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To:

Subject: Culinary herbFAQ part 1/7

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1 Introduction

Here's the umph + n posting of the culinary/gardening herbfaq.

1.1 Contributors

FAQ Keeper: Henriette Kress, hetta . spamcop.net (no blanks)

Very active contributors (listed alphabetically):

How do you get listed here? Easy. Give me some good input on any missing item ('wishlist'), or a valuable correction on any entry, or a valuable addition on any entry. All good stuff is welcome.

Anya McCoy, Catherine A Hensley, Chris McElrath, Christel Reeve, Conrad Richter, Corinne Leek, Deborahrah.aol.com, Donna Beach, DonW1948.aol.com, Dorde Woodruff, Gwen Baker, Jeanne Manton, Jeff Benjamin, Jennifer A. Cabbage, JR Schroeder, Judith Rogow, Karen Fletcher, Karen Gann, Lawrence H Smith, Leslie Basel, Linda Kovacs, Malcolm Farmer, Michael Rooney, Miriam Kresh, Nick, Nick Maclaren, Rene Burrough, Richard White, Silkia.aol.com, Sonny Hays-Eberts, Susan Hattie Steinsapir, Susan L. Nielsen, Terry J. Klokeid

Others:

adawson.ehs.eduhsd.k12.ca.us, Alan Woods, Alisa Norvelle, Amy Smith, Amy Snell, Andreas Guenin, Andrew Grant, Ann Albers, Ann McCormick, Anne E. Comer, Annette, Arthur Evans, Barb Schaller, Barbara Jahner, Barbara Seeton, BEAVOMEY.aol.com, Bess Haile, Beth W Sprow, Billie, Carole Henson, Ceci Henningsson, Christine A. Owens, Christopher Loffredo, Christopher Hedley, CKimb28370.aol.com, Curtis Nehring Bliss, Dan Baldwin, Dave Platt,

David Bennett, David Johnston, David Perry, David & Paula Oliver, Debbie Golembiski, Denise Henry, Denise Rounds, Dennis O'Connell, Denys Meakin, D Gholston, Diana Politika, Dina, Don Wiss, Donna, Duane Harding, Dwight Sipler, Elizabeth Platt, Eric Hunt, Esther Czekalski, Eve Dexter, Fran, Francoise Chevallier Allard, Graeme Caselton, Graham Sorenson, Gregory R. Cook, Harold, Helen Peagram, HerbalMuse.aol.com, Ingolfur Guðnason, J Michel, Jaime/WildFire Farm, James Michael Kocher, Jason Wade Rupe, Jeanne Ross, Jeffrey Clayton, Jennifer Norris, Jennifer Zahn, jnewbo.aol.com, jnilsen.minerva.cis.yale.edu, JoAnne Hildebrand, Joep.reol.com, Joe VanDerBos, Joey L Hanson, John Pedlow, Joseph St.Lawrence, Josh Bogin, jouet.aol.com, Joyce Schillen, Judi Burley, Judy Martin-Spiker, Julia Moravcsik, Julia Trachsel, K Raghunandan, Kacey Levesque, Karen White, Karyn Siegel-Maier, Kate Blacklock, Kate Borley, Kathleen Snyder, Kathryn M. Bensinger, Kathy French, Kaycee Curr, Ken Fitch, Kenneth Nilsson, Kim Pratt, kpmglib.netcom.com, Laurie Otto, Leslie, Leslie Paul Davies, Libby Goldstein, Mandy Haggith, Mari J Stoddard, Mark David Morrison, Martin Witchard (Cat), Mary A. Flesch, Mary Hall Sheahan, Marilyn Kraker, Matthew Shapiro, Mel Atchley, Melissa C. Davidson, Mike Stallcup, Mike Toop, Mindy Vinqvist, Molly, Nancy Moote, Nancy Namowicz, Naomi Brokaw, NDooley.president-po.president.uiowa.edu, Pat Peck, Patrick Millard, Paul Kentaro Matsumoto, Peter Harris, Peter Mortimer, Ray A. Orosz, rgyure.aol.com, Rick Cook, Rick Giese, Rick Jarvis, Rita Melnick, Robert G. Nold, Rudy Taraschi, Ruth J Fink-Winter, sallee.aol.com, Sallie Montuori, Sam Waring, Sarah G., Sheri McRae, skifast123.aol.com, Sue Flesh, Stavros Macrakis, Steen Goddik, Stephanie da Silva, Stephen Otrembiak, Steve Cogorno, Susan D. Hill, Susan K. Wehe, SuseB.aol.com, Suzanne M. Engels, TOIVO.aol.com, Tom Havey, Trey Jackson, Tristan Hatton-Ellis, Vicki Oseland, vshafer216.aol.com, Waldek Trafidlo, wayne chase, weed, Wendi L Gardner, Wolf, Xiaoyan Ma, Yasha Hartberg

1.2 Wish list

Single herbs, diverse missing bits:

- * If you find holes in the entries feel free to fill them.
- * Also, I take any culinary herb you wish to write extensively on, including those not mentioned in this FAQ yet. Please follow the general layout of the entries - thanks.

Gardening:

- * 3.2 more herbs you can't get rid of once they're planted
- * 3.3 more on tall herbs
- * 3.x anything else on herb gardening you might think of.

Processing herbs

- * 4.x any other way to process herbs you might think of.

End of wishlist. If you do decide to add something tell me - I'll keep track of who promises to do what so we won't have doubles.

2 Herbs: growing, harvesting, using/preserving, and checking which you've really got

This is the structure of the herb entries:

- * 2.x.1 Growing ____
- * 2.x.2 Harvesting ____
- * 2.x.3 Using / preserving ____
- * 2.x.4 Which ____ do you have?

Check these entries before posting yet another question on curry plant... on the other hand every time somebody asks for uses for mints some new ones pop up so keep asking for those.

2.1 Basil

Latin name: *Ocimum basilicum*, other *Ocimum* species.

2.1.1 Growing basil

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/basil-root.html>

From: engels.wibla.mv.att.com (engels s.m.):

Basil loves the sun and hates the cold & wind. If it drops below 50 degrees at night, the leaves will yellow. When it warms up the new growth will be green. If it doesn't get enough sun and stays in damp soil too long, it will eventually die. The wind will bruise the leaves. So will rough handling. Again, the new growth will be fine.

Very important to harden basil plants. Transplant shock may kill them. Set

the pots outside for 3-5 days (watch the night temps) before transplanting.

I use compost and occasionally organic fertilizer. Never had any bug problems. A few caterpillars and rabbits, but there was plenty for everyone in my patch.

From: mrooney.mrooney.pn.com (Michael Rooney), in response to above:
I believe it is better to not transplant basil, i.e., it is better to put seeds in the ground where you want it, when it is warm enough for them to grow. They will quickly outstrip the transplants however carefully they have been grown and hardened.

Yes, they do tend not to attract many bugs which is a surprise given their good taste.

From: carole.chenson.demon.co.uk (Carole Henson)
I am addicted to basil, really love it, even the smell is wonderful. I have 10 basil plants in my greenhouse at the moment, and two in the kitchen for chucking into salad etc. You only need a couple of large handfuls of leaves for a jar of pesto, so a couple of plants would do it. If you sow a few seeds at 2 weekly intervals, you should have a constant supply.

From: Dwight Sipler <dps.hyperion.haystack.edu>
There are several different varieties of basil. Mammoth basil has very large leaves, although the leaves are somewhat savoyed (wrinkled).

I've had good luck with Genovese basil, which I get from Johnny's Selected Seeds. No particular soil preparation, just normal garden soil, fertilized every other year, limed as necessary (determined by pH test). I put in about 600 plants and I always lose a dozen or so to cutworms, critters etc., but it's not a big problem. I plant marigolds nearby since the Japanese beetles seem to like them and they keep the beetles off the basil plants.

From: jmanton.standard.com (Jeanne Manton):
Opal Basil is probably one of our most favorite plants and I was delighted when my favorite seed catalogue advertised a new purple variety this spring - Red Rubin. While a hearty grower, I found a very high number of 'green' starts and the mature plant resembles lemon verbena in shape and texture. I made a batch of jelly from one harvest and not only was the color more of a

honey shade but it also captured and enhanced the vinegar (rice + wine) flavor. The leaves are too 'chewy' to be sliced over tomatoes but can pass the test when added to a cooked tomato sauce. Fortunately I also had a Purple Ruffles plant for my daughters vinegar as so much of the pleasure is derived from the lovely lavender shade.

>basil eaten to skeleton; more eaten each morning, no bugs evident?

From: mrooney.mrooney.pn.com (Michael Rooney)

There is a caterpillar that seems often to like basil that lives under the surface of the earth during the day. Gently disturb the top quarter or half inch of dirt in a circle around the plant going out about four inches or so and look for a dark gray circle about half to three quarters of an inch in diameter that usually stays that way and sometimes opens up to get away (depending on how deep a sleep it is in I guess :-)). If you find it, squash it and hope. The only other predator I can see that would do what you have is a lot of slugs so you would likely see them anyway. They can be taken care of by all the standard beer, diatomaceous earth, etc. methods in addition to hand picking.

There are few joys as great as finding one of those blasted caterpillars in the ground after they have been eating your food, let me tell you.

> basil wilting in the sun?

From: bogin.is2.nyu.edu (Josh Bogin)

Probably this is due to not enough water **and or possibly resulting from** not enough room for the plants. If the plants are root-bound it really will hardly matter how much you are watering them, since the pot would presumably be too small to hold much water, the plant would keep drying out, and also the roots probably get no nutrients. Give them some plant food, and think about finding them more room, if this is the problem.

From: wolf.gaia.caltech.edu (Wolf)

Here in Southern California, (Pasadena) our sweet Basil that "was" in full sun started wilting one after the other. Every couple of days, another one wilted. The sweet Basil we planted in part-shade (Morning shade, afternoon full sun) is thriving, and the plants are giant. They make great pesto. On the other hand, we have some purple Basil which is also in full sun, and it is completely unaffected by the heat. All plants are getting really big, despite frequent pinching. All plants get plenty of water, and the dirt around the dying plants was plenty moist.

The instructions on seed packets are simply not meant for folks in the Southwest.

Sweet basil is heat intolerant. It will do great in full sun if the temperatures don't exceed 85-90 degrees on average. Any hotter, and it starts wilting in full sun.

> have basil in pot; can I plant it outside?

From: Debbie Golembiski <102522.1235.CompuServe.COM>
You sure can move your potted basil into the ground. Just cut it back a bit first and try to move it with as much soil intact as possible.
Basil loves full sun, so pick a spot that gets at least 6 hours of sun daily.

> saw some basil for sale with huge healthy green leaves that put mine to shame.

From: wolf.gaia.caltech.edu (Wolf)
The guys who have these giant sweet basil plants feed them with Urea. Seems to do the trick. Also, sweet basil doesn't like it too hot, and likes to have moist soil. Make sure you pinch off any flowers before they go to seed. If you follow these guidelines, you should get giant plants.

> ...no basil sprouting - too wet for the last three weeks?

From: southsky.maui.net (Rick Giese):
Basil seeds will not germinate when they are constantly wet. I started mine in flats protected from the winter rains here on Maui. Once transplanted to the field, they did fine.

2.1.2 Harvesting basil

From: engels.wibla.mv.att.com (engels s.m.):
You can harvest basil leaves as soon as the plant has 3 sets of leaves. Keep the plants branches shorter than 4 sets of leaves and you will increase leaf production. Once it flowers, production drops. I've found the taste stronger before flowering.

From: mmorriso.blue.weeg.uiowa.edu (Mark David Morrison)

Basil leaf harvesting: pick all that you think that you will need for the recipe that you are preparing. If you have a lot of basil and are freezing basil for winter then just pick the big leaves. I use a lot of basil and pick leaves from the plant almost daily. If they are small or big leaves does not matter... the plant is the hardiest beast in my gardens. I think it may be of alien origin.

Pinching back basil: Always pinch off and use those tops. The leaves will really bush out on your basil when you do.

From: kathleen.snyder.lunatic.com (Kathleen Snyder)

Pick all over. Don't strip the stems of all the leaves. Be careful not to tear the stem when cutting off a leaf. I use scissors. Tearing can some times strip the stem and damage it.

Pinching will make it fuller. Don't let it flower either. Pinch off the flower buds the minute you see them coming.

From: stlouins.cnsvox.uwec.edu (Dina)

I often just go out and pluck off as much as I need once the plants are established--sometimes a third or more of the plant, depending on whether I'm making salad, herbing vinegars, or harvesting some to dry. Pinching back makes the plants bushier, and I'd definitely start cutting back when the plants start to flower. They grow back quickly.

From: David Perry <dperry.bbn.com>

The best method is to pinch them back at the main stem(s) a couple of times early in their lives. This will create a bushier plant rather than the single tree looking specimen.

Thereafter, just take the tips of the stems to keep the plant from going to seed. You will notice the tips become very heavy with small pointier leaves just before it goes to seed. Clip back any large main leaves when you notice the secondary buds beginning to show along the main stem, or when they get too big and seem to be sapping the rest of the plant (these leaves are great to wrap steaks for the grill, snip for salads etc...mmmmm!)

I also found that the leaves are oilier and more fragrant early in the day or at night. Of course, most of us don't use basil at 3 a.m.

Also, basil really doesn't have to be spaced out as much as the packet literature states. I fill 1/2 barrels of basil every year. I thin out only enough to keep full sun and air circulation on all plants.

>From Deborahrah.aol.com:

Growing Basils in Texas

I have had great success growing basil in the hot climate of Texas. I plant my basils in the afternoon shade of indeterminate tomatoes. My basils get about 6 hours of sun each morning. This shade is necessary, as the basil leaves will get "bleached" in the scalding Texas sun. Basil is my absolute favorite and it would be a sad day indeed if I couldn't pick it fresh from my garden.

2.1.3 Using / preserving basil

Also see Pesto, 4.9.2 , and Basil jelly, 4.6.1.

>From herblady.newsguy.com (Rastapoodle):

I've noticed that practically every freezing, oil or pesto instruction given here notes that the basil turns black. Although edible, it is very unappetizing, IMO. There is a standard culinary technique to combat this, so that you will have bright green oils, ice cubes, pesto, or whatever form you are preserving your basil.

Blanching.

Take the basil, either still on the stem, or single leaves that you've plucked off the stem, and plunge them into a large pot of boiling water for 15-30 seconds. If a clump of single leaves, give them a quick stir so they don't lump. Then, either plucking the stems with leaves out, or using a strainer, quickly remove the basil and plunge it into a large pan of cold water that holds ice cubes. This will stop the 'cooking'. The leaves will be bright green, and stay bright green.

You will then need to thoroughly dry them before processing, either with towels, a salad spinner, or whatever your favorite method.

Then, make your oil, pesto, ice cubes, or favorite preservation technique, and you will be eating green, not black, basil in December.

> ... alternatives for using pesto or fresh sweet basil?

From: jwr3150.tam2000.tamu.edu (Jason Wade Rupe)

I bake it right into bread sometimes.

I like a stir fry of basil and whatever with a basic simple sauce on rice.

Try using it fresh as a pizza topping.

From: cogorno.netcom.com (Steve Cogorno)

Take GOOD quality tomatoes, preferably ones you've grown yourself :-) and slice them. Top with fresh mozzarella whole basil leaves. A little expensive because of the cheese, but it makes a very colorful and tasty appetizer!

From: french.jeeves.ucsd.edu (Kathy French)

If your basil plants aren't producing fast enough to give you a cup or two of leaves at a time, you can pinch off stems and keep them with the ends of the stems in clean water (change it every few days) at room temperature for several days. Freezing the leaves doesn't work so well, because it will make them mushy when they thaw, and it reduces their flavor as well.

You can also preserve basil by washing it carefully, drying it thoroughly, packing it in good olive oil, and keeping it in the refrigerator. Then you can use the leaves plus oil to make pesto fresh when you want it by adding garlic, cheese, and pine nuts. I've tried this method and it works well, although the basil turns somewhat dark in the process.

From: mrooney.mrooney.pn.com (Michael Rooney)

You can make basil pesto and freeze it in cubes or patties and save it for the winter when you have nothing fresh to use.

>From jmanton.standard.com (Jeanne Manton):

I use Genova Perfum Basil and thoroughly wash the leaves in vegetable soap (available at natural foods stores). Dry completely with paper towels, then dice (I use a french knife). Pack into sterilized 1/2 pint jars: 1 layer of fresh ground Parmesan, one layer of basil, one layer of fresh ground sea salt. Continue layering process until the jar is nearly full. Cover with a thin layer of extra virgin olive oil and seal. Store in the refrigerator (I use the coldest shelf). I don't know how long this keeps because we will

use the entire jar within two months but my last really big supply was still fresh after nine months. Can be used on everything except corn flakes!

A blooming appetizer:

From: jmanton.standard.com (Jeanne Manton)

1 8 oz cream cheese (neuchafel is too light but may be substituted)

1 8 oz cheve (creamed goat cheese)

1/8 tsp dried garlic chips, crushed

1 tsp minced (using knife) basil, perferably Parfum

Mix the above together using your hands and shape into a ball. Place on plastic wrap and flatten. Generously sprinkle with fresh ground black pepper. Decorate with herbs and flowers (sprig of tarragon, few blossoms and stems of rosemary, johnny jump ups - whatever) and wrap airtight. Refrigerate overnight and serve either with a strong cracker or baguette slices.

This is a real favorite when I take it to work although one of my co-workers suggested I had dropped the cheese ball in the driveway just after the lawn had been mowed.

Note: When I make these for Christmas I use sprigs of rosemary and three or so red peppercorns.

Freezing basil

>From Deborahrah.aol.com:

"Fresh is best" certainly holds true for basil. But what to do in the winter for that fresh taste? I have found a method that works. When my basil is ready for harvest, I cut off about 20-30 branches early in the morning. Then I rush it to my kitchen, where I already have a large dishpan of cold, clean water waiting. I place the basil in the water and gently move it around slowly. (Putting the basil in the pan and then running water over it would release too much of the flavorful oils.) I remove the basil from the water and let it drain in a colander, shaking excess water from the plant. After a few minutes of this, I place the basil between clean kitchen towels letting the terry cloth absorb more water. Do not rub the basil with the towels, as it will bruise it. Next, I take small squares of "Handi Wrap" about 4" x 4" and place 6-7 basil leaves stacked on top of each

other. I gently wrap the basil with the plastic wrap and put the little packets in a freezer proof bag. In the winter when I need it, I remove the basil packet from the freezer. I immediately crush the basil while it is inside the packet. This method "cracks" the frozen basil into small pieces which I add to recipes. The trick to this is to "crack" the basil within 10 seconds of removing it from freezer, or you will have soft, wimpy basil. The basil will taste as good as fresh, but will be almost black in color. It is the fresh flavor that sells me on this method, not the appearance.

Basil oil

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/basil-pres.html>

From Laurie Otto <lotto.ptialaska.net>

Someone asked about drying basil. In my opinion, it wastes flavor to dry basil. Better to put it in the food processor with olive oil, make a paste and freeze it for later use. Or try making salted oiled basil leaves:

Note: Even though a lot of oil is used for this it can be cleaned off before using the basil so please don't discount this in the interest of maintaining a low-fat lifestyle! The oil is merely a preservative and it does keep the basil absolutely fresh for months!

Carefully clean *and dry* each leaf. Use a salad spinner or swing the leaves around in a clean, dry towel for a few minutes. Pat dry, just to be sure ... :) This is really important, so please be thorough! Next pour a little virgin- or extra-virgin olive oil into a sealable crock, preferably a stone one. The small kind used to house cheesespreads are ideal! Sprinkle a little salt on the oil. Add a single layer of basil leaves, careful not to overlap them. Cover with a thin layer of oil and sprinkle with more salt. Do this until the crock is full, then top off with oil and salt. Seal. Store in the refrigerator and it will keep indefinitely. To use the basil, simply take out what you need *with a very clean utensil* and, if you like, wash it well to remove the salt and oil.

From: Melissa_C._Davidson.city-net.com (Melissa C. David)

I tried to make basil oil the other day. I had a sterile, sealed bottle, basil from the yard, and olive oil. Put the herbs in the bottle, completely covered with oil plus a few inches. Supposed to be good for many months but the basil molded up within 2 weeks !! Help!

From: lgf0.Lehigh.EDU (Lesleigh G. Federinic) to above:

I always refrigerate mine. Only once did it mold on me in the frig but then I had it there for several months during the winter and hadn't been using it. I use it up in the summer. It's good for frying zucchini and mushrooms as well as making angel hair pasta sauce.

From: Yasha.bioch.tamu.edu (Yasha Hartberg)

I'm not sure having never done it myself, but it seems a bit strange to start with a sterile bottle and then add non-sterile leaves and oil to it and expect anything less than mold, bacteria, etc. I wonder if you might not try heating the mixture up a bit before sealing the bottle?

