

Welcome to winter!  
What do you have planned for Harvest of the Month?

# ILLINOIS HARVEST OF THE MONTH



## Hello Harvest of the Month Participants!

This is the January issue of IL Harvest of the Month Tips with featured recipes and activities for all sites participating in our programs and for our partners who share our programming.

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## Index

1. A note from Diane
2. Survey Alert!
3. The 411 Call Schedule
4. Program Tips & Information
5. Recipe of the Month
6. Fun Facts
7. Nutrition Facts



### Don't get snowed-in! Continue to focus on local foods.

Winter procurement can lead to continued educational opportunities and local on the tray when you share Illinois foods that are often overlooked. With fresh and storage crops now depleted, why not promote local [honey](#), [dairy](#), or [grains](#) on your menu or as a feature in your garden program? Use the winter season to share, promote, and educate your kids about lesser-known local foods!

As I watch the snow fly outside of my window, my thoughts drift to classic wintertime foods and beverages. Being a hot tea fan, I've chosen local honey- liquid sunshine in a bottle for our Harvest focus in January. Local honey taste tests can be a fun and economical way to educate kids about how honey is made and where honey comes from. Inexpensive, plain saltines or bite-sized pieces of bread will become the perfect vehicle to excite and educate your eaters about local foods.

Honey vinaigrette, dressings, and glazes are the easiest way to add local honey to your menus and recipes. By incorporating local honey into a dressing or glaze you can boost flavor and add interest to the most common of foods. Scroll down to find our amazingly easy recipe for a tasty honey glaze and a honey dressing for cold veggie salads!

Yogurt and honey were made to go together! Try a local [yogurt parfait](#) with local honey for a sweet breakfast surprise. Honey is versatile and has no expiration date! Did you know while excavating Egypt's famous pyramids, archaeologists have found pots of honey in the ancient tombs? The honey, dating back approximately 3,000 years, is the world's oldest sample - and still perfectly edible.

**Are you sharing this email with teaching staff, and others?**

Share your program and all the tools in this email with teachers, food service staff, and

administrators. The best way to drive up interest and excitement is to share the possibilities for collaboration with other staff at your site. By sharing information, you can promote Harvest of the Month beyond your meal, or garden program. Just think of the benefits you can create when sharing program information!

#### **Need assistance? We are here to help!**

To date, we have provided assistance to over half of our 2018/19 Harvest of the Month participants! It's exciting when a participant calls or emails asking for help.

Did you know we can customize recipes to fit your program and your food restrictions? We can also send you sourcing information for your area of Illinois chocked full of producers, processors and other procurement sources and ideas. Need advice on a specific topic or issue? We can connect you to other participants who have crossed that bridge before and have found a solution!

IFSN has experts on staff to provide free assistance on everything Harvest of the Month as you develop, or scale up your programs. You can take advantage of our free expertise through a variety of tools, our websites, and through direct consultations. Check out the [IL Farm to School](#) website and sign up for our monthly newsletter [here](#).

Still trying to determine how to start building your program? Perhaps you're having a problem incorporating local food, or you are unsure which rules apply to local purchasing? Do you want to start, or expand a garden? [Email](#) us and we will help you to get things started with helpful tools and resources!

Do you need to login to the Harvest of the Month website? You can do so by entering your password [here](#).

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## **The 411 Call Schedule**



411

**December 10- 2:30 pm "The 411" shares alternative winter procurement while the snow flies in Illinois!**

**\*Suggested listeners:** New and returning participants engaged in garden programs, feeding site participants and partners looking for winter procurement tips and integration ideas for non-produce items. These calls are open to all staff at your sites.

Need ideas for featured foods when celebrating Harvest of the Month in the dead of winter? During this 20-minute call we will share resources and ideas to bring local honey, grains and dairy into your menus and recipes.

Each registrant will receive resources for celebrating alternative Harvest of the Month featured foods during winter prior to the call. **Hurry! You must be registered by December 7th to receive call log in information.**

To register for the free "411" in December click [here](#).

#### **Future Calls:**

January 14th, 2:30 pm "The 411" shares how to locate partner organizations in your community and build partnerships to create a sustainable and robust program.

**\*Suggested listeners:** New and returning participants wishing to extend their programs into the community, and partners wishing to connect to farm to school participants.

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## **Program Tips & Information**



## In January, think outside of the icebox!

As the winter progresses it becomes impossible to find local produce. So, why not think outside of the icebox?

Featuring local honey during the winter months can be easy and fun!

Looking for bee-themed educational resources? Check out [BuzzedAboutBees](#) for coloring sheets and more.

