it together. Here's a fun fact from Margaret:

If she could be any animal, she would be a bird or butterfly on the farm to be able to see what the flowers look like from above. Her favorite flower is the orange Butterfly Weed that grows in fields this time of year -- the monarchs use it because it is a milkweed, and all kinds of pollinators love it!

Our third and final farmer was Gina Scarano. Her farm is named Farm Star because they think farmers are as cool as rock stars. It is located in northern Meigs county. They sell the grow garlic for sale, and they also produce a wide variety of vegetables for themselves to eat throughout the year. They sell their products to Village bakery. They care deeply about the earth and the humans plants and animals, so they don't use any chemicals in their farming practices. They use Permaculture principles, no-till methods, microbiology and the soil food web. They make their own compost and then they use that to make compost extracts and teas to apply to the soil. The teas and extracts help the soil feed the plants. She also uses a microscope to examine or look at the soil to make sure there are enough beneficial (that means good) microbes to help protect the plants from pest, diseases, drought, and flooding. Here are some fun facts from Gina:

If she could be an animal or insect in a garden or farm, she would be a monarch butterfly.

She would like kids to know that we can use biology to help us grow food and stop using chemicals and other bad farming practices



Camp Staff

- Molly Gassaway – Director, CFI Director of Garden Programs**
- Mary Jo Starkey – Teacher at East Elementary**
- Michelle Chapman – Teacher at Morrison Gordon Elementary**
- Theresa House – Teacher at East Elementary**
- Lucy Peloso – CFI Garden Education Coordinator, COMCorps**
- Sam Mcavoy – AAFN Summer Cohort AmeriCorps**
- Sheridan Boyd – CFI Intern**

Garden Education Mentors (GEMS)

- Claire Franz – AHS**
- Maggie Guseman – TPIS**
- Norah House – AMS**
- Cordelia Lockard – TPIS**
- Emma Molde – AHS**

Quotes from Campers

What was your favorite thing about Garden Camp?

- "Learning about honeybees" – Quay**
- "Making the pots" – Sutton**
- "The science experiment" – Talia**
- "Snack time" – Amelia**
- "Spending time with my friends" – Kaia**

What did you learn at Garden Camp?

- "Squirrels can die from a fox" – Quay**
- "Only girl bees can sting" – Sutton**
- "A loofah sponge is a thing" – Talia**
- "About native and non-native plants" – Amelia**
- "How bees get pollen from plants. And nectar" – Kaia**

Family Meal Information

Food for today's family meal was obtained locally from several sources and community partners.

Salad greens were sourced from the Athens Farmers' Market. Campers helped prepare the greens and dressing, which followed the recipe below.

Sandwich ingredients are from Bagel Street Deli, which uses locally-sourced ingredients whenever possible.

Focaccia bread for the sandwiches came from Jackie O's Bakeshop.

Purple Chopstix made us amazing carrot cake cupcakes – an opportunity to use homegrown vegetables in a dessert!



Today's Recipes

Simple Salad Dressing

Ingredients (for 1 1/4 cups dressing) :

- 1/2 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 3/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt, to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Directions:

Add all ingredients to a jar with a tight-fitting lid. Shake until the mixture is creamy and emulsified (about 1 minute). Store in the fridge for up to four days. If the oil solidifies, let it sit at room temp for a few minutes, then shake again until combined.

Hummus and Cucumber Crunch

June is Ohio Cucumber Crunch Month! CC is a celebration of locally grown seasonal summer produce. The cucumbers campers crunched on today came from the Chesterhill Produce Auction, a food hub operated by Rural Action in Morgan County.

Our Funders

This camp was made possible by generous grants from North Central SARE, the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation, the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and the Wildflower Legacy Foundation.



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