From: aa100465.dasher.csd.sc.edu (J Michel)

For years I've been preserving end of the summer basil leaves in olive oil with salt (lots - don't know how much - sprinkled on successive additions of leaves and oil to cover). The leaves turn black in the oil, but not moldy, and thru the winter I fish out a couple from time to time to use in cooking. I store it in the refrig. and in summer I toss out the salt which has settled to the bottom of the jar along with the last of the oil.

I am about to be a convert to the Ice cube basil/oil pesto storage method in order to eliminate the salt. However, I'd suggest experimenting with adding salt, or trying refrigeration.

From: rcook.BIX.com (Rick Cook)

The key is moisture. If there's moisture in the plant (as there is in basil leaves -- a lot of it) you're likely to get mold when you make basil oil.

If you want to make basil oil, grind the basil into a paste, add to the olive oil to steep for a while in the refrigerator and then filter the mixture.

>From Richard White <hazelwood.ultranet.ca>:

Re. problems with basil oil: harvest leaves and place in a large pot, cover with oil (we use canola). On medium heat bring oil to a temperature of no more than 190 F. Hold at this temperature for 20 minutes. Cool rapidly and allow to stand overnight. Remove leaves and siphon off oil, leaving sediment and water behind. Bottle into sterilized containers. It will be cloudy at this point but will eventually clear. Adding dried basil to the container will help clear it faster.

Drying basil

> drying basil - how long?

From: Kim Pratt <pratt.olympus.net>

The time factor really depends on where you hang it to dry, what the temperature is. Mine usually takes about 2 or 3 weeks to dry. That is hanging upside down with stems tied together in a bundle, in the kitchen. If you have a dusty house, after tying together in a bundle put inside a small paper bag that has been punched full of small holes and hang that (tie the top of the bag to the top of the stems so your herbs are still hanging upside down).

From: evedex.hookup.net (Eve Dexter)

My dehydrator has a fan and the drying takes only 1 1/2 -2 hours, depending upon the humidity of the day of course. I suggest you start in the am and keep a close eye on the process - it shouldn't take too much longer in your model.

2.1.4 Which basil do you have?

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/basils.html>

From: farmermj.bham.ac.uk (Malcolm Farmer):

Some suppliers offer different varieties of basil. Chiltern Seeds in the UK, for example, has about a *dozen* different varieties. Two I have growing now are:

Lemon basil - thinner, smaller, rather pointed leaves when compared with regular basil. Has strong lemony odour: when you tear up the leaves the smell is gorgeous, somewhere between mint and basil.

Thai basil - similar in appearance to lemon basil leaves, but slightly darker with stems having a purplish tinge. Scent is somewhat like regular basil, but much spicier and more fragrant. A friend says her Thai cooking using regular basil never tastes quite the same as authentic Thai, so I'm going to give her some of the Thai stuff to see if that's the reason....

>> The basils I grow are regular sweet basil, Spicy Globe, lemon basil, cinnamon basil, licorice basil, and holy basil. ... snip I've tried the holy basil in tea, but don't care much for it. I've read about using it as an incense/smudge ingredient.

>have you tried using the holy basil in Thai cooking? I've seen a number of Thai recipes that call for it. From what I've read, it's a hot (spicy) variety. I've been thinking of growing it, since I haven't found a source to buy it.

From: Conrad Richter <culinary.richters.com>:

I thought I should jump in here. There is a lot of confusion in the herb world about "holy" basil. Most of the seeds I have seen on the market is actually a hybrid of undetermined parentage. It is NOT *Ocimum sanctum*, the "sacred" basil known to the Indians as "tulsi" which many people assume.

We call "holy" basil, "spice" basil, following a convention established by Helen Darrah in her monograph on basils. I actually don't like her choice of name because it confuses newbies who think that this is the regular basil for regular basil use, but at least it is better than "holy" basil which everybody gets confused with *O. sanctum*.

If you want the real McCoy, you need to insist on *O. sanctum*. There are several varieties (purple, green and probably others) and it does turn up in seeds from Thailand where the plant is grown for use in cooking.

Now, there is also such a thing as "Thai basil" which yet another animal altogether. If you are looking for the basil used in Thai and Vietnamese cooking, you will want this. Now, some companies (including us) have in the past sold "anise basil" as being equivalent to "Thai basil" but we now know that this is not true.

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/basil.html>

2.2 Curry plant / Curry leaf

Latin names: Curry Plant: *Helichrysum italicum* (*Helichrysum angustifolium*)

Curry Leaf: *Murraya Koenigii*

Check Anya's plants page for side-by-side pictures of the these:

<http://member.newsguy.com/~herblady>

2.2.4 Which curry plant / curry leaf do you have?

From: kpmglib.netcom.com (Information Services)

The "Curry Plant" is an herb, *Helichrysum angustifolium*, from the family Asteraceae (Compositae). I believe it came from Africa or Australia, so it's tropical, and probably perennial; although in North Texas you may need to grow it as an annual or in a container (probably not frost-hardy). The name "curry plant" originated from this herb's pungent smell, which is reminiscent of some curries or curry powders; however it is not used in curry. I believe that it is widely cultivated in the U.K., and is used there mostly in salads, or mixed with cream-cheese.

There actually is a plant that produces what is known as the "curry leaf", and which *is* used in the preparation of some curries (much the same way as bay leaf is used). The leaves of this plant, a woody tree from the Asian sub-continent called *Murraya Koenigii*, also have a strong curry-like smell, and can be purchased dried at most Asian markets. The tree itself has only recently been cultivated commercially in this country, and is carried by only a very few nurseries. It is still considered an exotic, and commands a premium price.

>From Emme.worldnet.att.net:

What is known to American & British cooks as "curry" is actually a spice mix that varies by the dish being created.

2.3 Sage

Latin names: *Salvia officinalis* - sage
Salvia elegans - Pineapple sage
Salvia dorisana - Melon-scented sage
and other scented *Salvia* species.

2.3.1 Growing sage

From: Linda Kovacs (kovacsla.vnet.ibm.com)

Sage is a perennial here in zone 5. It's a very easy-to-grow plant. Half a day of sun, reasonable soil, and don't let it get too awfully dry.

The main problem with sage is to keep it under control. I've never had any insect problems with it. Pinch small plants to make them branch, then let them grow to harvesting size. Don't let stems get so tall that they lay down, or you'll end up with a twisted, woody mess in a couple of years.

Pineapple sage (*Salvia elegans*)

From: Jennifer Zahn <jszahn1.facstaff.wisc.edu>

I have a pineapple sage plant, and since last summer, the stems have become tall and woody. Now all but one are dead, and I'm afraid to trim back the remaining remnant. Any tips on how I can revive this plant? Ideal conditions? It was inherited and I never learned much about it. And what do woody stems mean, anyway?

From: Harold <orchids.communique.net>

Hi, Jennifer. If the plant were mine I would cut all of the stems back close to the ground. New stems will grow from soil level and provide you with lots of vigorous new growth. You may want to root the tips of the remaining growth. Pineapple Sage roots very easily and can make a substantial plant in just one season. If your plant grows too spindly you can always pinch or cut the stems back part way to cause them to bush out more.

Woody stems just mean they are old.

BTW, I'm surprised you have living tissue on your plant, considering how far north you are. Here in southern Louisiana mine die back to the soil almost every year.

From: Joe VanDerBos <joevanderbos.bdt.com>

Pinapple sage will look better cut back to the ground and given a chance to try all over again.

Pineapple sage: The indestructible filler plant.

From: weed <avril_tolley.berlex.com>

Pineapple sage routinely gets woody, so prune away. It may be that it just looks dead. This sage, *Salvia elegans*, is very easy to root, so if you're worried about the rest of the plant, take several cuttings from what you think is the remaining living stem and pot them up. You can dip the end in something like "Rootone" if you like, but I find they root without it. They

will look dead for a while, and the top may actually die. Eventually you'll get new leaves near the bottom. Pineapple sage benefits mightily from hard pruning, although I never go below about a foot and 1/2, because I just hate to prune. It's a little tender, so sometimes, if I think it may be exposed to frosts in winter, I'll root a bunch of cuttings and overwinter them to be sure I have some the next year. I usually end up giving these away, because mine generally makes it. Hummingbirds love this, as they do most sage. Really nice plant. Mine is by my front walk, so I have to brush up against it to get to the garage.

2.3.2 Harvesting sage

From: Linda Kovacs (kovacs.la.vnet.ibm.com)

Harvest sage before it blooms. After the dew dries in the morning, cut the stems, leaving a leaf or two at the bottom. I air-dry my sage, stringing the stems on a strong thread and hanging it in a breeze.

It will dry leathery rather than crisp, because the leaves are so thick.

Strip the dry leaves from the stems and place the leaves into a jar. Chop or rub the leaves into powder when you need to use them.

To use fresh sage, clip off enough of a branch to get the number of leaves you need, strip off the leaves, and chop them up if desired.

2.3.3 Using / preserving sage

Uses for Sage flowers:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/salvia.html>

Sage uses: <http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/sage.html>

> I have a very healthy sage plant in my garden but I don't know what to use the herb for, except of course for stuffing a chicken.

From: engels.wibla.mv.att.com (engels s.m.)

* Stuff a few leaves into the cavity of a trout. Tie with string, baste with a little oil and grill. Use only 1 or 2 leaves per fish otherwise the sage will overpower the fish.

* Chop fine, lightly saute in olive oil with minced garlic. Add a little chopped parsley & toss with spaghetti or other pasta. Serve as a side dish to grilled chicken, fish or meat.

* Toss a few sage leaves with quartered onion and flattened garlics into

clay pot chicken.

From: mrooney.mrooney.pn.com (Michael Rooney)

We use sage for stuffing turkeys in addition to chickens, if you have turkeys in the UK. We also use it in foccacia... ..Sage pesto is another way to use large quantity of sage and it can be frozen to be used in the winter. You might use walnuts or pecans instead of the traditional pignoli nuts in pesto as sage is stronger than basil.

It goes well with pork or chicken. You can also roast eggplant and sweet red pepper and food process them together with sage for a nice dip to be used with homemade French bread.

From: ag500.ccn.cs.dal.ca (Peter Mortimer):

It also makes a great addition to just about any green salad, either tossed in as whole leaves or cut up in small pieces.

From: rgyure.aol.com (RGyure):

I discovered last summer that garden sage makes a beautiful and fragrant addition to fresh cut flower bouquets I bring in from the garden. I grow more than I can use in cooking (who uses that much sage?)-- and the pale green, white-frosted somewhat sparkly leaves make delightful foliage for cutting-- and are long-lasting.

From: vshafer216.aol.com (VShafer216):

I recently tried a really good recipe that uses fried sage--it tastes great. Broil chicken thighs (marinate first). When done, fry several leaves of sage in butter; this takes less than a minute.

Grate cheese on top of the chicken thighs. Spoon some of the hot butter over the chicken (this melts the cheese) and put one or two sage leaves on top of each piece of chicken. Fried sage tastes good even without the chicken.

From: jrogow.ridgecrest.ca.us (Judith Rogow)

Dried and added to a fire at Thanksgiving or Christmas, it adds a nice Holiday scent to the house.

From: lebasil.ag.arizona.edu (Leslie Basel)

Sage jelly is just terrific with game, lamb, even a Christmas goose. The recipe is just the same as any other herb jelly (and it requires quite a bit of culinary sage). (see herb jelly, 4.6.1).

From: melatchley.aol.com (MelAtchley)

- * Decorative: Leaves in wreaths and nosegays.
- * Culinary: Flower in salads or infuse for a light balsamic tea. Leaves can be mixed with onion for poultry stuffing. Cook with rich, fatty meats such as pork, duck and sausage. Combine with other strong flavors: wrap around tender liver and saute in butter; blend into cheeses. Make sage vinegar and sage butter.
- * Household: Dried leaves in linen to discourage insects.
- * Medicinal: Leaves aids in digestion and is antiseptic, antifungal and contains estrogen. Helps to combat diarrhea. An infusion of sage leaves and a meal can help digestion.

From: baldwin.frodo.colorado.edu (Dan Baldwin)

I had sage mashed potatoes as a side dish at a five star restaurant last week--they were really good ! There were flecks of sage scattered all through the potatoes--Can't wait to try it myself.

From: Linda Kovacs (kovacsla.vnet.ibm.com)

Here's an oddity: sage makes a good insect repellent! Put a handful of sage sprigs and 3 mint sprigs in a pot. Pour over them 1 quart of boiling water and allow to steep. When cool, strain out the herbs and add 1 quart of rubbing alcohol. To use, splash or spray onto hair, skin, clothes. It won't stay on if you're sweating heavily or swimming, but otherwise it's great.

From: engels.wibla.mv.att.com (engels s.m.):

Sage dries very nicely and looks pretty. Bundle 8-10 sprigs, tie, hang to dry and put a red bow on it at Xmas. Use as a decoration for wrapped gifts or give as an small culinary gift.

From Karen White

Sage - I take dried sage and run it through the food processor (until it's like rubbed sage), and then pat onto pork chops. Sprinkle a little salt, pepper, and summer savory on them too, then saute in olive oil. They taste great!

Focaccia with Sage

Rosemary focaccia:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/rosemary.html>

Focaccia: <http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/focaccia.html>

From: mrooney.mrooney.pn.com (Michael Rooney)

Deriving its name from the Latin word focus, meaning "hearth," focaccia evolved from the unleavened hearth cake eaten during the Middle Ages. It was made by patting the dough into a flat round and cooking it directly on a hot stone or under a mound of hot ashes. While it has become something of a national dish, this popular bread's true home is the area around Genoa. It seems as if every seaside resort on the Italian Riviera has its own special focaccia. Whether soft or crisp, thick or thin, the dough is typically flavored with local herbs and olive oil.

Sponge:

0.5 cup warm water (105 to 115 deg.F)

1 tsp. dry yeast

0.75 cup unbleached all purpose flour

Place 0.5 cup water in large bowl. Stir in yeast. Let stand until yeast dissolves and mixture is cloudy, about 10 minutes. Stir in flour. Cover with plastic. Let stand until very bubbly, about 45 minutes.

Focaccia:

1 cup warm water (105 to 115 deg.F)

1 tsp. dry yeast

0.25 cup plus 2 tbs. olive oil

3.25 cups unbleached all purpose flour

3 tbs. finely chopped fresh sage

Place 1 cup water in small bowl. Stir in yeast. Let stand until yeast dissolves and mixture is cloudy, about 10 minutes. Stir in dissolved yeast mixture and 0.25 cup olive oil into sponge in large bowl. Stir in 1 cup flour. Stir in 2 tbs. chopped sage. Add remaining flour in 2 batches, mixing until well blended after each additions. Turn out dough onto lightly floured surface. Knead dough until soft and velvety, about 10 minutes.

Oil large bowl. Add dough, turning to coat with oil. Cover with plastic. Let dough rise in warm area until doubled, about 1 hour 15 minutes. Oil 11x17 inch baking sheet. Punch down dough. Transfer to prepared sheet. Using oiled hands, press out dough to cover bottom of pan. Cover dough with kitchen towel. Let stand 10 minutes (dough will shrink). Press out dough again to cover pan. Cover with towel. Let rise in warm draft free area until doubled in volume, about 1 hour.

Meanwhile, position rack in center of oven. Place baking stone on rack and preheat oven to 425 deg.F.

Using fingertips, press dough all over, creating dimples. Drizzle dough with 2 tbs. oil. Sprinkle with 1 tbs. sage.

Place pan directly on pizza stone. Spray oven with water from spray bottle. Bake until focaccia is golden and top is crisp, spraying oven with water twice more during first 10 minutes, about 25 minutes total. Transfer bread to rack. Cool slightly. Serve bread warm or at room temperature.

Makes one focaccia, 4 servings. Per serving, 400 calories, 13 g protein, 87 g carbohydrates, 0 g sugar, 3 g fiber, 0 g fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol and 0 mg sodium.

Bon Appetit, May 1995

Pineapple sage (*Salvia elegans*)

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/pineapple-sage.html>

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/pineapple-sage-1.html>

>It's so smelly! How did ma nature ever get such a sweet sniffy plant? I love that stuff! Now the question: what do i do with it?

From: Rastapoodle.newsguy.com (Rastapoodle)

- * It is great chopped fine and mixed with cream cheese and crushed pineapple for a dip/spread with crackers.
- * Also, crush leaves and let them steep with fruit to flavor a fruit salad.
- * A sprig is a great garnish for an iced tea, especially if the red flowers are on the sprig.
- * It makes a great iced tea in itself -- steep as you would any tea.
- * Dry and mix with potpourri.
- * If you like *S. elegans*, you will *flip* for *S. dorisana*, "Melon-scented Sage", available from Logee's Greenhouse. I'm addicted to both varieties.

From: "Martin Witchard (Cat)" <mwitchar.metz.une.edu.au>

How about adding some leaves to a cooling drink? - would go perfectly with lemonade! Also (and I've not tried this one), lay some leaves out on the base of the cake tin before cooking - the 'taste' should infuse up through the mixture. Anyway, there's a couple of suggestions,

From: es051447.orion.yorku.ca (Joseph St.Lawrence)
mmmmmm... tea.
oh yeah, you can eat the flowers too.

From: mv-martinek.nwu.edu (Marie Martinek)
I have something that was labeled "Fruit Sage" and a "Pineapple Sage" (Salvia sp.). I snip off leaves, dry them, and make sage tea with about 1 part crumbled sage leaves to 3 parts black tea. They're "tender perennials", so here in Chicago area I keep them in pots which I sink into my garden, yank up just before frost (disentangling the groping runners), knock out of the pot and root-prune before cutting most of it down and setting it in a sunny window to survive the winter. It also produces wonderfully-smelling red flowers, which I also dry for tea (if I don't just suck the nectar out and eat it!)

2.3.4 Which sage do you have?

There are a few other plants that are called Sage and that taste very bitter. If your sage is called Artemisia in Latin forget the cooking part. If it is Salvia try a leaf or two and if the taste is OK just go on and use it.

To illustrate:

From: joehanso.badlands.NoDak.edu (Joey L Hanson)
Subject: Re: What's the worse thing you ever ate?

Ever try sage brush tea? Kind of tastes like you're drinking insect repellent would be the closest thing I can relate to it. Damndest thing though it made ya spit blue kind of like a smurf trying to get the taste outta your mouth.

End of part 1 of 7

--
Henriette Kress, AHG Helsinki, Finland
Henriette's herbal blog: <http://www.henriettesherbal.com/blog>

From spamtrap.hetta@spamcop.net Fri Jan 21 17:01:39 2005

Newsgroups: rec.gardens.edible,alt.folklore.herbs,rec.food.preserving,alt.answers,rec.answers,news.answers

To:

Subject: Culinary herbFAQ part 2/7

From: Henriette Kress <spamtrap.hetta@spamcop.net>

Date: Fri, 21 Jan 2005 17:01:39 +0200

Archive-name: food/culinary-herbs/part2

Posting-Frequency: monthly (on or about 20th)

Last-modified: 27Jul03

Version: 1.17b

URL: <http://henriettesherbal.com/faqs/culi-cont.html>

2.4 Chives

Latin name:

Chives: *Allium schoenoprasum*

Chinese chives: *Allium tuberosum*

2.4.1 Growing chives

From: Linda Kovacs (kovacsla.vnet.ibm.com)

I started with a small pot from a discount store, planted it in moderately poor soil that got about 1/2 day sun. It went crazy! Grew big, made flowers and seeds, the next year the seeds came up and (repeat previous line over and over and over ...). I now have about 6 square feet of chives. I don't even water them.

After they blossom and the flowers dry, you can collect the drying flowers and shake out the seeds to plant elsewhere. The blossom stems should be removed to prevent their being harvested by accident, as they are rather woody and tough. They'll dry out anyway, and should be removed to keep the plant looking nice.

A funny thing happened with that first plant. It was next to a rose bush infested with aphids. When I planted the chives, the aphids disappeared. Then I got a fruit tree that had problems with aphids. I scattered some chive seeds, and the aphids disappeared again.

Chives are so easy to grow that I don't think I'll ever be without them again. To get a start, find some chive seeds or a pot of chives.

To grow them indoors, put on a sunny windowsill and water when the soil gets a bit dry.

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:

Chives are a very hardy perennial of the same genus as onions, leeks and

garlic. It makes a great container plant and does well indoors if given adequate light. A 5-inch pot of chives should be divided and repotted every spring if the clump has spread enough.

Chives like rich, moist well-drained soil with a pH between 6 and 8. It likes full sun but will tolerate partial shade.