Planning projects for next year? Could your site be interested in building a bee hive project? Check out the [Whole Kids Bee Grant Program](#) and the Observation Hive Project resources [here](#).

Want to discover other winter options? Check out the Winter Harvest toolbox [here](#).

### Did you know?

Much like wine, honey can have different flavors depending on the type of nectar a bee collects and the location of the hive. Honeybees pollinate many of the plants which produce the food consumed by people. Examples of plants pollinated by honeybees include almonds, apples, blueberries, cucumbers, melons, and pumpkins. Honeybees pollinate about one-third of all food-producing plants, including Illinois' nation-leading pumpkin crop!

As of 2013, Illinois' beekeepers managed more than 24,000 colonies. In the U.S. you can find more than 300 unique types of honey, each originating from a different floral source.

During the winter months, beekeepers insulate their hives to keep the bees warm. In the wild, honeybees huddle together for warmth and find shelter in tree trunks or caves.

Do you need a classroom lesson or activity for Illinois honey? Check out the [National Ag in the Classroom Curriculum Matrix](#). Type HONEY into the topic box. Our Fresh From the Farm [Roots and Fruits curriculum](#) also has a section on honey for grades 3-5! You can access the student workbook [here](#).

Do you need help finding local honey near you? Check out these local honey search engines.

The [Chicago Honey Coop](#)

The [Local Honey Source- Illinois](#)

The [Chicago and Northeastern IL Local Honey Finder](#)

The [Heart of Illinois Beekeeper Assoc. Honey Finder](#)

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## Put local Honey on the Menu!



Try a tasty [Crunchy Apple Slaw with Local Honey](#) as an addition to your salad bar or as a side dish. Looking for a CACFP recipe? Try [Chicken Sliders with Honey Mustard Aioli](#).

Share the [Local Honey Vinaigrette](#) recipe on your web page, on your menu grid, or as a companion send-home recipe.

Why not add a **local honey glaze** to precooked chicken patties, or fish? Or, add a honey glaze to cooked carrots, Brussel sprouts, or green beans for a savory/sweet taste sensation!

Using a heavy-bottomed saucepan combine:

1 cup local honey

6 Tbsps low-sodium soy sauce

6 Tbsps oil, canola or olive

Stir to dissolve the honey and allow to thicken slightly over medium heat to produce a glaze-like consistency.

Looking for more ways to add local honey to your salad bar? Try this [easy honey dressing](#) for your coleslaw mix. Or, add it to a mixed veggie salad, or a potato salad!

In a deep bowl combine and emulsify by whisking:

$\frac{2}{3}$  cup Cider Vinegar

1½ cups Olive Oil

$\frac{1}{8}$  cup Lime Juice, fresh

$\frac{1}{3}$  cup Orange Juice, fresh

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup local Honey

2-3 Tbsps Mrs. Dash "Caribbean Citrus Spice" Blend, or another citrus-based spice blend of your own making

Be sure to taste your dressing to determine if you have the perfect balance of sweet and tart!

Try the **Honey-Lime Taco Salad Bar** for feeding site salad bars adapted from The Whole Kids Foundation

Dressing:

1 cup lime juice

1 cup local honey

1 cup olive oil

1 teaspoon salt

1 1/2 teaspoons cumin powder

dash of cayenne or chili powder

Salad Ingredients for salad bar containers:

Mixed greens, rinsed and dried

Canned black or pinto beans, drained and rinsed

Fresh, or frozen corn (slacked)

Carrots, grated

Fresh tomatoes, chopped

Fresh cilantro, chopped

Grated Monterey Jack, Cheddar, or crumbled queso fresco cheese

Chopped jalapeños

Crumbled tortilla chips

Place all dressing ingredients in a deep bowl and whisk to incorporate. Serve alongside of all salad bar ingredients.

Don't forget to tag your local honey as a local selection in January. Display honey facts and shine a light on honey throughout the entire month. Share the Buzzzzz!

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## The perfect healthy choice in winter: Honey. Those minerals and vitamins pack a punch!

Honey is rich in minerals, vitamins, pollen and protein which create a superfood punch!

Honey contains natural minerals and vitamins which help the metabolizing of undesirable cholesterol and fatty acid on the organs and tissues into the system, hence aiding to prevent obesity and promoting better health.



The vitamins present in honey are B6, thiamin, niacin, riboflavin, pantothenic acid and certain amino acids. The minerals found in honey include calcium, copper, iron, magnesium, manganese, phosphorus, potassium, sodium and zinc.

