Locust Beer Recipes

Assembled by Ruth Ann Grissom from www.homebrewchatter.com, a forum/chat room for home brewers.

From John Skinner, The American Farmer, 1829:

The fruit is in the form of flat, crooked, pendulous pods, from twelve to eighteen inches long, and of a reddish brown color. The pods contain brown, smooth, hard seeds, enveloped in a pulpy substance, which, for a month after their maturity, is very sweet, and which then becomes extremely sour. Beer is sometimes made by fermenting the pulp while fresh, but (the practice is not general, as the apple tree, and peach tree, particularly (the last, have become common in the Western country, and afford a much superior beverage.

From Dietotherapy, William Fitch, 1918:

The pods of the honey locust are eaten raw and sold in confectioner's shops. A delightful beverage, locust beer, is made by breaking up the dried pods, adding dried American persimmons and dried apples, placing the whole in a barrel and pouring boiling water on the mass and allowing it to undergo fermentation. When three or four days have elapsed, a beautiful port wine colored “beer” is produced, possessing an alluring piquant taste with some “kick” in it.

From Fruit Grower, Volume 19, 1909:

The recipe for making persimmon beer was furnished by a Virginia reader, and published In The Fruit-Grower for June, 1908, as follows: Get a clean, tight barrel, and place within it a false head four inches from the bottom; then a pone of bread made of wheat bran and baked very brown; It takes this bread a long time to cook, and it is added to give a good color to the beer. Next put in a small armful of honey locust shucks, then put in the persimmons in greater quantity than the locusts, and continue in this way until the barrel is two-thirds or three-fourths full; weight down and add water until all is covered. In three days or perhaps a week. If the weather is very cold. It will be a sparkling drink that, will bite the tongue. A few dried apples or peaches will add to the flavor.

And, from The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine, 1885:

The colonists (About 1745.) brought from England the ancient art of making metheglin or mead from honey and water. That made in the colonies was praised on all hands; it was "as good as Malaga sack." A so-called metheglin was made from the sweet bean of the honeylocust, and some projectors in Virginia even set out plantations of that thorniest of all trees.