The seeds germinate easily in 10 to 12 days, but the plants grow and spread slowly at first. It is quicker to obtain a division of a clump from someone. Plant seeds 1/2 inch deep, in small sparse groups spaced about 12 inches apart all around to create clumps quicker, or plant seeds singly.

Clumps grown outdoors should be divided every 3 or 4 years. Chives make a good companion plant for beets but should not be planted with beans, carrots, or tomatoes.

2.4.2 Harvesting chives

From: Linda Kovacs (kovacsla.vnet.ibm.com)

Chives are best harvested with a scissors or sharp knife. Cut the blade as close to the ground as possible without injuring other blades. It's best to cut individual blades unless you are shearing the whole plant. This leaves the newly sprouted blades to grow bigger for your next harvest.

If you're harvesting during or after blooming time, watch out for those blossom stems. They're tough and woody.

Rinse the blades, gather together in bunches, and cut across with a sharp knife into the size you need.

When chives are in flower, you can snip off the flowers and use them before they start to fade.

From: unknown

I cut my chives back to the ground about three times each summer. I've found that this forces them to send up a whole bunch of replacement shoots. I usually wait to pick a few of the flowers to include in arrangements.

> My chives are flowering. Should I pinch off the flowers so they will not start to die for the winter?

From: karyn.siegel-maier.kotl.mhv.net

Chives, if well established in the garden, tend to flower in early spring, and sometimes again in mid-summer. The chive blossoms make an excellent vinegar, and can be used in baking if pulled apart. I don't cut my chives back, but let the seed fall to the ground resulting in more chives the following year.

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:
Cut off stems to about 2 inches tall, to encourage new growth. Stalks that
flower tend to be rather tough and bitter, so it's better to clip off
flower heads as they form, although they are a pleasant lavender color.

2.4.3 Using / preserving chives

From: Linda Kovacs (kovacsla.vnet.ibm.com)
Chives dry nicely, but lose much of their flavor in the process. If you
want chives in winter, grow a pot on the windowsill.
Chives can be used in any recipe that calls for chopped green onions. This
gives a slightly different, somewhat milder flavor.
Chopped chives make a wonderful addition to salads. I use them instead of
onions when the sweet onions aren't available, because the regular onions
give me terrible heartburn.
Chive flowers are also wonderful in salads. They are both pretty and
delicious, with a peppery-oniony flavor.
Chopped chives are great with potatoes. Baked potatoes with sour cream and
chives is a classic, but you don't need the sour cream. Just baked potatoes
with chives is tasty. Perhaps add a squirt of lemon juice! Also try chopped
chives on top of mashed potatoes, or mixed in.
Chopped chives make a wonderful garnish for almost any non-sweet dish, and
add a mild onion flavor as well.

From: mrooney.mrooney.pn.com (Michael Rooney)
It is also possible to make chive pesto.

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:
Mix chopped chives into cream cheese, sour cream, cottage cheese, or
butter. They are great with almost every kind of potato dish, and in
salads. Chives is used in vichyssoise, asparagus and cauliflower soups.
They can be used in egg dishes such as deviled eggs, omelets, and scrambled
eggs. The small bulbs of chives can be used in sausage or pickled like
small onions.
Chives are difficult to store dry due to a high moisture retention, but
they can be chopped and frozen to be used as if fresh.

Potato Casserole

8 large potatoes, peeled cut and cooked

8 oz sour cream
8 oz cream cheese
1/3 c chives

Blend all together, and if your family will let you, refrigerate overnight.

Bake at 350 for 34-40 min or until warmed throughout.

The stem/leaves of chives have high amounts of vitamin A and vitamin C, as well as some iron, calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, thiamin and niacin.

>From jrogow.ridgecrest.ca.us (Judith Rogow):

Chive Vinegar

When your chives (esp. garlic chives, yummmmmmy) are in bloom take four or five of the prettiest stalks w/heads and put them in a clear jar, cover w/white vinegar, cover, and stand in a dark cupboard for about a week. You will have pinkish vinegar w/a heavenly flavour. DO, however, watch out that the stalks do not have ants!

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/chives.html>

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/chives-trouble.html>

2.5 Saffron

Latin name: *Crocus sativus*.

2.5.1 Growing saffron

From: rnold.sanewssa.mnet.uswest.com (Robert G. Nold)

Crocus sativus comes up and blooms without autumn rain in Denver, and grows throughout the winter here, too. Like all fall-blooming crocus (of which there are many species), they go dormant in summer.

2.5.2 Harvesting saffron

From: kcurr.cyberspace.com (Kaycee Curr):

...it is the threads that you would collect and dry. There are three of them (the stigmas) per crocus flower. (Over a million crocus flowers

produce a pound of saffron- phew!)

From: lpdavies.bcfreenet.seflin.lib.fl.us (Leslie Paul Davies):

In planning your planting, estimate 6 mature plants will provide the stigmas for one small recipe.

2.5.4 Which saffron do you have?

From: chaseway.nbnet.nb.ca (wayne chase):

I have recently heard of a substitute for saffron. Dried Marigolds. Just air dry well and grind to powder. Use twice the amount of marigold as saffron to get same result.

From: melnick.stsci.edu (Rita Melnick):

Saffron comes from *Crocus sativus*, the saffron crocus. It is a fall blooming crocus. Each flower contains 3 red threads (stigma) that you pick, then dry, for culinary use. Be sure to get ONLY *Crocus sativus*, not the other fall-blooming crocuses, as they are NOT edible.

As for the marigolds, I'm not sure if the above advice applies to all varieties of marigolds, but I do know that it is true of the pot marigold, also known as *Calendula*. It gives the yellow coloring of saffron, but not the saffron taste. Turmeric is also a yellowing substitute for saffron. But nothing else tastes like saffron!

2.6 Zucchini flowers

Latin name: *Cucurbita pepo*.

You can also use the flowers of other *Cucurbita* species.

2.6.3 Using zucchini flowers

From: Joep.reol.com

Zucchini flowers battered and fried are far superior to anything else you can do with zucchini. Mix water, flour, salt & pepper to a pancake consistency. If you want a fluffier batter add baking powder. Deep fry and eat them while hot. Tastes like a hint of Zucchini with creamy texture and cheese quality. 4 Zucchini plants is 3 too many :)

From: bmilhol.sas.ab.ca (Billie)

I pick them when they are wilted and stuff them with seasoned cooked rice,

put them in a casserole dish with a little seasoned chicken or vegetable broth and bake. Grate a little cheese on 3 min before taking out of oven. Beautiful and tasty.

From BEAVOMEY.aol.com

Blossoms are excellent stuffed with a goat /cream/or/ricotta-herb stuffing. Then battered and fried.

Had them at L'Etoile in Madison, WI with squash-goat cheese stuffing and pumpkin seed oil drizzled over the top. Excellent.

2.7 Chamomile

Latin names:

German chamomile: *Matricaria recutita* (*M. chamomilla*, *Chamomilla recutita*)

Pineapple weed: *Matricaria matricarioides*

Roman Chamomile: *Chamaemelum nobile* (*Anthemis nobilis*)

English Chamomile: *Chamaemelum nobile* 'Treneague'

2.7.1 Growing chamomile

From: Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>

German chamomile is an annual that reaches 1 to 2 feet tall and is grown from seed. It prefers a moist sandy soil with a pH between 6 and 8.5, and full sun. Plant outdoors as early in the spring as possible. If seeds are planted on June 1, flowers should appear in late July or early August. Seedlings transplant easily when one to two inches tall. Center of flower head is hollow.

English chamomile is a low-growing perennial that reaches 1 foot in height, propagated by seed, cuttings, or root division. It does well in a slightly acid to neutral soil with good drainage and full sun, but does not do well in hot, dry weather. Growing English chamomile in rich soil produces abundant foliage but few flowers.

Center of flower head is solid. Chamomile makes a good companion plant for broccoli.

> chamomile as groundcover - any experiences?

Anne_E._Comer.kamilche.wa.com (Anne E. Comer)

Chamomile is not usually the recommended choice for *HUGE* areas. It is sometimes used in mixtures. By itself it is best used in smallish areas where there will not be heavy foot traffic. It can stand some walking on

and in fact that is one reason that it is used. When trodden on it releases a fragrance that is very pleasant to many people.

From: Denise Henry <denise.gromet.demon.co.uk>

Remember chamomile is not a grass!! This means that selective lawn weedkillers don't work. Make sure ground is well prepared with no perennial weeds and keep the site hand weeded in the first year until the plants grow together, after that you may still need to hand weed two or three times a year. A chamomile lawn is something special, but you can tell it was invented by people of a by-gone age with lots of money and a large supply of garden laborers. Try it in a small area by all means but only if you are prepared for some hard work.

(PS. I think it is worth the effort.)

From: naomib.sco.COM (Naomi Brokaw)

I like it, but it's not as carefree as some make it sound. I planted it last year (check the sections in the nursery where they sell herbs in flats). I was worried about mowing it before it got established, so I was going to wait until the cooler weather. Of course, this year, "cooler weather" meant about 7 months of rain (I'm just south of you, in Santa Cruz), so I could mow. The chamomile reached up, up, sending sun-seeking stems into my lavender, rock roses, rosemary, and yarrow. By the time I finally found the time and weather to mow, it was way too high, so I had to clip down by hand. That meant taking out most of the green stems and leaving the brown mat underneath. However, it did grow back the green within a few weeks, much faster than I feared.

It also has a tendency to die in patches, leaving brown again. Ugly while it lasts, but if you pull out the brown, the green will close in again in a few weeks.

I like the smell, but a lot of people find it cloying. On the other hand, you only smell it if you walk on it or cut it.

I tried mowing it a couple of weeks ago, with our rotary mower. Only a partial success. Our mower, which is probably dull, though sharp enough for the weeds out back, tends to pull up some of the chamomile clumps, instead of cutting them cleanly.

All in all, I'll use it again, but be aware of the drawbacks before you embrace it. It's a walkable ground-cover with a pleasant color that is nowhere near as thirsty as grass. Oh, it doesn't do well in medium to heavy shade. And bees love the flowers, so if you don't want a lot of bees (I love them), don't plant a lot of chamomile.

From: Kate Borley <kab1004.hermes.cam.ac.uk>

Re: Chamomile lawns: I saw a chamomile seat in the Cambridge University Botanical Gardens, it was a stone base with chamomile growing on the top in a wooden box and a wooden chair back. Apparently the Elizabethans invented these seats which they liked because a pleasing smell is given off by the crushed chamomile when the seat is used.

HeK comment: Now I'd like to know how they kept their behinds dry after watering the chamomile... (biig grin)

2.7.2 Harvesting Chamomile

From: Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>

Harvest and dry flowers of both species.

>From hetta.saunalahti.fi (Henriette):

You can pick only the flowers, if you have lots of time. If you have other things in your garden, too, it's easier to just pick the whole flowering plant (when in full flower) (I've only done this with German chamomiles, *Matricaria recutita*, and don't know how it would work with the Roman ones). Cut off the root and any brownish parts, and make some bundles. Put them head-first into large paper bags, one bundle per bag. Cut lots of holes in the sides of the bags, but make sure to keep the bottoms whole. Hang up to dry. Now your chamomile will dry (it takes about a week), but you'll still have all the flowers, which are apt to fall out - they're in the bottom of your bag, not all over the floor.

When dry, cut stems and all into 1/2-1 inch chunks. The stems are just a bit weaker in taste/efficacy than the flowers.

And use pineapple weed like you would use German chamomile, they're pretty close to identical twins, herbal wise.

2.7.3 Using / preserving Chamomile

From: Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>

Chamomile tea: one pint boiling water to 1/2 ounce flowers, steep 10 minutes. Strain. Add honey, sugar, milk or cream as desired.

Hair rinse: steep dried flowers in hot water, cool infusion. Strain.

> I've been told that a chamomile infusion used in the hair will bring out highlights. Does anyone have a recipe for this? Thanks!

From: Graham.fragrant.demon.co.uk (Graham Sorenson)

Two methods come to mind immediately.

One is to get some chamomile tea (loose or bags) and make a strong infusion. Or about five drops of Chamomile essential oil in a bowl of water. Then rinse hair with the result leaving for a while before rinsing out.

From: jrogow.ridgecrest.ca.us (Judith Rogow)

Chamomile Tea - very strong - is a wonderful hair rinse for shine and a glint of sunlight.

From: Annette

>.. seeking chamomile recipe for lightening hair..

I'm Annette using another person's number but I thought I'd respond to your question. Basically, just make a good strong tea with chamomile and put into a pout where you can stick your head in. Let tea cool for awhile and then stick your head in (can you read upside down?) and stay for 5-10 minutes, do weekly and hopefully you will see lightening.

Comment from Henriette: You need to strain the liquid before putting your head in it, for all above methods. Otherwise you'll be occupied for a week or so, combing out the flowers...

2.7.4 Which chamomile do you have?

From: Anne_E._Comer.kamilche.wa.com (Anne E. Comer)

The German chamomile, *Matricaria recutita* is an annual and will reseed itself. Obviously this means that it flowers. It is probably the best kind if you want to harvest the flowers for tea.

Roman Chamomile, *Chamaemelum nobile*, is perennial, probably the most used form for lawns also flowers.

English Chamomile, *Chamaemelum nobile* 'Treneague', is non-flowering and is very good for lawns and pathways but it must be grown from cuttings as there is no flower, thus no seed.

2.8 Coriander/Cilantro/Culantro

Latin name: Coriander/Cilantro: Coriandrum sativum

Culantro / Puerto Rican coriander / Spiny coriander: Eryngium foetidum (see 2.8.4)

Vietnamese coriander: Polygonum odoratum (see 2.8.4)

2.8.1 Growing coriander/cilantro

Also see <http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/cilantro.html>

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:
Coriander is a hardy, strong smelling annual native to southern Europe. It may reach up to 4 feet in height when grown outdoors.

Coriander needs full sun and plenty of moisture, and the soil should be deep, well-drained, moderately rich with a pH between 6 and 8.

Coriander is easily grown from seed, germinating in one or two weeks, and self sows well in the garden. Plant seeds 1/4 to 1/2 inch deep, and thin seedlings to 8-12 inches apart. Sow seeds directly into the garden in the early spring, or into deep pots; coriander does not transplant well due to its taproot.

>I've read that the best way to deal with bolting is to do several plantings over a season.

From: dplatt.ntg.com (Dave Platt)
I would agree.

Start a few cilantro plants each month, harvest the leaves before they bolt, and then sacrifice most of the plants before they flower. Leave a few to flower and set seed - the flowers are very attractive to ladybugs, green lacewings, and other beneficial (predatory) insects.

I've found that having a few cilantro plants flowering around the garden provides an excellent defense against aphids.

> Does anyone know what conditions I should avoid to keep the cilantro from going to seed?

From: unknown
- If you plant the stuff really close together you'll probably get less bolting.

From: eaplatt.worm.hooked.net (Elizabeth Platt):

Don't let it get too hot--like lettuce, it's sensitive to heat. But, cilantro is an annual, so most pros advise planting several batches in succession, so that there's always some that isn't going to seed.

By the way, if you've gotten far along enough to worry about it going to seed, congratulations. All my cilantro is devoured, pronto, by the slugs and snails as soon as the first tiny leaves appear. Tastiest seedlings in the garden....

From: mrooney.mrooney.pn.com (Michael Rooney)

To avoid bolting, the hotter the weather the more it should be in the shade. There are also varieties that are designed to produce leaves and some designed to produce seeds.

>I've been trying to grow cilantro (Chinese parsley, coriander) for several years so that I can use the leaves in Mexican and Chinese recipes.

>However, all I ever get are a few leaves, then they go into business making flowers and seeds. I never get big bunches of lush, leafy growth as I've seen in produce departments of grocery and natural foods stores.

>So far I've tried the following: planting in very early spring / planting later / fertilizing / not fertilizing / using seeds of plants that were hybridized for more leaf growth

>Has anyone been successful in growing lush cilantro? If so, what are your secrets?

From: Jaime/WildFire Farm <jknoble.INTERSERV.COM>

First, if you want a continuing supply of cilantro, you should succession plant about every 3 weeks. I know you said you've used seed that is hybridized for more leaf growth, but here's the following info anyway.

To the more basic question of bolting - you need to get "slow-bolt" cilantro. There are two types: slow-bolt and regular. The regular is generally grown for seed, hence the speed to seed. The slow-bolt is grown for the leaves like you want. It still bolts pretty fast, though.

That's why the succession planting. I always use Shepherd's (I have no association with them other than as a consumer) because I find I get nearly 100% germination rates & theirs is the slowest to bolt of all I've found. [If anyone's found a slower bolt seed, I'd love to know about it.]

Look at the cilantro in the store, if it has roots attached you will see that it is only 10 - 12" high. It pretty much all bolts just about then. I grow cilantro for commercial use (as well as a lot for my own use) and generally pull it at about 12". I always pull it, not cut it because it keeps much better with the roots on and because it leaves space for the

next planting. I do fertilize lightly once just after the first true leaves appear. It grows nicely in sandy loamy soil. I'm experimenting a little this year with light shade to keep it cooler in order to see if I can slow down the bolt even more without losing anything. It works well with lettuce, so I'm giving it a try. I'll let you know my experiment results in a month or so.

>From Nancy Namowicz:

I'm in a suburb west of Chicago, so the winters here can be brutal. In 1997, I planted some cilantro in my flower garden just for fun. It grew and I let it go to seed (I was looking at it as more of a flower, albeit a delicate one, rather than a herb). What I have discovered is that in spite of our harsh winters, cilantro WILL reseed itself, and spread through the flower bed. Last year I was surprised to see it reappear, and this year, it has not only reappeared, but two additional plants, about 5 or 6 feet from the original plants, have sprung up. Interestingly enough, these latest cilantro plants are slow growing -- the plant that reappear in almost the same spot has quickly grown up and flowered; these other two, however, are appearing to be much more like the cilantro bunches you find at the food store. I also planted (this year) some cilantro in pots and have clipped those leaves for sauces, etc., leaving the plants in the flower garden untouched. Their delicate white flowers add a dainty note to the mixture of flowers I've planted next to the house.

2.8.2 Harvesting coriander / cilantro

From: dplatt.ntg.com (Dave Platt)

In my experience, the best leaves are the dense, wide ones which grow close to the ground. Once the plant begins to even think about flowering, it throws up a vertical stalk, and starts putting out leaves which are much thinner and lacier. These leaves aren't anywhere near as tasty as the early foliage.

I've heard some people compare the taste of cilantro to Lifebuoy soap. To my taste-buds, the thin upper foliage does somewhat resemble Lifebuoy, and I don't like it at all. The denser low-growing early foliage, on the other hand, is utterly wonderful.

> OK, my cilantro bolted! Am I going to have to hand pick each of the little seeds to restock my coriander spice bottle or does someone have an easier way?

From: eberts.donald.uoregon.edu (sonny hays-eberts):

Take a brown paper bag, and place the seed 'umbrella' inside. shake heartily. Repeat for each 'umbrella'. This method is useful to harvest some seed, and keep the rest for hopeful volunteer plants.

For an even easier method, harvest the plant, then beat against the side of a clean trashcan. Most seeds should fall to the bottom. you'll need to clean it a bit, but it's lot easier than hand-picking. This method of course, harvests *all* the seed, as opposed to number 1.

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:

It takes coriander about 3 months to produce seed - to get seed on plants grown indoors, grow under plant lights. The best leaves to use are the denser, lower foliage. Once the plant bolts, the lacy upper foliage should not be used, as it is not as tasty. Leaves should be harvested before the plant blooms, or seeds should be harvested when about 2/3 of the seeds have turned a brownish color. Cut the tops of the plant in the early morning while still wet with dew, to prevent the seeds from shattering.

From: rudy.cae.ca (Rudy Taraschi):

The way I do it is to dry the entire plant, seeds and all. I then get a large paper shopping bag, hold the dried plant by the stem and thrash it around in the bag. Most of the seeds usually fall off if the plant is dry enough.

From: mrooney.mrooney.pn.com (Michael Rooney)

Even better than a paper bag is the feet of panty hose that you or your SO has decided are too far gone to wear any more. They are great for putting over dill and cilantro stems to catch the seed. Just put the toe where the seed head is and a twist tie around the shin part where it is over the stem and you will catch almost every seed.

2.8.3 Using / preserving cilantro / coriander

From: snielsen.orednet.org (Susan L. Nielsen)

Not exactly on the matter of etymology, but as to the flavor of cilantro/coriander leaves, Julia Child has said, [pitch voice appropriately high in the head]: "I just can't stand it. It tastes like dirt." Other interpretations invoke soap. I find it quite fresh in flavor, and even take it straight off the plant in the garden. Of course, I nibble a lot of things as I dig, but cilantro is definitely one I enjoy. No accounting for taste.