Did you know that Manuka honey, made in Australia and New Zealand by bees that

pollinate the native manuka bush, has a higher than normal conductivity (a way of measuring the mineral content of a honey), about 4 times that of normal flower honeys? The higher the conductivity, the better the nutritional value of the honey.

## Recipe of the Month

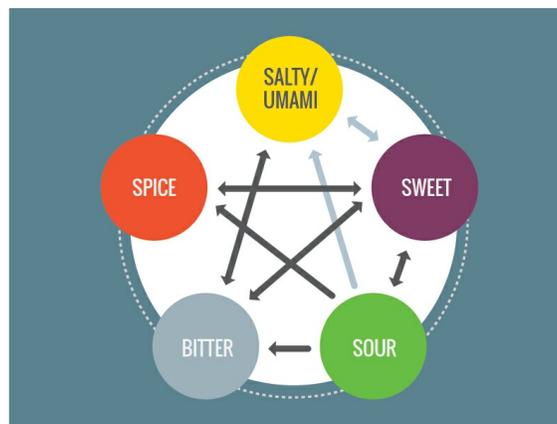
### Crispy Sweet Brussel Sprouts with Local Honey

Cooking and Prep Level: Basic  
Featured Harvest: Brussel sprouts, Cranberries (autumn) local Honey (winter)  
Recipe Type: Food service  
Servings: 100



This recipe, adapted from Super Healthy Kids!, showcases fresh Brussel sprouts and local honey using an easy oven-roast method. The twist in this recipe is in the topper of dried cranberries and fresh parmesan cheese which creates a sweet and nutty balance against the earthy taste of the Brussel sprouts.

Why not create a flavorful taste-test? While sampling this recipe ask your students to identify the opposing, or competing flavors in this dish. Why do these flavors create harmony when eaten together? Explaining the culinary technique of creating balance with opposing flavors and sharing the 5 flavor star will help your students understand and appreciate the flavors they are sampling. You can read about the art of flavor balance [here](#).



Find more recipes in the Harvest of the Month Recipe Portal

## Fun Fact

### It's all about honey!

- Bees are the only insect in the world that make food that people can eat.
- Honey contains all of the substances needed to sustain life, including enzymes, water, minerals and vitamins.
- One bee will only make 1/12 of a

teaspoon on honey in its entire life.

- A bee's wings beat 200 times a second, that's 12,000 times a minute!
- Each colony smells different to bees; this is so they can tell where they live!
- Bees communicate by smells called 'pheromones' and by performing special 'dances'.
- There are 900 cells in a bee's brain.
- Bees have two separate stomachs; one for food and another just for nectar.

## Fun Facts About Bees & Honey

\*Bees live in beehives & each hive has one Queen Bee.



\*Honey never goes bad, it can last forever!

\*Honey bees beat their wings 200 times per second!



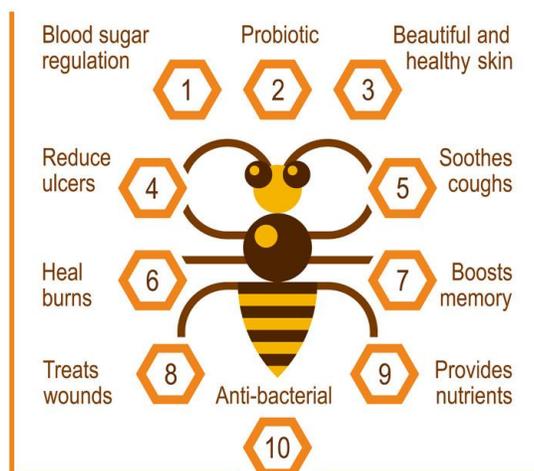
\*Honey is really very good for you & can even make your sore throat feel better!



[www.simplyhomemadeblog.com](http://www.simplyhomemadeblog.com)

## Nutrition Facts

### BENEFITS OF HONEY



### Need facts and recipes for a different vegetable or fruit?

- Go to the [Harvest of the Month](#) website. Hover your mouse over the **Registered Sites** tab at the top of the home page and click on a site. Then, click on **The Harvest** in the drop down menu
- Click on [Winter](#) to go to the seasonal list of fruits and veggies.
- Next, click on a veggie or fruit item, add your password if prompted, and the nutrition and fun facts are all there to copy and paste onto your line signage and wall posters!

Questions about Harvest of the Month? Contact [diane@sevengenerationsahead.org](mailto:diane@sevengenerationsahead.org).

STAY CONNECTED AND JOIN THE CONVERSATION





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