

Farmer's Choice

organic food for kids,
fundraising for schools



27th April 2009



KID'S CORNER

Just bee-cause

Want to save the world? Little things always make a difference. Here are a couple of things you can do to help bees start buzzing again!

1. Simply plant some bee-friendly lavender or rosemary in your garden, or in a window box. Get the seeds from a garden centre, or online. Place them in a pot of organic soil, cover with more soil, then water and let the sun help them grow.

2. Visit the BBC's website: www.bbc.co.uk. Now, find the search bar and type in 'Blue Peter Bee Café'. They'll tell you how to build your very own 'Bee Café', and, you may even be able to snap up one of their free packs of bee-friendly seeds.

DID YOU KNOW?

Bees have five eyes!

We need bees, not bees in our bonnets!

Have you been in tune with the latest buzz about honeybees?

Last year, Britain lost a third of its bees. Since the 1970s, Britain's bee population has plummeted by 60%. Beekeepers are keeping their ears to the hive to see what this year will bring.

Why are we all so keen on these bees? For a start, bees help farmers with their crops. Without bees taking pollen from one apple tree to another, you wouldn't get any apples.

In Europe, honey bees are the no. 1 pollinator of fruits and vegetables. They help produce over 90 crops. Apples, pears, plums, berries, onions, cauliflower, nuts, rapeseed, and even cotton are produced thanks to the honeybee.

Some of the bad guys suspected of killing off some of our bees are chemicals sprayed on crops - these chemicals are called pesticides. Farmers use them to get rid of bugs that eat the fruits and veggies they grow. But, organic farmers don't use these chemicals. Instead, they distract veggie-munching bugs by planting other things they like to munch on.

Our Herefordshire carrot grower Colin Andrews, of course, doesn't use pesticides. He uses clover instead. The luscious green stuff is great for carrots - and it just so happens to be a marvellous magnet for bees!

To thank Colin for planting meadows of clover, his bumblebees, in turn, act as farmhands - helping him pollinate his carrot crop each spring. So, he breaks his back to keep them alive and well!

We need to do our part to keep the environment in which we and bees live in top notch condition. Orlando Clarke, who keeps bees on the tops of buildings in London, says: "Bees act as a barometer for the general health of the planet." There are a few things you can do to help. Have a look in the Kid's Corner for ideas...

Abel & Cole
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This week's bags...

Vegetable

Green Lettuce
Portobello mushrooms
Potatoes
Spring Onions
Tomatoes

Fruit & Veg

Cauliflower
Mango
Plums
Potatoes
White Onions

Fruit

Apples
Mango
Oranges
Plums

Please note that the planned bag contents shown may vary through the week due to unforeseen changes in weather and availability. If we do have to change the contents we will replace with something else.

This week's recipes...



Baked Chicken with Caramelised Onions and Black Olives

It's a light meal with salad, or as a filling meal with rice and steamed vegetables, for 4.

1 chicken (1.5-2kg), cut into quarters (or enough chicken pieces for 4 people)
1 teaspoon each ground cumin and paprika
½ teaspoon each salt and turmeric
60ml olive oil
4 or more white onions, thinly sliced
2 heaping teaspoons honey
400ml white wine (or chicken stock)
4 medium garlic cloves, peeled
1 large handful pitted black olives, chopped

Combine the cumin, salt, paprika, and turmeric; sprinkle over both sides of chicken and set aside. Heat half of the oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat; add the onions, reduce the heat to low, and cook until golden, about 20 minutes. Add the honey and cook 10 minutes more. Spread onions in a medium baking dish. Preheat oven to 180C/350F/gas4. Heat remaining oil in the same frying pan over medium-high heat. In batches, brown the chicken for 5 minutes per side. Arrange atop the onions. Add the wine or stock to the frying pan and reduce by 1/3 over high heat. Pour over the chicken and tuck the garlic between the pieces. Cover the

baking dish with foil and bake 30 minutes. Uncover, sprinkle with olives, baste the chicken and bake uncovered until tender, about 30 minutes more. Serve with pan juices.

French Toast & Apple Bake

A brilliantly indulgent breakfast that you prepare in the evening, and then bake the next morning. Enjoy as is, or top with maple syrup, fruit puree, or jam. Serves 4-6

400g wholemeal bread (about ½ large loaf), cut into bite-sized chunks
200g cold cream cheese, cut into chunks
3 apples, chopped or grated
1 heaped teaspoon ground cinnamon
8 eggs
200ml single cream
3 tablespoons unsalted butter/coconut oil, melted
4 tablespoons maple syrup

Grease a large baking dish with oil or butter. Spread half of the bread in the bottom, and plop the cream cheese on top. Sprinkle with the apples, cinnamon, and then the rest of the bread. In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, cream, butter and maple syrup until blended. Pour the mixture over the bread. Cover with cling film, and press down so the bread gets soaked. Chill in the fridge overnight. In the morning, remove the cling film, and preheat the oven to 170C/325F/gas3. Bake 50 minutes. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.
* You can prepare and bake it in the morning if needed - just let the bread soak up the egg mixture.