From: nancy_moote.sunshine.net (Nancy Moote)

Cilantro goes to seed very quickly. You can eat the flowers, though. They taste like the leaves but lighter and sweeter. Or let them develop seed for baking, pickling, curries, and planting next year.

They grow so fast that you can plant seeds now for more leaf cilantro later this summer. Next year maybe try planting a few seeds every 2 weeks for a continuous supply.

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:

Coriander is eaten in salads and as a pot-herb in China, and the leaves are often used in Mexican, Turkish, Indian, and some Chinese foods. Leaves are used in rice dishes, refried beans, salsa, curries, omelets, soups, and salads. The seeds are used for flavoring breads, cookies and cakes, sausage and meat dishes, plum jam, and herb liqueurs.

Leaves contain vitamin C, vitamin A, calcium, phosphorus, potassium, iron, fiber, niacin, thiamin, and 14-22% protein.

On news:rec.gardens.edible in May 2001:

From Bud Beckman <budbeck.uswest.net>

The seeds are great tasting and can be used in many dishes. That is why I grew cilantro, which is an overpowering herb to my palette.

>From nicole <nicole.ocella.com>:

I like to use the unripened seeds in dishes. They taste like a cross between the leaf and the seed... lovely in any dish that calls for either.

>From "Lynne" <lynne164.hotmail.com>:

Also the roots are used in Thai curry pastes - a basic ingredient in many Thai dishes. They're milder than the leaves but still impart an inimitable flavor.

herblady.newsguy.com (Rastapoodle)

Not only are the roots used, they are regarded as a medicinal part of the plant, more so than the stems and leaves. I'm not sure what they're supposed to do, but Thai friends in the past have always said that the roots are very medicinal.

'Lucknow' curry powder

1 oz. ginger, 1 oz. coriander seed, 1 oz. cardamom seed,
1/4 oz. cayenne powder, 3 oz. turmeric.

Spicy Cilantro Butter

3-4 cloves minced garlic, 4 generous tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro, 1 or 2 jalapeno peppers or 1 serrano chile- seeded and finely chopped, 1 teaspoon lime zest (peel), 2-3 teaspoons fresh lime juice, salt to taste, crushed dried red chile to taste, 1/4 pound softened unsalted butter (one stick)

Blend all together. Good with grilled or broiled fish, shrimp or steak, pasta, rice, squash, corn, and eggplant. Roll corn on the cob in the butter, then sprinkle with Parmesan and lime juice.

Cilantro Salmon

3 to 3 1/2 lbs salmon
2 to 3 cloves crushed garlic
2 tsp. fresh grated ginger
2 to 5 jalapeno peppers, cored, seeded, and chopped
2 small onions, finely chopped
2 tomatoes in eighths
1 bunch of fresh cilantro, finely chopped

Clean salmon, removing the head and tail. In a bowl mix together the remaining ingredients, reserving 5 tomato wedges, and stuff the fish. Line the fish opening with the remaining tomato wedges. Wrap the fish tightly with foil. Bake at 450 degrees F. for 10 minutes per inch of thickness of fish or barbecue over hot coals.

>From Alisa Norvelle <NORVELLE.uga.cc.uga.edu>:

When I buy cilantro for whatever reason, I often have much of the bunch leftover. This is an easy way to keep from wasting it:

Remove the leaves from the bunch of cilantro. Mash them in a mortar and pestle with cloves of garlic & salt. The ratio is up to you. I usually use about 2 cloves of garlic with 1/2 teaspoon of salt and as much cilantro as

I can cram into the base of the pestle/mortar without making a mess.

Once you have this paste, you can roll it in saran wrap and freeze it, slicing off whatever you need for a particular dish.

Two uses for this stuff (measurements are approximations):

Lebanese Sauteed Potatoes

2-3 potatoes, diced
2-3 T of cilantro pesto stuff
olive oil
vegetable oil

Dice the potatoes small enough so that they fry fairly quickly, e.g., about the size of one of the keys on your keyboard.

Fry them in the vegetable oil. Remove and drain them as they get done.

Drain the vegetable oil from the pan and add just a tablespoon or two of olive oil. Return the potatoes to the pan with the cilantro pesto.

Just saute until everything's a good serving temperature.

This never fails to be a crowd-pleaser. Folks will go *nuts* over it! And no, it is not a part of your fat-free diet.

Lubieh (another Lebanese dish, I don't know how to write it)

I make this vegetarian style. But this is the traditional way:

1/4 lb meat
1 lb green beans
cilantro pesto stuff
olive oil
Lemon juice

Dice the meat into bite-size chunks. Cook it in a sauce pan until it is good and done--no pink. Add the green beans and a bit of olive oil. Cook them on a low heat until they begin to exude water. Add the cilantro pesto in about the last 5-10 minutes of cooking. Squeeze about a half a lemon onto the meat & beans.

Even prepared the meat-eater way, the amount of meat in this dish is small for what most Americans-I-know think is a normal meat/vegetable ratio. Eat it as a meal unto itself or with rice, using pita bread as your eating utensil.

2.8.4 Which coriander / cilantro do you have?

From: dplatt.ntg.com (Dave Platt)

There's the "slow-bolting" or "leaf" cilantro, and the coriander - they're the same species, but they're different strains selected for different growth characteristics. Leaf cilantro grows more of the low, dense foliage, and it's not as eager to bolt to seed as is commercial seed-coriander stock.

Culantro

From: endothyр.athens.net (Dennis O'Connell)

Also known as Puerto Rican coriander or spiny coriander. Leaves are 4 - 8 inches long, strap-like with serrated edges, very different from typical coriander. Taste is similar to (but much stronger than) cilantro.

From: afn23664.afn.org (Ray A. Orosz)

Finally, my culantro (*Eryngium foetidum*) woke up! I let some of it bolt, (Oh, boy does it bolt!), after the little flowers went away, I'm left with something cone-like where the flowers were. It appears they may be seeds, but I'm no sure. I'm also starting to get tired to get stung with the prickles around it every time I check to see what's happening. Are they seeds, or should I just cut them out and send them up the river? Exactly, how does this thing reproduce?

From: Rastapoodle.newsguy.com (Rastapoodle)

Culantro has vicious seed heads, with prickles like hypodermic needles. The seeds are within that nasty seed head. I just snip them off after they open and collect the seed. Cutting off the seed heads as soon as they form (early flowering stage) will result in lusher plants that spread faster.

From: Tristan Hatton-Ellis <Tristan.Hatton-Ellis.bris.ac.uk>

Eryngiums come from the same family (Umbelliferae, which also includes Carrots, Fennel & Queen Anne's Lace), but most Eryngiums are spiny and grown for ornamental reasons; the flowerheads are usually surrounded by several large spiny bracts which are often an attractive shade of metallic blue, silver or purple. Yours seems to be seeding very early, but then you are in a pretty warm climate! The cone-like structure is the seedhead, and is the best way of propagating Eryngiums. When it is dry the whole thing can be picked and the seeds shaken out. Fresh seed should germinate quite quickly; if you leave it it may need a period of cold to encourage germination.

Alternatively, you can take root cuttings, but since the plants dislike disturbance this is best done in early spring so the plants can establish again before summer.

Vietnamese Coriander

From: Rastapoodle.newsguy.com (Anya)

Vietnamese Coriander (*Polygonum odoratum*) is a low-growing spreading plant with tender stems and small light green leaves, and resembles a wandering Jew (*Transcendica* spp.). It has a pungent smell, not like coriander/cilantro at all. It likes wet, semi-shady locales.

It is used in Vietnamese cooking, in soups, stir-frys, etc. I have made a delicious vinegar with it. Too bad mine died, and I can't get it anymore. It is believed to be an aphrodisiac, and the Buddhist monks use it a lot for this reason.

I don't know if it is a perennial in cold climates, better to pot it up and bring it indoors, as it is tropical.

From: Robert Lauriston <robert.lauriston.com>

In looking for a local source for the Trinidadian herb "shadon beni" (or "shadow beni"), I found that it is culantro (*Eryngium foetidum*), and is called "ngo gai" (saw leaf herb) in Vietnamese, and "recao" by some Puerto Ricans (though in Venezuela, "recao" means a mix of herbs). There are additional possible synonyms in Gernot Katzer's spice pages:

http://www-ang.kfunigraz.ac.at/~katzer/engl/Eryn_foe.html

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/coriander-viet.html>

2.9 The mints

Latin names: The mints: *Mentha* sp.

Peppermint: *Mentha x piperita* (*Mentha aquatica* x *M.spicata*)

Spearmint: *Mentha x spicata* (*Mentha longifolia* x *M.suaveolens*)

Apple mint: *Mentha suaveolens*

Pennyroyal: *Mentha pulegium*

These might not be up to date as botanists make a hobby out of changing Latin names for *Mentha* species.

2.9.1 Growing mint

From: skifast123.aol.com (SkiFast123)

When you move spearmint, trust me and only transplant it into a container of some sort. You can bury the container if you want. Good containers to use are those big multi-gallon types that roses come in. Bury it right up to the rim. Otherwise, in a few years, you will have only one herb in your

garden and that is mint because it is VERY invasive.

From: Gary & Jeanne Ross <ross.together.net>

Spearmint will keep spreading unless you start pulling some of it out by the roots. We however have let it and several other mints spread thruout the lawn. It smells so great when you walk across it.

2.9.2 Harvesting mints

From: Henriette <hetta.saunalahti.fi>

Usually, with perennials, it's "cut at most one fifth at most three times a year". Mints are vigorous. You can cut at most one third at least five times a year, if they're growing nicely. Discard brown leaves, cut off brown stem parts, bundle and hang up to dry. Snip into bits when dry, the stems are just as valuable as the leaf. If you want to you can make thicker stems into baths or foot baths.

2.9.3 Using / preserving mints

Also see 4.6.2, Flower / herb syrup.

Also see tabouleh:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/parsley-1.html>

Also see tabouleh, syrup, senkanjabin:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/mint-recipes.html>

>I've got way too much peppermint / mint / spearmint ...:

* From: hattie.netcom.com (Susan Hattie Steinsapir)

Make a simple sugar syrup and add a whole lot of fresh mint to it. Use this when making granita or to sweeten sun tea. Lemonade made with the mint syrup would be nice, too.

* I like to make iced tea heavily minted. Steep a whole lot of mint with the tea bags. Or better yet, boil them with the tea water, then add the tea and steep. Discard the leaves.

* Make cold Asian type noodle salads with finely chopped mint added. I use mint to line a bowl in which I'm serving fresh whole strawberries. Don't see why you couldn't use them to line a bowl in which a fruit salad will be served. Melon salad would be nice.

* Some middle eastern dishes call for lamb and mint. Ground lamb and finely chopped fresh mint (and a few other goodies) would make interesting meat balls.

* Use it in flower arrangements. I've put rosemary branches and mint leaves together when I wanted something but hadn't picked up any fresh flowers.

* Give it away to your friends!

From: lebasil.ag.arizona.edu (Leslie Basel)

You also might want to preserve it in vodka or aquavit...

From: asnell.interaccess.com (Amy Snell)

Boil a handful of peppermint leaves in a pot of water, strain it, add sugar and serve over ice ... wonderful peppermint drink -- tastes a lot like candy canes, but very summery. Also good hot. Leftovers can be frozen in an ice cube tray and popped into iced tea to make it minty.

From: thavey.boi.hp.com (Tom Havey):

- * Pesto.....a bunch of peppermint leaves, some peppermint or walnut oil, a bit of sugar, all whipped up in a food processor.
- * Dried, put in decorative jars for gifts, or mixed in some homemade potpourri stuff.
- * Tea.
- * Raviolis stuffed with peppermint, pepper and raisins and a bit of goat cheese (or cottage cheese) topped with a light and spicy curry sauce.

From: libby.igc.apc.org (Libby Goldstein)

Just add it to water or seltzer, crush it a bit and serve over ice. It's lovely.

From: jrogow.ridgecrest.ca.us (Judith Rogow)

Mint planted at the kitchen door keeps ants away.

From: MORAVCSIK.clipr.Colorado.EDU (Julia Moravcsik)

- * You can make tabouleh with the mint.
- * You can boil water with sugar and dip the leaves in for crystallized mint leaves.
- * You can freeze them for later use.
- * You can make a sort of pesto by putting them in a blender with some oil and then freezing the pesto for later use.
- * You can put it in fruit salad, chopped fine.
- * You can chomp on a leaf before you drink water to make the water taste better.

From: sgoddik.sunflowr.usd.edu (Steen Goddik)

One of our friends describes chocolate-mint leaves (a variety of mint that has a taste of chocolate to it) as a great "social lubricant" for her 5-year old son. All the neighbor kids love it, and it has made him rather popular.

From: snielsen.orednet.org (Susan L. Nielsen)

Tea from spearmint is a pretty usual solution; I find it perkier than

peppermint. It also makes a terrific addition to iced tea made from regular black tea. We make what is conventionally called sun tea by the gallons all year 'round, though without the sun. Seven tea bags (good ol' Lipton's or Red Rose) steeped all day in a gallon jug of water will make good tea for icing with or without Sol. Use the spearmint fresh, or dry it, or freeze it in baggies. I also add it to raspberry leaf tea (calcium boost) because the raspberry has very little flavor of its own. Straight mint tea is good for bad tummies.

From: Don Wiss (no email address given)

Looking it up in my Wise Encyclopedia of Cookery I find: candied mint leaves, mint butter, mint ice, mint jelly, mint julep, mint mousse, mint sauce, mint syrup, mint wafers, and sprigs in the ice tea.

>From jmanton.standard.com (Jeanne Manton):

Mint allegedly has a root system extending 18 - 22 inches beneath the plant. I had mint planters built 18 inches x 18 inches x 26 inches deep. The mint hadn't read the same book because you always can tell where I have been living - yep, mint sprouts! This year the apple mint drowned and froze so I replaced it with pineapple mint - very pretty variegated leaves I use with cut flowers. When I made my mint jelly for the year I used the pineapple mint with crushed pineapple. This was supposed to be Christmas presents but oh, well, I will have another crop shortly.

From: awoods.magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu (Alan Woods)

This is from Erica Klein's _'Skinny Spices_:

Moroccan Mint Blend

2 T dried mint leaves
2 T garlic granules or powder
2 T toasted sesame seeds
1/2 T lemon peel
1/2 T onion flakes

She uses this as a rub, as flavor for a yoghurt-based soup, and as the main ingredient in marinade.

Spicy Mint tea

From: DonW1948.aol.com

6 c Water

2 Cinnamon sticks
4 Clove, whole
4 Allspice, whole
2 c Mint leaves

Bring the water, cinnamon, cloves and allspice to a boil. Boil for 1 minute. Stir in mint leaves. Remove from heat and steep for five minutes. Strain into cups.

From Taste of Home Magazine.

Orange Mint Vinegar

From: DonW1948.aol.com

1 sm Orange; peel; thin spiral - colored portion only
1/2 c Mint leaves; fresh
Vinegar, white

Remove peel (colored portion only) from 1 small orange in a thin spiral, and place in a sterilized pint jar. Lightly bruise 1/2 cup fresh mint leaves, add to jar. Heat apple cider or distilled white vinegar to just below the boiling point. Fill jar with vinegar, and cap tightly. Allow to stand 3 to 4 weeks. Strain vinegar, discarding peel and mint. Pour vinegar into a clean sterilized jar, adding a new sprig of fresh mint, if desired. Seal tightly. Use in dressing for tossed green salads with orange and grapefruit sections, or in marinades for chicken or lamb chops.

Mint jelly, apple based

>From sherae.zeta.org.au (Sheri McRae):

4 lb. tart apples
3 cups strong mint water
2 cups white vinegar
sugar

To make the mint water, soak a large quantity of mint (about a pound) in 3 cups boiling water overnight. Next day, chop apples and place in a pan, and barely cover with water. Cover and simmer about an hour until apples are soft. Strain. Combine apple juice, mint water, and vinegar and strain again. Measure and place in a pan, adding cup for cup of sugar. Stir until the sugar dissolves. Bring to boiling and cook rapidly until the jelly will set. Bottle and seal. Mint Jelly is good with meats, especially lamb and is also good on toast, etc.

I haven't tried this recipe but it came from a reliable preserving book

which I have used and like.

Mint jelly

From mcat.epix.net (Molly)

I've made mint jelly from my prolific mint patch. I didn't use any apple juice base, just boiled the crushed leaves in water, strained, added sugar and pectin. I think the recipe came in the pectin box, they've got an 800 number there also for other recipes. There's also a recipe in my WD Encyclopedia of Cookery:

- 1 1/2 cups firmly packed fresh mint leaves and stems
- 2 1/4 cups water
- 2 Tbs strained fresh lemon juice
- Green food coloring
- 3 1/2 cups sugar
- 1/2 bottle liquid pectin (nowadays that means one pouch Certo)

Wash mint, put in large saucepan, crush with masher or drinking glass. Add water and bring to a boil. Remove from heat, cover and let stand 10 min. Strain, measure 1 2/3 cups into large saucepan. Add lemon juice and a few drops of food coloring. Stir in sugar, bring to a full boil over high heat, stirring constantly. Stir in pectin, bring to a full rolling boil, boil for 1 min. Remove from heat, skim, pour into hot jars, and seal.

If you're looking for other ways to use mint leaves, you can candy them and use them for garnishes on cakes. Dry them and add an interesting taste while cooking lamb or pork. Mint and Elderberry flower is supposed to be a great combination for fighting colds and flu. Mint is very calming to an upset stomach, as well as freshening the breath.

Try mint jelly once, at least, to see for yourself if it's worth it. Good luck.

Molly

2.9.4 Which mint do you have?

Also see the Monarda / Beebalm entry, as this plant is often used like the mints: 2.24

From: conrad.richters.com (Conrad Richter)

Mints - Mentha spp.

Seeds -- Do not buy

The best mints cannot be grown from seeds. They are propagated asexually either by cuttings or division. Often seeds are offered in catalogues or in seed racks, but the plants that grow from these will be inferior rogues not worth the bother. The flavour and odour may have some degree of menthol, but the mix of oils is almost always a disappointment to anyone who has enjoyed the fresh, clean scents and flavours from a good spearmint or a good peppermint.

Peppermint (*Mentha x piperita*) is a natural hybrid, probably between watermint (*M. aquatica*) and spearmint (*M. spicata*). Its flowers are sterile and so are incapable of producing true peppermint seeds. What is usually sold as "peppermint" seeds is actually a type of spearmint. The highest and best use of this rogue mint is for medicinal tea, but it is not nearly as nice as true peppermint.

Even though spearmint flowers are fertile and are capable of producing seeds, seeds produce disappointing results. In most cases seeds bought as "spearmint" will turn out to be the same menthol-smelling variety sold as "peppermint."

Why does the seed industry continue to sell mint seeds? For years the seed industry has had little interest and expertise in herbs. Herbs tended to be sidelines that produced profits and as long as people continued to buy, the industry did not care. This is true of oregano and remains true of other herbs as well.

There are some mints, however, that can be grown true from seeds. Watermint (*M. aquatica*), applemint (*M. suaveolens*), corn mint (*M. arvensis*) and pennyroyal mint (*M. pulegium*) all grow from seeds.

But for the beginning herb gardener who just wants one mint for tea and perhaps one for lamb chops, it is better to get plants. There are many good quality spearmint strains and hybrids including English mint, improved spearmint, curled spearmint and the plain Jane, regular spearmint. Among the peppermints, the most commonly available variety is black peppermint (*M. x piperita vulgaris*), but there are others, like the new "chocolate mint" which, incidentally, some swear really has a "hint" of chocolate in its aroma profile.

When buying plants beware of the impostor mints grown from seeds. Just because mint plants are offered for sale in a reputable garden centre does not mean that the cultivar offered is a good one. Many large growers are growing mints from the same rogue seed varieties sold by the seed industry. Always let your nose be the judge; and don't be afraid to squeeze a leaf to allow the scent to escape into the air.

End of part 2 of 7

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Henriette Kress, AHG Helsinki, Finland
Henriette's herbal blog: <http://www.henriettesherbal.com/blog>

From spamtrap.hetta@spamcop.net Fri Jan 21 17:01:42 2005
Newsgroups: rec.gardens.edible,alt.folklore.herbs,rec.food.preserving,alt.answers,rec.answers,news.answers
To:
Subject: Culinary herbFAQ part 3/7
From: Henriette Kress <spamtrap.hetta@spamcop.net>
Date: Fri, 21 Jan 2005 17:01:42 +0200

Archive-name: food/culinary-herbs/part3
Posting-Frequency: monthly (on or about 20th)
Last-modified: 23Jul03
Version: 1.17b
URL: <http://henriettesherbal.com/faqs/culi-cont.html>

2.10 Feverfew and Pyrethrum

Latin name:

Feverfew: *Tanacetum parthenium* (*Chrysanthemum parthenium*)

Pyrethrum, Dalmatian daisy: *Tanacetum cinerariifolium* (*Chrysanthemum cinerariifolium*)

Have a look at entry 2.9, feverfew and migraine, in the medicinal herbfaq.

