

The farm wife examines her Mennonite roots

by [Shari Wagner](#) in the [July 9, 2014](#) issue

They're the riddle in my garden

*What has eyes but cannot see?*

Like a stone, they fit my hand

as I turn their other cheek.

With love but no regrets,

I mash them into mounds

or whip them, scallop them,

dice them for rivel soup.

Cancer could not lessen

Dad's affection for them fried.

He tells how they clustered

like sleigh bells in the sand

where nothing else but winter

squash and zucchini thrived.

His mother, Fannie Mishler,

fixed them for every meal

like some cultures live on rice.

My son-in-law from St. Louis

splashes hot sauce on their skin,

but I fancy even their pockmarked

faces that shrivel as they age.