2.10.1 Growing feverfew - it does not seem to repel bees.

>I bought a feverfew plant today with high hopes of introducing it to my herb garden. Now I have read (of course I couldn't research before making my purchase) that bees can't stand the smell of feverfew and won't come near a garden with feverfew in it!

From: James Michael Kocher <jk1n+.andrew.cmu.edu>
I watched with delight last evening as the bees visited the heavy blossoms of my foxglove, which are growing right next to feverfew. I have never noticed a lack of bees, and feverfew grows all over my garden.

2.10.3 Using / preserving Feverfew

Have a look at the migraine / feverfew entries in the medicinal herbfaq.

2.10.4. Which feverfew do you have?

>From Rene Burrough <100735.543.compuserve.com>:
Feverfew is one of my favorite garden herbs, and I let it self seed gloriously. I came about having it in my garden as a total mistake. I thought I was planting an insecticide. It's not, and I'd like to give you the benefit of my mistake because Feverfew does not contain pyrethrum -- the organic insecticide.

Certainly feverfew, *Tanacetum parthenium* (formerly *Chrysanthemum parthenium*) is a good companion plant in a vegetable garden. Because of the flat composite head, hover-flies are attracted to it. Hover-flies are invaluable for eating the larvae of aphids. Any kind of aphid. So feverfew does provide a way of eliminating insects.

But the actual insecticidal constituents, pyrethrum & cinerin, are found in *Tanacetum cinerariifolium*. Obviously, also a member of the Composite family. It has finely divided, pungent, grey-green leaves. White daisy flowers with yellow centers as does feverfew. I don't think *T. cinerariifolium* has single & double forms. Certainly there is not a golden leafed *T. cinerariifolium* as there is *T. parthenium* var. *aureum*.

Pyrethrum has a local name of Dalmatian Daisy. The leaf of the pyrethrum gives a feathery feeling to the whole plant while feverfew has a chunkier look to say nothing of seriously lobed, with scalloped edged leaves.

The leaves of pyrethrum are concentrated closer to the ground -- giving a yarrowy kind of look to the base of the herb; while feverfew's leaves provide a bushier effect, and thus the flower heads themselves seem to be more part of the plant than above it as with the pyrethrum.

In the UK it is illegal to make homemade insecticides. In theory one could extract the juice from the plant to make an insecticidal spray. Legally, one can buy the powder which is mixed with water to form a spray; some folk believe it should first be mixed with alcohol and then diluted with water to activate the active principles of pyrethrum & cinerin. And some

pyrethrum powders are sold in plastic puffer bottles so that a plant can be dusted with the dry powder.

2.11 Tarragon

Latin names:

French tarragon: *Artemisia dracunculus* var. *sativa*

Russian tarragon: *Artemisia dracunculus* var. *inodora*

Mexican tarragon / Mexican Mint Marigold: *Tagetes lucida*. See 2.38.

2.11.1 Growing tarragon

>... can't grow tarragon in East Texas...

From: southsky.maui.net (Rick Giese)

Texas in summer is probably too hot for French Tarragon. You might experiment with a fall planting. French Tarragon is the preferred type for cooking, and will not grow from seed.

From: Lawrence.H.Smith.williams.edu (Lawrence H Smith):

French Tarragon may not be frost hardy in Finland, but in milder climes, particularly with a bit of mulch, it should be. It can also be potted for the winter. It likes full sun (though again, I'm not in Texas, so I can't say for there). Give it any sort of reasonable soil (it's not overly picky). The major growing tip is to divide it frequently (every 2-3 years), or it becomes rootbound. So keep giving plants away to your friends once you have enough for your own use...

2.11.2 Harvesting tarragon

From: Lawrence.H.Smith.williams.edu (Lawrence H Smith):

While it's growing, the best bet is to just harvest fresh whatever you need for today by picking off leaves or tips of branches with multiple leaves.

For collecting a lot (drying, vinegar, etc.) you can cut back all the branches by about 2/3rds, whereupon you should leave them for 8 weeks

before doing so again, supposedly. Personally, I only do a major cutback of this sort when clearing out before frost, so the time between cuttings is just what some book said, not experience.

2.11.3 Using / preserving tarragon

From: mrooney.mrooney.pn.com (Michael Rooney)
Tarragon pesto with pecans is a pretty good way to save it.

From: HeK
Vinegar recipe, anyone? That IS the classic way to preserve tarragon. You can also dry it or freeze it or freeze it in oil.

From: Lawrence.H.Smith.williams.edu (Lawrence H Smith):
Vinegar recipe, if you like. Clean/sterilize a canning jar. Stuff with Tarragon. heat white vinegar (or wine vinegar) to/near boiling. Pour into jar, seal, put in dark place. Strain off into another jar at a date depending on your tarragon taste tolerance - 2-6 weeks, or leave it until used. Adjust amount stuffed & time to taste. A canning jar is used primarily to reduce the likelihood of the jar cracking when boiling vinegar is poured into it.

Tarragon dries well - ideally, hang the branches in a dark warm place (such as an attic, or in a paper bag), and then collect the leaves into a jar for storage when dry. It freezes alone with a lack of fuss that suggests that freezing in oil is probably not worth the bother. You can also make up a flavored oil in a similar fashion to the vinegar recipe, though boiling the oil would not be a good idea...(warming it a bit might help).

From: Donna Beach <phuyett.CCTR.UMKC.EDU>
Here's another tarragon recipe. I found it in *the Herb Book* by Boxer & Bick

Baked Eggs with Tarragon

3 sprigs tarragon
2/3 cup light cream
sea salt & fresh black pepper
4 large eggs

Strip one teas of the best tarragon leaves from the sprigs and chop them. Put the rest in a small pan with the cream and bring to a boil. Remove from heat, cover the pan, and leave for 20 minutes. Strain the cream and add salt and pepper to taste. Break each egg into a buttered individual baking dish and stand them in a roasting pan with enough hot water into to come halfway up the sides of the dishes. Cook in a moderate oven 325 deg F until the whites are almost set. Pour a little cream over each one, just enough to cover the surface, then return to the oven for another 2 minutes. Sprinkle with the chopped tarragon and serve immediately.

This book--a nice coffee table book which offers tips on growing herbs and history of herbal lore--also includes a recipe for scrambled eggs with tarragon. Two tablespoons for eight eggs. You then serve the eggs on pumpernickel toast.

There's also a recipe for tarragon soup using a roux from chicken stock, cream, egg yolk, salt and pepper and fresh tarragon--about four cups of stock and six sprigs of tarragon. That one's easy enough to figure out on your own, and strict vegetarians would make adjustments for the egg and cream.

2.11.4 Which tarragon do you have?

>From Henriette:

There are 2 kinds of true tarragon: *Artemisia dracunculus* var.*sativa* (French tarragon) and *Artemisia dracunculus* var.*inodora* (Russian tarragon). The French tarragon cannot be grown from seed, it's taste is finer but it isn't frosthardy. The Russian tarragon can be grown from seed, it's taste isn't so good but it will survive outdoors in Finland.

2.12 Nasturtiums

Latin name: *Tropaeolum majus*.

2.12.1 Growing Nasturtiums

From: Lawrence.H.Smith.williams.edu (Lawrence H Smith):

Not fussy for "growing at all", but do respond well to rich, loose, well-drained soil & compost, plus regular watering, for growing nice large plants. Differences with the same variety on different spots have been dramatic (plants & leaves 2-3 times larger on good spots). Hummingbirds like the flowers.

From: baker.325.magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu (gwen baker)

If they get aphids - usually after midsummer in zone 5 - simply spray with a dilute soap. Any kind will work. Then rinse the leaves well before use.

From: Lawrence.H.Smith.williams.edu (Lawrence H Smith) to above:

Never had much trouble from insects - have had some aphids, had some aphid damage, but it never amounted to anything worth bothering to control. Most bugs don't find nasturtiums that appealing.

2.12.2 Harvesting nasturtiums

From: Lawrence.H.Smith.williams.edu (Lawrence H Smith):

I've had good results just picking leaves & flowers as needed for salad - once established, they produce right up until frost. You probably shouldn't harvest more than about 1/3 of the leaves from plants you intend to keep harvesting from.

2.12.3 Using / preserving nasturtiums

From: baker.325.magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu (gwen baker)

Nasturtium leaf is wonderful in salad. Slightly bitter but refreshing. I don't think it preserves very well and should only be used fresh.

From: Lawrence.H.Smith.williams.edu (Lawrence H Smith):

Any sort of cress-ish or lettuce-ish use - they are a bit hot like cress. The flowers are edible as well, and make a nice garnish. Large leaves from plants in rich plots can be used for lettuce-like purposes in sandwiches (or hamburgers) - the smaller ones tend to slip out annoyingly. Flowers do well both in salads, and floating on cold soups. If you like nasturtiums, you can make them the bulk of a salad, with no need for other greens. Great

for just eating in the garden. Have not tried preserving - I suppose you could blend up some nasturtium mush and freeze it for use in soup, but it's basically a fresh thing.

False Capers

Pickled Nasturtium Pods or Seeds

From: snielsen.orednet.org (Susan L. Nielsen):
After the blossoms fall, pick off the half-ripened Nasturtium seed pods. Continue as your crop develops to drop them into a boiled and strained mixture of:

1 quart white wine vinegar
2 teaspoons Pickling Salt
1 thinly sliced onion
1/2 teaspoon each allspice, mace and celery seed
3 peppercorns

Keep refrigerated and use as a variation for capers.

Taken from 'The Joy of Cooking', Irma S. Rombauer and Marion Rombauer Becker, Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., New York, 1975.

Pickled Nasturtium Flower Buds

>From Mary <mbuckNOSPAM.mindspring.com>:
Just soak the flower buds in salt water (10 % brine (1c salt : 2 qts water)) for 24 hours, drain, you soak them in cold water for an hour, drain, then pour boiling vinegar over them to pickle them. For canning process in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes.

Exceedingly easy and they taste just as good, if not better than capers.

2.12.4 What kinds of nasturtium are there?

From: Lawrence.H.Smith.williams.edu (Lawrence H Smith):
There's your basic nasturtium with green leaves & red & yellow & orange

flowers, the same but with variegated leaves, and a variety with all red flowers and a "more compact" growth habit (cherry flowered, I think it's called). I think there is also a climbing variety, but I don't have any of those.

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/nasturtium.html>

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/nasturtiums.html>

2.13 Dill

Latin name: *Anethum graveolens*.

2.13.1 Growing dill

From: kenneth.dicom.se (Kenneth Nilsson)

Here in Sweden dill is the most common herb and there are always discussions on why it is so difficult to grow. It always (?) dies when about 3" high and the 'story' here has it that dill is very susceptible to a root fungus. - By the way, you say "transplanted" dill into your garden. Does that mean you sow it indoors and plant it out? - The only solution for ME has been to sow/spread out the seeds from the mature dill flowers in fall. I take some mature stalks of dill and walk around the garden shaking them and I have beautiful dill BUT all over the garden. They just won't grow where I want them to - in nice rows - THERE! It seems as if the seeds that end up in non-infected soil thrive whereas the others simply don't make it. If you don't find that untidy, it's worth a try. I guess you can spread the seeds in early spring too.

From: mrooney.mrooney.pn.com (Michael Rooney)

First, there are many different dills. The best approach I have found is to find a dill that that survives the winter wherever you are. Then, it is one tuned to the environment and will grow better. It will also self seed, both where you want it :-) and where you don't :-(or :-) depending. It is perfectly acceptable to seed them very close together.

It is also a good idea to succession plant dill if you want a continuous supply of it all growing season long.

2.13.2 Harvesting dill

From: Anahita.aol.com (Susan D. Hill):

Dill can be harvested for leaves any time during the growing season. If you're growing for seeds, wait until the flowers die off and the seeds are set, then tie little socks around the seed heads. You can use nylon net, cheesecloth or even old stockings. Any fabric that is porous. Be sure to tie them on loosely so as not to damage the stem. Once the seeds are dry, just cut off the stalk and take it inside.

From: mrooney.mrooney.pn.com (Michael Rooney)

To harvest, assuming they are planted very close together, cut the plants off at their base that are the biggest. Then, let the remaining plants, which will be more properly spaced, grow larger until they are crowding themselves and pick them. Then repeat the process until they are all properly spaced and then pick the fronds as quickly as they reach their size because they are preparing to go to seed by then. I pick every frond while the plants are going to seed and it does not seem to affect the seed production at all and I get more dill fronds that way :-).

To harvest the seeds, take a pair of panty hose past the wearing stage and cut them off mid-thigh or mid-calf depending on your preference. Put the seed head, when it is still green, into the foot of the panty hose and the leg over the stem. Tie a twist tie around the panty hose on the stem and wait until the seeds are fully developed and quite dry. Then cut off the stem below the twist tie, bring it into the house or somewhere else out of the wind and put it over a big piece of paper. The seed will pretty much fall off the head as it is dry enough. Don't forget to shake the seed out of the panty hose leg too :-).

2.13.3 Using / preserving dill

From: jrogow.ridgecrest.ca.us (Judith Rogow)

I always cut some heads with ~almost~ mature seeds to add to my garlic dill half-sour jars. Adds extra flavour, and looks so pretty against one side of the jar.

From: Silkia.aol.com

The dill is an aromatic European plant that belongs to the parsley family, and it bears yellow blossoms that turn into tiny fruits or seeds. The pungent leaves and seeds of the plants are used as condiments and as pickling agents. Dill is derived from the Norse "dilla", meaning to lull,

and was formerly given to infants as a soporific.

Dill seeds have a rather acrid taste, and they serve to stimulate the appetite. The odor of dill is stronger and less agreeable than that of fennel. The two are closely related but they are not identical. However dill that is found growing wild in the United States, is popularly called fennel.

Dill is used primarily to pickle cucumbers, but it should be used more extensively as a seasoning. Its finely chopped fresh leaves add their fragrance to potatoes, stews, fish, cucumbers, vegetables salads, and broiled meats. Dill seeds will render cabbage, cauliflower, meat gravies, spaghetti sauces, fish sauces, turnips, sauerkraut, and soups (especially bean and borscht) more appetizing. Add a dash of dill to tomato sauce, or try using dill and celery in stewed tomatoes. Dill seeds resemble caraway seeds in flavor, and the two may be used interchangeably.

Dill Pickles

Carefully select and wash good cucumbers, about 5-6 inches long. Pack them in earthenware jars. Between the layers of cucumbers, place thin layers of dill, using stalks, leaves, and seed balls. Cover with brine [using about 1 lb. of salt to 3 pints of water]. Place a layer of grape or horseradish leaves on top, weight down with a large earthen plate. Let stand several weeks before using.

Source: the American Dictionary of Cooking, 1938 Ed. I can't tell you the publisher as the pages were torn years ago. My Grandmother gave the book the day I married .. it has been like a Bible for me.

From: DonW1948.aol.com

Friss Kaporleves (Fresh Dill Soup)

2 tbs. Butter, unsalted,
1 tbs. Flour, all-purpose
2 tbs. Dill; minced
4 c Water; cold
Salt
1/2 c Sour cream
1 tbs. Lemon juice

Make a roux with the butter and flour. Cook it until golden brown. Add dill, stir well, immediately pour in 1/2 cup cold water and whip until smooth. Add 3-1/2 cups water and salt to taste. Cook soup for about 10 minutes.

Mix sour cream with lemon juice and put in the soup tureen. Eliminate lemon juice if the soup is too sour for your taste. Pour the soup over. Serve with Potato Dumplings (recipe). Cook these dumplings in the fresh dill soup for 5 minutes.

Yield: 6 servings

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/dill.html>

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/dill-growing.html>

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/dill-dip.html>

2.14 Rosemary

Latin name: *Rosmarinus officinalis*.

2.14.1 Growing Rosemary

By jrogow.owens.ridgecrest.ca.us (Judith Rogow)

This is an herb you can literally kill with kindness! Rosemary will die if you fertilize her, or water her too much, or plant her in too-rich earth.

Benign neglect will result in big healthy plants. There are two basic types of Rosemary, the trailing or prostrate type, and a bush type that will, in time, become large enough to be considered a shrub. These plants have been used in England in mazes, and in the USA as landscape plantings. Prostrate Rosemary is an excellent ground cover.

Rosemary comes in various shades of blue-lavender, and there is a pink version that is a magnet for bees (as is the blue). The leaves are like miniature pine needles, in a lovely blue-green colour.

Rosmarinus, the herb's Latin name, means "sea spray", and the plant grows especially well near the ocean.

2.14.2 Harvesting Rosemary

By jrogow.ridgecrest.ca.us (Judith Rogow):

I cut my rosemary back all summer and dry it hung in a closet. This perfumes my hanging clothing, and keeps it from sunburn.

2.14.3 Using / Preserving Rosemary

By jrogow.ridgecrest.ca.us (Judith Rogow):

I use it for poultry stuffing, and as a tea to soothe stress. Also, the tea is a wonderful hair rinse for red heads and brunettes. I also use the tea in a bath when I ache all over from too much gardening.

Rosemary may be dried by hanging sprigs in a warm place, then stripping the leaves and keeping them in a jar or plastic bag. Uses of this versatile herb include teas (infusions of the leaves) that make soothing tisanes, enhancing hair rinses, and lovely fragrant soaking baths.

Leaves are used in cooking and for scented oils, the flowers are often added to a bride's headdress to insure fidelity.

Rosemary is considered an excellent tonic for headaches, and stomachs. It is also a traditional memory sharpener. Shakespeare said in Hamlet . . . "There's Rosemary, that's for remembrance." Mourners in many countries drop sprays of Rosemary in the coffin of a loved one as a pledge not to forget the person.

RECIPES

From: jrogow.owens.ridgecrest.ca.us (Judith Rogow)

1) A decoction for the bath

Steep several handful of Rosemary (fresh or dried) in water for an hour at simmer. Cool and bottle. Add to bath for soothing and scent.

2) Rosemary Water

4 tbs. Rosemary Flowers

1 Nutmeg, grated

2 tbs. Cinnamon, grated

1 QT alcohol spirit (Vodka works well)

Pour liquid over herbs in a clean jar - stand in warm dark place for two

weeks. Strain through cheesecloth or paper coffee strainer. Use as you would witch hazel, to soothe aches.

3) Rosemary Wine

1 bottle of white wine

1 handful fresh rosemary (or 2 tbs. dried)

2 tbs. dried Borage leaves

Steep herbs in wine a week or more, strain as in #2. This is an excellent nerve tonic.

4) Insect repellent candle

Crumble dried Sage and Rosemary leaves, mix with melted wax, form into candle (an easy way to do this if you don't have candle molds is to put a votive candle in a bowl, pour warm herb-wax in the bowl a bit at a time, and let harden) and use to keep bugs away.

Nick thinks rosemary and roast pork were made for each other. Here's his recipe for

Rosemary Roast Pork

For a robust, in-yer-face Rosemary Roast Pork that makes the whole house smell divine:

rolled, boned, tied leg of pork

depending on size of above, more or less of the following:-

about a cup of fresh rosemary leaves

untold garlic - well at least 4 fat cloves

sea salt

freshly ground black pepper (don't go mad, it's rosemary pork not peppered pork)

olive oil

Several hours before you plan to cook the meal:

Coarsely chop the rosemary leaves, then put them into a good sized mortar.

Add the garlic and lovingly smash the hell out of it all. Slosh in some extra virgin olive oil, (the greener and thicker and more peppery the better) and sprinkle in some sea salt (no additives allowed! check the packet!). Continue to work it until you end up with a coarse green viscous paste. The smell is fantastic - watch out for uncontrolled salivation.

Untie the joint, open it out. Trim off the rind and most of the fat (the crackling needs to be cooked separately if you want it) and smother the

joint thickly with the paste. Really lather it in. Roll it back up, retie it (or slip the elastic-string net back on) and leave it somewhere cool, the longer the better.

Wipe the mortar out with a hunk of warm ciabbata bread and scarf it down.

Roast the joint as usual. The rosemary and garlic on the outside of the meat will be dark and almost burnt - inside it will be green and fragrant.

Uncork something gutsy and prepare for paradise on a plate.

slurp

Nick

From: Ron Lunde <ronl.teleport.com>

Here's my recipe for Rosemary bread that never fails. (I use fresh rosemary, from the planter on the side of my house, next to the grape vine. Both the rosemary and the grape vine are trying to take over the universe. I'm waiting to see which wins.)

Rosemary Bread

(Popular for centuries, as legend goes, particularly in southern Europe)

Ingredients:

1 package dry yeast, not too far past the expiration date
1 cup warm water (I stick my finger in it, and it feels "slightly warm")
2 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary leaves (or dried, I guess)
1 teaspoon sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1 & 1/4 cups whole wheat flour
1 & 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
Olive oil to grease bowl and baking sheet
1 beaten egg

Destructions:

Fling yeast in water, add sugar. Let stand until foamy. If it isn't foamy, try again. Should take 5-10 minutes.

Add rosemary, salt, whole wheat flour, and about a cup of the regular flour. Stir with a wooden spoon until it's all a big lump, with kinda stretchy qualities around the edges. Add remaining flour, and turn it into an even bigger lump. Turn it out onto a floured surface (not a cat -- cat's tend to resent that), and knead it far longer than you actually want to, or about 8 minutes.

Cover with plastic wrap, and let rise for an hour or so in an oiled bowl, until it's doubled in volume.

Punch down, knead briefly (get rid of air pockets). Shape into a ball, and scrunch it around so that the top surface is reasonably smooth.

Put it on a lightly oiled baking sheet. Brush loaf with oil. Let rise for 45 minutes or so, until it's doubled.

Brush it with the egg. If you're feeling traditional, cut an 'X' in the top with a very sharp knife.

Bake at 375 degrees (Fahrenheit -- we're not doing plasma physics, we're baking bread) until the top is brownish, and you can get a nice hollow sound when you tap the bottom. That should be 45 minutes, or so. Cool on a rack. Eat.

It's low fat, high fiber/protein/taste. I like it.

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/rosemary.html>

2.15 Lavender

Latin name: *Lavandula angustifolia* and other *Lavandula* species.

Also see 3.6, Growing herbs from cuttings.

These lavender entries have been compiled by Susan L. Nielsen
(snielsen.orednet.org). Nice piece of work; thanks!

(copyright, Susan L. Nielsen, 1995)

"Lavender's blue, dilly dilly, lavender's green;
When I am king, dilly dilly, you shall be queen."

'Lavender's Blue', from *_Mother Goose's Melody_* (Anon.), 1781.

2.15.1 Growing Lavender

by Susan L. Nielsen

Among native plants of the Mediterranean, Lavender must surely be one of the most adaptable of these sun and warmth-loving plants. It thrives from its indigenous lands as far north and south as hardy perennials will grow. It is grown commercially in Australia, as well as in the more familiar lavender fields of England and France. It will grow even as far north as Norway, though perhaps not very far north once there.

Lavender is happiest in light, well-drained soils, in a somewhat lean loam. By lean, I mean a soil not too rich in nitrogen; lavender, like many plants, will gladly imbibe the nitrogen, and then send this nourishment into healthy leaf growth. In general, we prefer to cultivate lavender for its blooms (the leaves are useful, but the blooming plant will, after all, have leaves enough for most purposes I can imagine). Drainage is at least as important as soil content. I don't recommend planting lavender in gravel, but gravel would be preferable to a clay bed. A sandy loam is ideal. "Just dirt" is probably fine as long as it will crumble in the hand. Clean wood ash is a helpful addition to the soil.

Lavender likes the sun. Unlike human beings, it is made to flourish under UV rays (after all, ultraviolet and ultralavender aren't that far apart).

So, give it sun, give it drainage, water it sometimes, and enjoy its heady, sweet abundance.

Lavender may be propagated by seed, though I would suspect the ability of some of the cultivars to produce, from seed, plants true to the characteristics of the parent.

It may also be easily propagated from cuttings. This is the way most commercial stock is reproduced. In the spring or fall, take cuttings from new growth. You want small stems, pulled with a "heel" from the larger branch (pull quickly downward from the angle of the stem, and the "cutting" will detach with the desired tissue forming the heel). Dust with rooting hormone if available. Set the cuttings into sand or soil.

Don't, by the way, believe the words on a package of "sterile" soil mix; treat it to half an hour in a low heat oven (about 65 C degrees or 150 F, if you can set it that low). Use a shallow pan so that the soil can heat uniformly; it is very insulating and, if piled up, the inside can still be quite cool when the outside is hot to touch. Make certain it is cooled again before you use it. When you are using packaged soil for rooting or seeding, you will save yourself complications with damping off and other fungal diseases by ritually observing this practice.

Tend the plants gently, and keep them moist, and when they have rooted, (new top growth is a good sign) pot them into larger containers and fertilize them.

In addition, lavenders will layer well in the garden; buried stems will root along their length and can then be dug up, separated from the parent, and replanted on their own.

2.15.2 Harvesting Lavender

by Susan L. Nielsen

Lavender flowers should be harvested just before the blooms open. The flowers will look like fat, purple seeds on a stem. If you miss and must cut them later, be prepared for the flowers to fall off the stems. For culinary purposes, it may not be so important that you have perfectly preserved stems of lavender, but they probably lose some of their intensity of aroma as they mature on the plant.

All the herbals say that the aromatic powers of herbs are strongest when the plant has not yet opened to full bloom (true of most all the blooming herbs), and to cut herbs "in the morning when the plants are perfectly dry." I have never been able to achieve the match between morning hours and dryness at this pre-bloom season, though I suppose it depends on the dews and the rains where the garden grows. The dryness is probably more important than the morning hour.

Cut the lavender stems as long as you are able. Doubtless some of your harvest will be used for gifts or crafts. The long stems are most lovely. They also increase the possibilities available to you (you cannot make lavender bottles with short stems).

2.15.3 Using/Preserving Lavender

by Susan L. Nielsen

Do not dry your herbs in the sun. "Dry them quickly," say the books, but direct sun will cause them to fade, both in color and in intensity. You can spread them out flat to dry if you have unlimited table space. Or tie them in bundles and hang them upside down. "In a closet," say the wise authors. Ha-ha. Show me a closet with room for bundles of herbs to hang undamaged. I hang mine from curtain rods, but I have a window onto a vestibule where no sun strikes. Hang them from hooks or nails or thumb tacks. I know it is terribly quaint, but don't leave them there all summer,

fall and winter. They will gather dust, and they will lose potency in time. Once they are thoroughly dry, store them someplace more sheltered, though less scenic.

Rosetta Clarkson (in *_Herbs and Savory Seeds_*, Dover Publications, 1972) reminds us that, "To retain the full flavor and fragrance [of lavender and of other herbs to be used for cooking] you must store the herbs in containers, preferably glass or pottery with tightly fitting covers." Otherwise, "the oils will in time escape." Good advice for all herbs saved, though not too good for long stems. Try wrapping them in tissue paper and keeping them in a carton, drawer or chest. When storing freshly dried herbs in closed containers, you will do well to check them during the first weeks for signs of mildew. Turn them out now and then, spread the herbs loosely, sniff them, touch them, look closely. If all is well, re-pack them.

For culinary use, all experts agree (!) that lavender is strong. Use a light hand.

THE RECIPES

By Susan L. Nielsen

Beginning with the most simple:

Lavender Tea

About 3 tablespoons fresh flowers (half this amount for dried ones) steeped 3-5 minutes in a pint of water just off the boil. This has a pale straw color but is plenty aromatic. You might try combining the lavender with mint leaves, too.

Lavender Vinegar

Use distilled white vinegar. Flavored vinegars and stronger ones will compete with the herb for your senses. Place "some" (say, a small handful) in a modicum (say, a pint) of vinegar. Let stand 4-6 weeks. Use it as a dressing for fruit salads.

Even simpler: a few lavender leaves, washed, scattered into a garden salad add what the authors of *_Joy of Cooking_* (Irma S. Rombauer and Marion Rombauer Becker) call a "bitter pungency." In the US recently, "bitter pungency" in the form of radicchio commands a handsome price in the market, so let not this opportunity pass!

Lavender Martini

(I have not myself tried this, but I promise to, soon)

"Make your martini with your favorite proportions. Use a small sprig of lavender as the garnish. The oil of lavender is quickly but subtly released by the alcohol..."

(from *The Forgotten Art of Flower Cookery*, Leona Woodring Smith, Harper & Row, 1973).

Lavender Fruit Salad

Choose your favorite seasonal fresh fruits (no canned fruit cocktail here). Peel them as appropriate, reduce to bite-sized pieces. Combine them in a bowl with 10 or so sprigs of fresh lavender (remember: much less for dried). Let it all chill for a couple of hours. Serve it with a good splash of champagne over the top and lavender pretties in the bowl. Another version of this steeps the salad in a quarter cup of Grand Marnier, then follows with the champagne at serving.

Lavender Jelly

(Also from *The Forgotten Art of Flower Cookery*)

2 1/4 cups bottled apple juice [I would assume that this requires a clear juice for a clear jelly]

1 cup lavender flowers

3 1/2 cups sugar

1/2 bottle (4 oz.) liquid pectin

Place apple juice and lavender in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Cover and remove from the heat. Let stand for 15 minutes and strain. Return 2 cups of this juice to the heat, add the sugar, and stirring constantly, bring to a full boil. Stir in the liquid pectin and bring to a rolling boil for 1 minute, stirring constantly.

Remove from the heat, skim off the foam, and pour into jelly glasses with a sprig of jelly in each glass [and seal]. (Makes about 5 medium glasses.)

Lavender Apple Crisp

Add about a tablespoon of fresh (half that if dried) lavender to your favorite apple crisp or deep dish pie recipe.

and, by no means least:

Lavender Ice Cream (from *At Home with Herbs*, Jane Newdick, Storey Communications, 1994, changed a bit)

4 egg yolks

3/4 cups sugar

2/3 cup half-and-half [half cream, half milk]
6 fresh lavender flower heads
2/3 cup whipping cream or heavy cream
2 cups of milk

Whisk the egg yolks and sugar together until light and foaming. Gently heat the half-and-half in a pan with the lavender flowers. Bring to the boil, then strain into the egg yolk mixture. Return the mixture to the stove and cook over very low heat, stirring constantly until it is slightly thickened and will coat the back of a spoon. Do not let it boil. Pour the custard into a bowl, and refrigerate until it is completely cold. Whip the cream just until it forms peaks and fold it into the cold custard. Add remaining 2 cups of milk. Process in an ice cream maker, or freeze in the container in the freezer compartment of the refrigerator. Serve with thin, crisp cookies.

[O', I do say...]

Now, I know this last is not a culinary item, but I've been very good about leaving out the 4,012 craft uses of lavender I could have mentioned, and I did bring these up earlier, so indulge me:

Lavender bottles

Lavender bottles are a very old little whimsy. You must use freshly cut lavender. Once it has dried, the stems will break as you try to bend them, and your bottles will fall apart before they are made.

Use a goodly bunch of lavender, 15 to 20 stems with flower heads. Also have on hand some strong thread.

Neatly bunch the lavender and tie the stems together just below the flower heads. Wrap the thread several times around the stems to make a strong band. Trim the thread ends.

One stem at a time, bend the stems over the flower heads. Work around the bundle, carefully. The stems will form a kind of cage over the flowers. As the lavender dries, the stems will shrink some, and the "bottle" will be more open.

When all the stems are bent over the flowers, tie them again at the point just below the flower heads. Your earlier tie will be obscured. Tie the bottoms of the stems together, too. Tie tightly, because the stems will shrink. You can tie narrow ribbons over the strings to make things prettier.

By Susan L. Nielsen

"Oh, call it by some better name..." -- Thomas Moore

The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology (C.T. Onions) considers that the English word "lavender" derives, through a painful series of transcriptions, from the Latin **lavare** (to lave, to wash), though Professor Onions comments that, if this is so, "the sense-development is obscure." Perhaps he was unfamiliar with lavender-scented baths.

Lavandula varieties are many, and the manifold literature does not come to any tidy agreement on the number of lavender species. At last I went to Hortus Third to settle the matter. While this is specifically a North American reference, I do not believe there can be too many examples of this herb not now grown somewhere in N. America.

The following is a fairly tedious list but, because of the large number of names under which lavender is sold, I have listed the subspecies and cultivar names (forgive me, but I have omitted the convention of italic markers for genus, species and variety names; cultivars are in single quotes). The list is somewhat abbreviated. All names not listed are judged, "without botanical standing.":

- * *L. angustifolia*: ENGLISH L. (synonyms = *L. delphinensis*, *L. officinalis*, *L. spica*, *L. pyrenaica*, *L. vera*).
Cultivars = 'Alba', 'Atropurpurea', 'Compacta', 'Dutch', 'Fragrance', 'Hidcote', 'Munstead', 'Nana', 'Rosea', 'Twickel Purple', 'Waltham'.
- * *L. dentata*: FRENCH L. (also, previously, sometimes referred to as *L. delphinensis*). var. *candicans*.
- * *L. lanata*: (plants offered under this name may sometimes be *angustifolia*).
- * *L. latifolia*
- * *L. multifida*: (synonym = *canariensis*)
- * *L. pinnata*: var. *Buchii*.
- * *L. stoechas*: SPANISH L., FRENCH L. (synonym = *pedunculata*).

Some folklore: Three of the above names are interesting in history.

- * **L. Spica** (spike Lavender [who says Latin is tough?]), shows in its name the earlier use of the term "Spike" to refer to lavender (as, Culpeper's Oil of Spike). The Greeks called this plant, 'Nardus.' Bible readers will here recognize the name Spikenard: "While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof." said the dark, passionate lover in "The Song of Solomon" (1:12), and

"Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard, spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon..." (4:13,14).

* *L. vera* (English Lavender), is also called "true" Lavender, and **L. stoechas*, French Lavender. Obviously there is room for a cross-Channel rivalry here. The English Lavender claims to possess the finest, true lavender scent: **vera**. In fact, it is the basis of the huge commercial market in lavender. French Lavender, on the other hand, (according to dear Mrs. Grieve, *_A Modern Herbal_*, 1931, reproduced by Dover Publications, 1971), is "probably the lavender so extensively used in classical times by the Romans and Libyans as a perfume for the bath." This is a fairly distinguished citation, which endures despite the fact that its aroma is judged by some to be "musty," by others "musky" (a distinction one might have thought more clear), and, by the more discriminating, "like a cross between lavender and rosemary."

So, among these worthies, the question remains, which do you have? Or even, which do you want to have?

The above list should help if you have purchased lavender with a nursery tag in the pot and are unsure where you stand among the synonyms.

If you have no lavenders, or wish to increase your holdings, and are looking for guidance, you might consider the attributes you most seek. If you are very involved in processing, and want to extract oils, for instance, you might choose the larger-leaved Spike varieties for a greater yield of oil. Be forewarned, however, that oil extraction requires enormous quantities of material for a start.

If you live in a harsh, cold-winter area, the hardier *L. angustifolia* (*vera*) might be your best choice.

For deck or terrace edging, parterres, or walkway borders try the smaller varieties: Hidcote, or Munstead, for example.

If your lavender has wooly white foliage, in a mound of about 12" height, and blooms late in the season on towering stems topping at 3' or so, you probably have *L. lanata*. Its scent will be similar to that of *L. angustifolia*.

The *L. pinnata* and *L. multifida* cultivars have greyish, ferny foliage.

L. dentata has little "teeth" along the edges of the leaves. Its scent is said to suffer from the same shortcomings as that of the *Stoechas* lavenders.

For historical interest, or from the standpoint of a collector, of course,

one cannot have too many lavenders. And all of them are equal candidates for inclusion in the garden.

"...we shall find a cleanly room, lavender in the windows,
and twenty ballads stuck about the wall."

-- Izaak Walton, *The Compleat Angler*, 1653-1655.

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/lavender-1.html>

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/lavender-2.html>

2.16 Lemon balm

Latin name: *Melissa officinalis*.

2.16.1 Growing Lemon balm

From: jera.ksu.ksu.edu (JR Schroeder)

Lemon Balm, is a hardy perennial member of the mint family (Lamiaceae). I've found it easy to propagate from seed or by dividing the clump in spring or late August; cuttings don't seem to work well. A mature plant forms an ordinary-looking rounded clump that's about 2' across. It doesn't spread as rampantly as some of its relatives, although it can become weedy if you let it go to seed (this is a good way of getting little plants to share, though :)).

There is a variegated form, very attractive but less vigorous (it is hardy in my Zone 5 winters). I've found that if you stress this form, it reverts to completely green, until it recovers from the stress (which may take the rest of the season). I haven't tried propagating this one from seed; it is true from cuttings and divisions.

2.16.3 Using / Preserving Lemon balm

From: doliver.minerva.polaristel.net, Northwind Farm Publications

Someone asked about lemon balm tea: should it be used fresh or dried, etc. We are great lovers of lemon balm tea. We grow a patch of it, harvesting the leaves all summer for fresh tea. In the fall, we gather the crop and air-dry it for winter. The flavor is different depending on whether it is fresh or dried; I prefer the fresh, but dried is fine. Bruising the leaves before brewing the tea definitely intensifies the flavor.

To prepare the tea, just steep the leaves in boiling water for a few minutes. Personal taste will determine the amount to use (don't skimp) and the brewing time. Try adding some of your other favorite tea ingredients for a little variety. Chamomile and hops make a soothing (maybe sedative or soporific for those sensitive to these ingredients) combination with the lemon balm.

I have never heard of any toxic effects or contraindications to the use of lemon balm. From personal experience, I'd say it's perfectly harmless.

From: ericf.central.co.nz (Sue Flesch)

Put some fresh stalks in a muslin bag or similar and hang over hot tap while running a bath. Scents the bath beautifully. Nice dried and added to pot pourri.

> What can I do with all this lemon balm?

From: denysm.vcn.bc.ca (Denys Meakin):

It makes a good refreshing tea. Just steep a stalk with the leaves in boiling water for a few minutes. Experiment with different amounts until you get the strength of brew you like. You can dry the leaves for making tea in the winter.

Lemon Balm Cordial

From Vicki Oseland <vikio.earthlink.net>, quoting 'The Complete Book of Herbs and Spices' by Sarah Garland:

4 sprigs lemon balm
2 sprigs hyssop
2 sprigs basil
2 sprigs mint
2 sprigs sage
1 Tbs. chopped, crushed angelica root
2 oz. sugar

"Regular" garlic does not get "seed" heads. Rocamboles garlic does. The "seed" heads are not really seeds but are "bulblets" which may be planted and will develop into garlic in a couple of years. These bulblets do have a garlic flavor but I find them a bit bitter compared with garlic cloves. Btw, my rocambole is just slightly smaller (head size) than my "regular" garlic. and, I am unable to taste a difference between the two varieties.

>From sallee.aol.com (Sallee):

The little bulblettes which are formed after the flower are the seeds for the garlic plant, but they must be planted in the FALL to make big beautiful garlic bulbs the following fall. Actually, the garlic knows the best time to plant itself -- when that head dries, it drops its seeds at just the correct planting time.

The garlic also tells you the best harvesting time for the bulbs for keeping and eating -- when that gooseneck flower stem unwinds fully, the bulbs are fully formed, but have not yet started to petal outward. The bulbs are still tightly closed and keep well.

I've grown award winning garlic in Nebraska for years by letting the plants tell me when to pick this way.

2.17.2 Harvesting garlic

In news:rec.gardens.edible in May 2001

>From Setzler <christie.psknet.com>:

> the garlic plants will start to wilt and die back when the photo period is correct, let the energy drain back to the bulb and the tops wilt completely.

If you wait until the tops are completely brown, it may be too long. As they start to brown, pull one up to see the shape of the head. If it is completely covered with the papery covering and you can see the cloves inside it is probably right. If you wait too long the cloves start to separate, and will not keep as well. If you pick one too soon, that is fine to eat.

2.17.3 Using / preserving garlic

From: NDooley.president-po.president.uiowa.edu

Garlic Jelly

2 T. butter or margarine
1 head garlic, cloves separated and peeled and minced
3 C. granulated sugar
1/2 C. apple cider vinegar
6 oz. liquid pectin

In a large saucepan, combine butter and garlic over medium heat. Cook, stirring constantly, until garlic is light golden brown (3 to 4 minutes). Add sugar and vinegar. Cook, stirring constantly, until sugar dissolves and mixture comes to a boil. Stir in pectin. Boil 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Skim foam from top of jelly. Pour into sterilized jars and seal. Yield: about 3 C. jelly.

>From Schaller_Barb.htc.honeywell.com (Barb Schaller):

Here's a recipe from the Fall 1995 Kerr Kitchen Pantry publication:
"This unusual jelly can be used as a condiment: Simply add it to a meat marinade or brush it on a roast while cooking. The combination of ingredients results in an attractive light green color -- no food coloring needed!"

Garlic Jelly

4 oz. peeled garlic cloves
2 cups white vinegar (labeled 5 percent acidity)
5 cups sugar
3 oz. package liquid pectin (Certo brand)

In a food processor or blender, blend garlic and 1/2 cup vinegar until smooth. In 6- to 8-quart saucepan, combine garlic mixture, remaining 1-1/2 cups vinegar and sugar. Over high heat, bring mixture to a boil, stirring constantly. Quickly add pectin, return to a boil and boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Immediately fill hot, sterilized half-pint jars with jelly, leaving 1/4 inch headspace. Wipe jar tops and threads clean. Place hot lids on jars and apply screw bands firmly. Process in boiling water bath for 5 minutes. Yield: 5 half-pint jars.

Garlic jam

From: Sam Waring <waring.ima.infomail.com>

4 Garlic head, whole (~14 oz)
1 T Olive oil, extra-virgin
1 md Onion; unpeeled & halved lengthwise
Salt (opt)

Preheat the oven to 350F. Using a large sharp knife, cut off 1/2-inch from the top of each head of garlic to expose some of the flesh.

Drizzle 1 tablespoon of the oil over the bottom of a gratin or glass pie dish. Place the garlic and the onion halves cut sides down in the dish, cover tightly with foil and bake for 45 minutes, until very soft to the touch. Uncover and let cool for 20 minutes. Peel the onion halves and finely chop them. Place in a medium bowl.

Squeeze the garlic pulp from the skins into the bowl; discard the skins. Using a fork, stir in the remaining 2 teaspoons oil and mash with the onion and garlic until thoroughly incorporated. Season with salt if desired. (The garlic jam will keep refrigerated in a glass jar for up to 2 weeks.)

Makes 1-1/3 cups.

Use this condiment with roasted meats or as a spread for toasted croutons or cold meat sandwiches, or try a spoonful of it mixed into homemade salad dressings and sauces.

Source: Food & Wine - December, 1993

>From hattie.netcom.com (Susan Hattie Steinsapir):

Garlic bulbs - intact - keep well if given enough air about them. I keep a pound or so on hand, ordinarily, in a bowl on the counter. If it starts to go bad, usually you'll notice that it's sprouting much as an onion or potato would.

It's great baked - then squeeze the paste out onto toasted baguettes.

Absolutely ***DO NOT*** store it in oil. Doing this can lead to death by bacterial contamination.

I don't know about freezing it. I usually use it up before I really have to consider such a course.

>From ness.tc.fluke.COM (Jerry Ness):

I break up the garlic bulb and peel each clove of garlic. I put all the cloves of garlic in one of those pint jars with the glass lid, wire bale and red rubber gasket. I fill the jar with Gallo cocktail sherry and put it in the 'fridge.

I tried the oil method with the same kind of jar in the 'fridge but after a couple of weeks the hiss of exhausting gasses when I opened the jar made me more than a little suspect that something wasn't right with this method.

I have had no spoilage problems with the sherry/garlic method. An extra bonus is the garlic flavored sherry for stir fry, Yum!

>From hattie.netcom.com (Susan Hattie Steinsapir):

The best part of a pickle is the pickled garlic. It's the safest thing for me to eat - I can eat about 3 of them and not salt out. I've seen pickled garlic in the stores. It costs 3 USD to 4 USD for a half-pint. Garlic is cheap, this stuff is way overpriced! So, I wanted to pickle it myself but needed a recipe. Voila! Here's a recipe for pickled garlic from the Kerr Kitchen *Pantry*.

Pickled garlic

3 cups peeled garlic cloves (this was the tough part!)
1.5 cups white vinegar (5 percent acidity)
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 t pickling salt

Add garlic cloves to pan of boiling water. When water returns to a boil, boil for one minute. Drain and pack into hot half-pint jars, leaving 1/2 inch headspace. Heat vinegar, sugar, and salt to boiling. Pour boiling pickling liquid over garlic, leaving 1/2 inch headspace. Carefully run a nonmetallic utensil down inside of jars to remove trapped air bubbles. Wipe jar tops and threads clean. Place hot lids on jars and apply screw bands firmly. Process in Boiling Water Bath Canner for 10 minutes.

Yield: 3 1/2 pints.

I'll probably use less sugar, more salt. I know that I'll add hot pepper flakes for some extra kick.

As an addendum, from Susan Hattie Steinsapir:

When I pickled the garlic, I soaked it overnight in the fridge in vinegar. I poked holes in it so the vinegar could penetrate it better and then I boiled it in the vinegar. I didn't use sugar at all but used more salt. I haven't opened a jar yet but gave one to my sister. She was thrilled.

>From jouet.aol.com (JOUET):

Garlic Soup 1

1 clove garlic
2 tbs. olive oil
3 tbs. butter
1 large onion, finely chopped
3 Cups chicken stock
4 slices white bread, crusts removed
2/3 Cup light cream
1 ounce blanched almonds, finely chopped

Garnish: fresh parsley or chives, chopped

Separate the garlic cloves, removing the papery skins. Heat the oil in a pan, add the garlic, and cook for 10-15 minutes until tender. Remove from the heat. Cook, then skin. Roughly chop the flesh.

Melt the butter in a large saucepan, add the garlic and onion, cover, and cook over low heat for 10-15 minutes until the onion is soft. Pour in the stock, add the bread, and simmer for 30 minutes.

Transfer the soup to a blender or food processor. Add the cream and almonds and blend until smooth. Garnish and serve

NOTES: Garlic that has been smoked over oak chips adds a great flavor but regular garlic will work quite well.

Garlic Soup 2

1 whole garlic bulbs
2 quarts water
2 teaspoons salt
a pinch of pepper
1/4 teaspoon sage
1/4 teaspoon thyme
1/2 teaspoon bay leaf
4 sprigs parsley
3 tablespoons olive oil
3 whole egg yolks
4 tablespoons olive oil
some grated Parmesan cheese

Separate the garlic cloves, drop into boiling water for 30 seconds. Drain, plunge into cold water, and peel. Put the garlic with the 2 quarts of water, salt, pepper, sage, thyme, bay leaf, parsley, and olive oil into a large saucepan and boil slowly for 30 minutes. Adjust seasoning.

Beat the egg yolks in a soup tureen until they are thick. Beat in the oil very slowly, as if making mayonnaise. Just before serving, beat a cup of the hot soup into the egg mixture slowly, so that the eggs heat gradually. Strain in the rest of the soup through a sieve, beating constantly; keeping back the garlic and seasonings. Press the garlic against the sieve to get the juice out. Serve at once with fresh French bread or croutons and cheese.

Alternative: instead of the oil and egg mix in the tureen, strain the soup and return it to the pot. Add 3 cups potatoes, diced, and a pinch of saffron; simmer for about 20 minutes until the potatoes are tender.

Garlic Soup 3

1/2 cup oil
4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
8 oz stale white bread, crusts removed, crumbled

1 teaspoon paprika
pinch salt
pinch cayenne pepper
4 cups water
3 whole tomatoes, peeled and coarsely
2 whole eggs, lightly beaten
Garnish: 2 sprigs parsley, finely chopped

Heat the oil in a saucepan, add the garlic and saute until soft but not brown. Add the bread and cook over moderate heat until light golden but do not brown. Add the paprika, salt, cayenne, water, and tomatoes, then simmer for 30 minutes over low heat.

With a wooden spoon, beat the soup until the bread disintegrates. While beating, add the eggs. Simmer for a few moments but do not boil. The soup should be highly seasoned. If necessary, add more cayenne and salt. Garnish with parsley and serve.

>From Susan Hattie Steinsapir hattie.netcom.com:

Here's yet another garlic soup recipe. This one from Elizabeth David's *French Country Cooking*.

Soupe A L'Ail

This version is from Languedoc.

Put 2 tablespoons of goose or other good dripping into a deep earthenware casserole. In this, gently melt 24 cloves of garlic without letting them brown. (Note, most of us don't have goose fat or an earthenware casserole. I usually have some schmaltz - rendered chicken fat - on hand, or use a mixture of butter and olive oil. Use an enameled soup pot.)

Over this pour 3 to 4 pints of warmed stock or water. Season with salt, black pepper, nutmeg and mace. Cook for 15 minutes. Put the soup through a sieve. (By this, I think you mush the garlic cloves through.) Return the soup to the pot to reheat it.

In a bowl, beat the yolks of three to four eggs with three tablespoons of olive oil. Stir some of the soup into the eggs, then pour the egg mixture back into the soup without letting it boil again.

Have some slices of stale bread, toasted in the oven with the egg whites (not beaten) spread over them. Put these bread slices into a soup dish and pour the soup over them.

Should serve 4 to 6 easily. Enjoy.

2.18 Thyme

Latin name: *Thymus vulgaris* and other *Thymus* species.

2.18.1 Growing thyme

From: skifast123.aol.com (SkiFast123)

Transplanting thyme: a suggestion made by Adelma Grenier Simmons (of Caprilands, CT fame) in one of her many herb pamphlets is to bury one-half of the plant along with the roots in the soil. In other words, you will only, after transplanting, be able to see 1/2 of the plant that you had formerly. The other 1/2 will be underground.

Since thyme is tricky to transplant because its roots are so fine and in my experience easy to sever from the main plant, this method has worked with good results for me.

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/thyme.html>

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/lemonthyme.html>

2.19 Lemon grass

Latin names:

Cymbopogon flexuosus -- East Indian lemongrass

Cymbopogon citratus -- West Indian lemongrass

Cymbopogon martini -- palmarosa

Cymbopogon nardus -- citronella grass

2.19.2 Harvesting lemon grass

From: stoddard.aruba.ccit.arizona.edu (Mari J Stoddard)

Scissor off the top third of the leaves, [dry] and use in tea or potpourri. Do this whenever you have lots of points sticking up, rather than harvested edges. I love to mix it with mint and Texas Ranger (all three fresh off the plant). Supposed to be good for throat complaints (cough, soreness). Rose petals or hibiscus makes for a prettier color.

Cut off a clump to ground level, use bottom third in cooking - sliced fine or diced. Traditionally boiled in soups or sauces. For instance, lemon

grass clump, chicken broth, coconut milk, garlic and a bit of fish sauce makes a great soup. Wait till you have at least three clumps.

Cut off a clump almost to ground level and lay on the BBQ grill under fish or poultry. I usually separate the clump vertically into 1/4- 1/2 inch diameter lengths and grill them for about a minute before putting down the fish.

Separate the pot contents into clumps, and plant each clump in a new pot.

From: Christopher Loffredo <cloffred.umabnet.ab.umd.edu>

Either start by trimming off some of the older blades every few weeks, leaving some young shoots on the plant, then (1) roll up each blade into a tight curl or tie it into a bow and freeze it at once inside a plastic bag, or (2) dry the leaves, chop them up, and store in jars.

If you use the freezer method all you have to do is thaw the lemon grass and it's ready to use. Dried lemon grass needs to be softened up if you're going to cook with it, so place some in a small bowl with a few tablespoons of hot water and let it soak for a while before cooking.

2.19.3 Using / preserving lemon grass

From: ehunt.bga.com (Eric Hunt)

This should be a great refresher.

Iced Lemongrass Tea

1/4 c Chopped fresh lemongrass-tops or

2 tbs. Dried flakes

4 c Boiling water

Sugar to taste

Preheat teapot with boiling water; discard water. Add lemongrass and boiling water, steep 8 to 10 minutes; strain. Allow to cool, sweeten to taste, and serve in tall glasses with ice. Yield: 4 servings

From: albersa.aztec.asu.edu (ANN ALBERS)

Lemon Grass Crockpot Chicken & Thai soup from the leftover stock

1 whole chicken
8 young lemongrass stalks, 4-6" long (use the tender white parts from the base of young shoots. These are tastiest)
salt and pepper to taste

Rinse the chicken and pat dry. Rub all over with butter and then salt and pepper to taste. Stuff about half the lemongrass stalks in the cavity of the chicken and put it in a crockpot, or Dutch oven. Make slits in the skin and insert the other stalks. Trim if necessary to fit these in. Pour water over the chicken to submerge it about halfway and cook on low 6-8 hrs till tender.

Now, you can eat the chicken and make Thai soup out of the lemon grass stock. To make the soup, strain all the stuff out of the stock. Add a can of coconut milk, several shakes of red pepper flakes, bits of leftover chicken that you've shredded and then salt and pepper to taste. Heat thoroughly & in the last five minutes of cooking time add some sliced mushrooms, & green onions. Yum.

Other ideas:

Make lemongrass tea. I never measure, just pour boiling water over the leaves or stems and steep till it's well-colored. Add honey to taste.

Use the tender young shoots, chopped in stir fry dishes to add flavor. It's good with stir fried chicken, water chestnuts, sliced carrots and broccoli. I usually stir fry the lemongrass shoots first (about an hour ahead of time) in a little oil then mix with teriyaki or soy sauce, some ginger, and cornstarch to thicken. Then, after stir-frying the rest of the stuff, dump the sauce over all and allow it to thicken. Serve with rice.

From: Sam Waring <waring.ima.infomail.com>

Nasi Kuneng (Yellow rice)

1 lemon grass stalk or lemon zest
2 1/2 c rice
1 1/2 c coconut milk
3 c water
2 1/2 tsp. turmeric
1 tsp. salt
1 sl galangal, dry
1 bay leaf
1 krapau leaf

Once reserved for religious ceremonies, nasi kuneng is still served on

special occasions in Indonesia. This sweet and aromatic centerpiece of a dish is perfect with satay.

Cut lemon grass into pieces about 3" long and tie into a bundle. In a 3-quart pan combine lemon grass, rice, coconut milk, water, turmeric, salt, galangal, bay leaf, and citrus leaf. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, uncovered, stirring gently every now and then, just until liquid is absorbed. To finish cooking, steam according to one of the methods listed below.

To steam in cooking pan: cover pan, reduce heat to low, and cook until rice is tender (15-20 minutes). Halfway thru estimated cooking time, gently fluff rice with 2 forks. Remove and discard seasonings. Transfer to a serving bowl or mound rice on a platter into a rounded cone.

To steam using traditional method: transfer rice and seasonings to a colander or steamer basket insert. Into a large kettle, pour water to a depth of 1 1/2 inches: bring to boil over high heat. Place colander in kettle. Cover and reduce heat, steam until rice is tender (about 20 minutes). Remove and discard seasonings. Serve as noted above.

-- per Larry Haftl

>From arielle.Starbase.NeoSoft.COM (Stephanie da Silva):

Lemongrass Drink

A handful of fresh lemongrass leaves, preferable the soft grassy tops,
or the top half of 12 fresh green stalks
3 cups cold water
1/4 cup sugar syrup

Cut the leaves or tops into 2-inch lengths, measure out 1 1/2 cups, loosely packed. In a blender, combine the tops, water and syrup and blend at high speed until the water is a vivid green and the lemongrass leaves are reduced to fine, short, needlelike pieces, about 1 minute. Strain through a very fine sieve into a large pitcher, spoon off and discard green foam. Taste to see if it's sweet enough, and add more syrup if you like. Serve in tall glasses over ice.

Sugar syrup:

1 cup sugar
1 cup water

Combine sugar and water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and cook until liquid has thickened and colored slightly, about 5 minutes. Cool.

2.19.4 Which lemon grass do you have?

>From herblady.newsguy.com (Rastapoodle):

Often *Cymbopogon citratus*, the variety grown for flavoring savory dishes, is attributed to Brazil, but others dispute that, and say 'origin unknown.' This species grows about 3-5' tall, with graceful, arching leaves. Can be used in the ornamental garden as a pretty plant.

C. flexuosus is known to be native to India, and is much sweeter than *C. citratus*. It is used more for flavoring soft drinks, making syrup, candies, etc. It grows up to 8' tall, and is rather rangy, or ratty looking in its growth habit. Doesn't look very good in the ornamental garden.

C. martini smells like a cross between lemon and rose, and is mostly used in perfumery. I haven't grown it, so I don't know its growth habit. It is on my wish list :-)

>>A friend told me he was buying small lemon grass plants to put in his garden to help keep away bugs.

>>Has anyone ever heard of lemon grass as a bug (I assume he meant, gnats, etc.) deterrent?

>Perhaps there is a connection to citronella?

>From herblady.newsguy.com (Rastapoodle):

Boy, are we confused here folks, but it is a common mistake. Here's the story: Lemongrass, a delightful plant, and its close cousin, Citronella have many wonderful properties, releasing their scent into the air not being one of them.

Very interestingly, a Dutch plant scientist did some genetic engineering and spliced the oil gene of the Citronella into a Pelargonium (scented geranium) plant. The resultant plant looks like a scented geranium, but gives off the fragrance of Citronella (and rose, the original scent of the geranium) to the air with just a breeze or a kiss from the sun.

The hybrid is called Citrosa, and it is patented (you can't make cuttings for sale). A fully grown Citrosa (about 4 x 4 feet here in Miami) is supposed to protect a 100 sq. ft area from mosquitoes.

An update to this from herblady.newsguy.com (Rastapoodle):

It's been four or five years since I wrote about Citrosa, and in

that time, I have discovered that the entire story of "Dutch scientist does gene splicing, etc.", was a con game. It is now believed that no such genetics were at work, just lemon/rose geraniums sold with fake labels.

Lemongrass is wonderful to eat, Citronella is *not*. They look similar, so be careful what you buy. Citronella is distilled to extract its oil, which is used in insect repellent candles, burning coils, etc.

Anya

>I would like to know if it is worth while to grow citronella plants with the idea that I can make citronella candles. I don't believe I have seen these plants in any of my order catalogs and none of my gardening books tell how you get the citronella out of the plants.

From: adgrant.water.waterw.com (Andrew Grant):
Commercially the oil is extracted by steam distillation using old extracted plants as fuel. I doubt that you want to get that elaborate. I have never tried it but I suspect that the plants could be chopped up and extracted with a solvent like alcohol or toluene. Of course you would then have to boil off the solvent. If you do contemplate this, know that the % oil in the plant is low (I have forgotten the number) so your yield will be low.

Incidentally the notion that citronella discourages mosquitoes is not well supported by my experience. I have seen mosquito larvae in rain water on top of drums of citronella oil with oil droplets in the water!!!

Best of the herbal forums:
<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/lemongrass.html>
Best of the herbal forums:
<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/lemongrass-1.html>
Best of the herbal forums:
<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/lemon-grass.html>

2.20 Horseradish

Latin name: *Armoracia rusticana*.

2.20.1 Growing horseradish

With this plant, the problem is less how to get it to grow and more how to get rid of it later. To illustrate:

From: david bennett <dabennet.mailbox.syr.edu>

I need some help; how do I get rid of horseradish which I planted a number of years ago that now threatens to take over my garden? Key issue is no matter how deep you dig; you never get all of the root out. Now there hides beneath the soil an infant root waiting to become a big plant next year, etc.

>From eberts.donald.uoregon.edu (sonny hays-eberts), to above:

Learn to appreciate horseradish - I doubt you'll be able to eradicate it short of using some harsh chemical means. you'll very likely have to settle for control instead of removal.

If your soil is not heavy clay, I'd recommend spading up the area and using a sieve to extract as many runners as possible. depending on the area of your problem, that may be some work.

You can also pinch off all the leaves (continuously) in an effort to deplete the roots of energy.

You may also have some luck by using a large sheet of black plastic to mulch the area, though I'd not recommend this in times of extreme heat, it tends to bake the soil pretty badly.

Another method used to contain such invasive plants is to ring the area with some sort of buried edging; I know of people who cut the bottoms off five gallon plastic buckets, bury them and plant the horseradish in the center of each bucket (the bottom is removed for drainage).

While it's too late to do that, you may be able to define an area, trench it, and bury a foot or two of something (metal will corrode eventually, wood will rot, plastic isn't very organic and eventually becomes brittle, all end up needing to be replaced over time) to restrict underground movement.

2.20.3 Using horseradish

also see 4.9.5 Mustards, below.

From: rcook.BIX.com (Rick Cook)

First get a gas mask . . .

Seriously, the root is incredibly pungent when you're grinding it. You can simply peel and grate it and use as is, or you can mix with mustard, vinegar, cream, etc. for various sauces.

A word of warning: Proceed slowly. Fresh horseradish is a lot hotter than the stuff you get in bottles.

From: CAOWens.ix.netcom.com (Christine A. Owens)

Dig up the root. Wash carefully, and peel like a carrot. Grate very fine. Add 1 T cider vinegar and a pinch of salt per 1/2 c. Store frozen, or in the refrigerator.

You can add a couple of ounces of grated horseradish to vinegar, and let it sit for a couple of weeks to produce a spiced vinegar with a real 'zip'. A small amount of grated horseradish added to any dressing or sauce will pep it up effectively. Mix powdered mustard, the vinegar of your choice, and grated horseradish in equal volumes for the best mustard in the world.

BTW, horseradish greens are also very good, either diced very fine as an addition to a salad, steamed like spinach, or sauteed in a little butter or oil.

From: NDooley.president-po.president.uiowa.edu

Horseradish Jelly

3 C. granulated sugar
1/2 C. prepared horseradish
1/2 C. apple cider vinegar
6 oz. liquid pectin

In a large saucepan, combine sugar, horseradish and vinegar over medium heat. Cook, stirring constantly, until sugar dissolves and mixture comes to a boil. Stir in pectin. Boil 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Skim foam from top of jelly. Pour into sterilized jars and seal.
Yield: about 3 C. jelly. Delicious with meat or cream cheese/crackers.

>From cleek.ns.sympatico.ca (Dr Corinne B Leek):

>Seriously, the root is incredibly pungent when you're grinding it.

True, true, true. I just finished doing my own horseradish sauce yesterday. My eyes are still raw!! <VBG> Though using a food processor and blender reduce the work load, it doesn't help with the pungency problem.

Horseradish Sauce - Pickled Style

2 C Grated Horseradish

1 tsp Pickling Salt

2 Tbsp Sugar

3 C White Vinegar

Mix salt, sugar, and vinegar. Bring to boil and stir to dissolve. Remove from heat and stir in horseradish.

* Remember that if the horseradish itself is heated, the oils that provide the pungency will be damaged. *

2.21 Fennel

Latin name: *Foeniculum vulgare*.

2.21.1 Growing fennel

From: Sonny Hays-Eberts <eberts.oregon.uoregon.edu>:

Fennel is easy to grow, growing wild in many areas. An annual, it looks like dill, only slightly more coarse. I've had problems in wet years with it getting some sort of mold, but is generally quite troublefree. It prefers full sun and well-drained soil. Seeds can be planted as soon as frost danger is past. It's best to blanch (cover with dirt) the bulbs if you plan on harvesting them to keep them tender. Plants should be thinned to about a foot apart. You should get some volunteers if you let them go to seed.

2.21.2 Harvesting fennel

From: Sonny Hays-Eberts <eberts.oregon.uoregon.edu>:

The tender leaves may be diced and used to add a hint of licorice flavor and is great to use with seafood. Fennel seed can be used with poppy seed, sesame seed, celery or dill seed on bread. The bulb of the plant is also commonly harvested, though I always let mine go to seed instead. For best flavor harvest the leaves just as the flowers are starting to bloom.

> Can anyone give me some ideas on how to store or prepare the surplus of fennel seeds in my yard?

From: HerbalMuse.aol.com

If you intend to use the seeds in baking or other cooking, then you must collect them from the flower heads as soon as they begin to turn brown, or they will fall to the ground to re-seed. I store whole dill seed heads (as you can do with fennel) in paper bags and keep them in a cool, dry pantry in the basement. Fennel seeds are excellent with grilled or broiled fish, chicken, with tomato based soups, and of course, in breads, cakes & cookies.

If the seeds have already fallen to the ground, and are not cleared away, you can expect to see the emergence of new plants in early spring. This may delight you, however you should consider where these plants will grow in relation to the rest of garden. Fennel should be grown in a bed of it's own since most herbs won't do well in its presence, and it will stunt tomatoes and bush beans.

2.21.3 Using / preserving fennel

From: Sonny Hays-Eberts <eberts.oregon.uoregon.edu>:

The leaves and seeds may be dried. The leaves may also be frozen. The tastiest way I've had it is from a local restaurant, Ambrosia. A dish called fettucine Gamberi, it had fettucine (duh!) in a parmesan cream sauce with garlic, fennel leaves, parsley, scallops, shrimp, capers and fresh tomatoes. Quite tasty! Fennel has an anise or licorice flavor, and can be used to flavor cheeses, vegetables and some pastries in addition to seafood.

From Karen White

Fennel seeds - This is often used in making sausage, so I use it when cooking to give things a "sausage-y" flavor without actually using sausage. Works great when using tofu instead of meat, or when using ground beef

instead of sausage. I always use it when making spaghetti.
If you crush the seeds a little just before using them, the flavor is a lot better.

2.21.4 Which Fennel do you have?

From: Sonny Hays-Eberts <eberts.oregon.uoregon.edu>:
There are two common types of fennel; Bronze Fennel and Common Fennel also known as Finocchio (or Florence Fennel). True to it's name, the Bronze Fennel's foliage is a dusky brown. My experience has all been with bronze fennel, which is pretty in the garden as well as useful for cooking.

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/fennel.html>

2.22 Anise hyssop

Latin name: *Agastache foeniculum* (anise hyssop)
Agastache rugosa (licorice mint, korean hyssop)
Hyssopus officinalis (hyssop)

2.22.3 Using / preserving Anise hyssop

From: Patrick Millard <ac577.dayton.wright.edu>
They are attractive in the garden with long spikes of blue-purple flowers. They are considered to be good bee forage. They will grow well indoors under fluorescent lighting, blooming about 2 months after seeding. Anise Hyssop is native to N. central U.S. I used the leaves and flowers in salads and for flavoring meat dishes. They are supposed to good as a tea also.

2.22.4 Which hyssop do you have?

Anise hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*) is not the same plant as hyssop (*Hyssopus officinalis*). There are some *Agastache* species that are actually

tasty even if you don't like the taste of anise. Hyssop never tastes of anise, instead it's got a nice lemony tinge, which is especially evident after you've dried the flowering tops. Add hyssop to your herbal tea, or to your meat dishes - yum!

2.23 Parsley

Latin name: *Petroselinum crispum*.

2.23.1 Growing parsley

Also see <http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/parsley.html>

From: Linda Kovacs (kovacsla.vnet.ibm.com)

Parsley is a biennial. Plant seeds early in the spring (they're a little slow to germinate). The first year, you get plenty of leaves, on fairly long stems that come from the crown of the plant. The second year, you get a couple of leaves and a long bloom stalk, which looks very much like Queen Anne's Lace (they're related.) If you let it go to seed, some of the seed will grow the next year.

To have a steady supply of parsley for cooking, you should plant two years in a row. After that, it will self-sow if you let it.

Parsley's easy to grow - reasonable soil, sun, and water if you have a long dry spell. The only pest I ever had was leaf miners, and the damage was minimal.

2.23.2 Harvesting parsley

From: Linda Kovacs (kovacsla.vnet.ibm.com)

Pick leaves from the plant, stem and all. The first year, the more you pick, the more leaves you'll get. The second year, there are only a couple of leaves, and no more will grow, because the plant is working on bloom and seeds.

Also see <http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/parsley-1.html>

From: Linda Kovacs (kovacs.la.vnet.ibm.com)

The flat "Italian" parsley is the most strongly flavored. If you're going to use it for cooking, this is the kind to get. Curly parsley is much prettier on a plate, but doesn't have as much flavor. Use it mostly for garnishes.

Parsley is, of course, a classic garnish. A sprig of curly parsley on a plate really dresses it up. You can also chop parsley and sprinkle it on meats, vegetables, etc.

Parsley is also a classic soup herb. When you're making stock, parsley is one of the "aromatic vegetables" that's recommended to make the flavor richer. For this, use stem and all; in fact, this is a good place to use stems that you've cut off from pieces used for garnish.

It's a wonderful addition to a cooked vegetable, especially green beans or peas. Tends to accentuate the flavor of the vegetable.

It's good in salads, too, adding a different "green" texture and flavor. It's a bit too strong to be used by itself, for most people's taste.

Parsley can be chopped and dried, or chopped and frozen in ice cubes. The cubes are great added to soup or a sauce. The dried parsley can be added as is to a dish to be cooked or used as a garnish on soup, or soaked in a little bit of water and sprinkled on top of already-cooked food as a garnish.

2.24 Monarda

Latin name: *Monarda didyma* and other *Monarda* species.

2.24.1 Growing Monarda

From: jnewbo.aol.com (Jnewbo)

My *Monarda didyma* 'Cambridge Scarlet' (the most common one) doesn't stay in place; it moves forward on flat stems near the surface. That means it

creeps forward and needs to be divided and resituated every two-three years or so. It also is prone to mildew - but the crown-like scarlet blooms are fabulous.

A more well-behaved variety is the pink one, 'Croftway Pink'; it has more lanceolate leaves and smaller blooms, but the bees (including hummingbird-moth) love it, and it enlarges in the more traditional way, increasing the clump rather than traveling all over the garden.

Both bloom about three weeks, maybe more (sometimes I get "double" and even "triple decker" crowns on the red one). After that clip back and you may get more smaller blooms after a while.

From: Tristan Hatton-Ellis <Tristan.Hatton-Ellis.bris.ac.uk>

Both 'Croftway Pink' and 'Cambridge Scarlet' are rather mildew-prone. You may be interested to know that there are a whole range of new hybrids that have come out, bearing the names of the signs of the zodiac, that are much more mildew-resistant. They come in colours from purple through red and pink to white.

Monardas are also much less prone to getting mildew (and also grow and flower much better) in a dampish soil, or at least in a place where they do not get too dry in summer.

an354.FreeNet.Carleton.CA (Barbara)

Monarda didyma, also known as Bergamot and Bee Balm is a hardy perennial which grows 2-3 feet tall. Bees love it.

The plant spreads fairly quickly through its root system. Divide every three years, discarding the dead centre of the root. The plant will grow well in sun or part shade. The flowers last 4-6 weeks.

2.24.3 Using / preserving Monarda

From: an354.FreeNet.Carleton.CA (Barbara)

Monarda didyma, Bergamot or Bee Balm: The leaves dry well and can be used to make a tea that tastes like Earl Grey tea.

From: jnewbo.aol.com (Jnewbo)

The leaves and flowers of Cambridge scarlet are marvelous,

bergamotty-flavored things, though I found the tea rather scratchy on the throat.

From: Marilyn.Kraker.bbs.c4system.com (Marilyn Kraker)

Mondarda does make good tea, which is why it's also called Oswego tea. It's not the same as the bergamot in Earl Grey, which is a tropical citrus.

From: Conrad Richter <conrad.richters.com>

Both the leaves and flowers can be used. The flowers, of course, add nice colour. Some say that the flowers have a more delicate flavour, and of the various varieties, the red bergamot is the creme-de-la-creme.

2.24.5 Monarda and the bergamot flavor in Earl Grey tea

>So I heard from someone that bee balm is sorta-kinda the same plant that gives Earl Grey tea its distinctive taste. Is this true?

>From hetta.saunalahti.fi:

No, it isn't. The flavor in Earl grey tea comes from the bergamot orange, Citrus aurantia var. bergamia. Monarda just has the same flavor, so you -can- make your own Earl grey tea using Monarda leaves. Storebought Earl grey uses abovementioned citrus.

2.25 Ginger

Latin name: Zingiber officinale

2.25.3 Using / preserving ginger

Also see 4.8.2, Ginger beer, below.

>From wouk.alumni.cs.colorado.edu (Arthur Wouk):

>I have a couple of recipes that call for crystallized ginger. Much to my dismay it's about \$7.00 per bottle. Upon close examination it looks like nothing more than peeled ginger coarsely chopped and slathered in sugar. How far off the mark am I??

You are off by about 8 hours of cooking the ginger in a sugary syrup.

>Does anyone know how to make preserved ginger? I've also seen it called crystalized ginger. It is small chunks of sugar-coated ginger and the texture is quite chewy. If you have a recipe for this I would appreciate a copy.

From: Eve Dexter (evedex.hookup.net)

Scrape and cut into 1/4 inch slices enough non-fibrous young Ginger root to make 1 quart. Put the slices into a large non-aluminum pat and cover generously with water. Bring slowly to the boil and simmer, covered until tender (20 min). Add 1 cup sugar and stir until the mixture boils. Remove from heat.

Cover and let stand overnight at room temperature.

Recook, simmering gently for about 15 min (after coming to the boil). Add 1 seeded sliced lemon and 1 cup light corn syrup. Uncover and simmer 15 minutes longer, stirring occasionally.

Remove from heat and let stand covered overnight.

Bring the mixture to the boil again and add 1 cup sugar and simmer for 30 min **STIRRING CONSTANTLY** (burns easily). Add 1 cup sugar, bring back to the boil and remove from heat.

Cover and let stand overnight again.

In the fourth cooking, bring the mixture to a boil once more. When the syrup drops heavily from the side of a spoon, and the ginger is translucent, pour the mixture into sterile jars and seal. This yields about 5 cups.

If you want Candied ginger...drain the ginger after the last cooking.

Reserve the syrup for flavoring sauces and allow the slices to dry on a sheet or better still a rack, overnight. When well dried, roll in granulated sugar and store in tightly covered glass jars.

From: albersa.aztec.asu.edu (ANN ALBERS)

Before grilling a thick whitefish, I sometimes coat it with this mixture:

1 cup orange juice

1/4 cup honey

1/2-inch gingerroot, chopped very fine

Sweet but tasty.

Slivered macadamia nuts or almonds may be sprinkled on after the fish comes off the grill.

From: jdtrach.islandnet.com (Julia Trachsel)

This is a great recipes which I always make in our cool, rainy season out here on the west coast. Hope you enjoy it as much as my family and guests do.

Gingerbread

1/2 cup shortening
1/2 cup sugar
1 egg beaten
1 cup molasses
2 1/2 cups flour
1 1/2 teas. baking soda
1 tbsp. ginger
1 tsp. allspice
1 tsp. cloves
1 cup boiling water
1 cup raisins (optional)
1 cup crystalized ginger, chopped

Cream shortening, sugar, add beaten egg and molasses. Add dry ingredients. Add boiling water, mix well. Add chopped crystalized ginger and stir gently. Pour into 2 small greased loaf pans. Bake at 350 degrees for 50-60 minutes. A skewer inserted into the middle should come out clean when the gingerbread is done.

My personal twist to this recipe is to add 1 cup of crystalized ginger (instead of 1/2 cup) and to serve it with hot lemon pie filling which has been extended by adding enough extra water to make it pourable.

2.26 Anise

Latin name: *Pimpinella anisum*, aniseed, the plant covered here.

Illicium anisatum (*I. verum*), star anise, is a half-tropical bush, and not found in your usual temperate herb gardens; this one is not covered here.

2.26.1 Growing aniseed

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:

Anise is an annual herb native to the Mediterranean- Egypt, Greece, Crete, and Asia Minor. It is a rather fussy herb; it likes perfect weather of uniform rainfall and temperatures. It wilts under excessive heat but requires full sun, and it does not transplant well.

Propagation is by seed, and be sure the seed is fresh. Seeds need a temperature of 70F to germinate, and will germinate in 7 to 14 days. Sow 1/4 to 1/2 inch deep in light, well-drained, medium-rich sandy soil. A pH of 6.0 to 7.5 is best. Space 3 inch seedlings 6 to 12 inches apart.

2.26.2 Harvesting anise

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:
Harvest seeds as soon as the tip of the seed turns gray (they should not be black), anywhere from 60 to 130 days after planting, depending on climate. Since Anise is an annual, collect seeds either by pulling up the entire plant, or by just cutting the tops off. Spread plants to dry. Thresh.

2.26.3 Using / preserving anise

From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.

camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:

Use fresh leaves as a garnish or flavoring for salads. They can be cooked as a pot-herb.

Flowers are occasionally dried and powdered as a flavoring for wine.

Seeds are used in bread, pastries, cookies, vegetables, baked apples, applesauce, cheese, desserts, plum jam, brandy, cordials, and milk. 1/2 to 1 tsp per 4 quarts of potato or lentil soup, 1/2 tsp crushed in salads.

Use ground anise seed quickly, it loses its strength fast.

2.27 Borage

Latin name: *Borago officinalis*.

2.27.1 Growing borage

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:
Borage is a very hardy annual native to the Mediterranean. It grows to 2 feet tall, or even 5 feet in rich soil, and has beautiful blue flowers. It is an extremely tolerant plant, doing well in average and poor dry soils (pH between 5 and 8), but it is difficult to transplant due to its tap root. It is a good plant for container culture, planted in a large tub with smaller herbs arranged around the edge.

Borage is easily grown from seed. Plant 1/2 in. deep (about the time of the last frost outdoors), seeds will germinate in 7 to 14 days. Plant in full sun or partial shade, thin 18 in. to 2 feet apart. To encourage leaf growth, supply rich moist soil. To encourage flowers, hold the fertilizer and give plenty of sun.

Leaves give off sparks and pop when burned due to nitrate of potash.

2.27.3 Using / preserving borage

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:
Fresh leaves are best, but can be dried. Harvest leaves for drying as plant begins to flower. Dry very carefully - quickly, good air circulation, and with no overlapping of leaves. Flowers can be dried to add color to potpourri.

Fresh leaves and flowers have a spicy, cucumber-like taste and an onion-like smell. Young leaves or peeled stems are good chopped in salads, or leaves can be boiled as a pot-herb. The flowers make a colorful addition to salads and a flavorful addition to lemonade. Add borage to cabbage-type vegetables, gravies, or spiced punches. In some areas of France, the flowers are dipped in batter and fried. Flowers can also be candied.

Borage Flower Tea: handful of fresh leaves steeped in 1-2 quarts of water, add one or two sprigs of spearmint. Makes a refreshing summer beverage.

Borage and Rosemary Wine: Steep a handful of fresh rosemary (or 2 tablespoons dried rosemary) and 2 tablespoons dried borage leaves in one bottle of white wine for a week or more. Strain through cheesecloth or a paper coffee strainer.

Candied Borage Flowers: Brush flowers with lightly beaten egg white, then dip in superfine granulated sugar. Spread to dry.

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/borage-2.html>

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/vinaigrette.html>

End of part 4 of 7

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Henriette Kress, AHG Helsinki, Finland
Henriette's herbal blog: <http://www.henriettesherbal.com/blog>

From spamtrap.hetta@spamcop.net Fri Jan 21 17:01:46 2005
Newsgroups: rec.gardens.edible,alt.folklore.herbs,rec.food.preserving,alt.answers,rec.answers,news.answers
To:
Subject: Culinary herbFAQ part 5/7
From: Henriette Kress <spamtrap.hetta@spamcop.net>
Date: Fri, 21 Jan 2005 17:01:46 +0200

Archive-name: food/culinary-herbs/part5
Posting-Frequency: monthly (on or about 20th)
Last-modified: 25Apr04
Version: 1.17c
URL: <http://henriettesherbal.com/faqs/culi-cont.html>

2.28 Horehound

Latin name: *Marrubium vulgare*.

2.28.1 Growing horehound

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:
Horehound is a perennial native to the Mediterranean and northern Europe, and is naturalized in the United States. It is a good border plant and doesn't require much attention, but is sometimes winter-killed.

Horehound prefers a poor, dry sandy soil, and tolerates a wide pH range- all the way from 4.5 to 8.

Horehound is easily grown from seed sown in shallow holes in fall or early spring. It can also be propagated from stem cuttings, root divisions, or layering. Space seedlings 8 to 15 inches apart.

2.28.2 Harvesting horehound

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:
Horehound flowers from June to September, but not always in its first year as plants that are grown from seed may take two years to bloom. Harvest the leaves and flowering tops in peak bloom, they are easy to dry, or can be used fresh.

2.28.3 Using / preserving horehound

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:
Horehound tea, cough syrup and candy: (Dried leaves may be used for tea.)
Strip leaves from plant, chop into measuring cup. Measure out twice as much water as leaves. Bring water alone to boil, then add horehound. Boil for five minutes, let cool, and strain into jars. Refrigerate resulting infusion until needed.

To make tea: Add twice as much boiling water as horehound infusion. Sweeten to taste.

To make syrup: Add twice as much honey as horehound infusion and a little lemon juice.

To make candy: Add twice as much sugar as horehound infusion, and add about 1/8 teaspoon cream of tartar per cup of infusion. Stir to dissolve, and cook over low heat until the hard ball stage (290F) is reached. Pour into buttered plate. Break into pieces when cool.

Old-Time Horehound Candy

From: Fran <frich.TENET.EDU>: from Herbal Treasures by Phyllis V. Shaudys (highly recommended!):

2 cups fresh horehound, including leaves, stems and flowers (or 1 cup dried)

2 1/2 quarts water

3 cups brown sugar
1/2 cup corn syrup
1 tsp. cream of tartar
1 tsp. butter
1 tsp. lemon juice (or 1 sprig lemon balm)

In large saucepan, cover horehound with water. Bring to boil, simmer 10 min. Strain thru cheesecloth and allow tea to settle. Ladle 2 cups horehound tea into large kettle. Add brown sugar, corn syrup, cream of tartar. Boil, stirring often, until mixture reaches 240F. Add butter. Continue to boil until candy reaches 300F (hard crack). R4move from heat, add lemon juice. Pour at once into buttered 8" square pan. As candy cools, score into squares. Remove from pan as soon as it is cool. Store in aluminum foil or ziplock plastic bags.

Note from Henriette: horehound candy, made with any horehound at all in it, is exceedingly bitter. A far better cough candy can be made by using thyme, hyssop (not anise hyssop) and peppermint instead of the horehound. That mix is actually tasty.

2.29 Marjoram and Oregano

Latin names:

Origanum majorana (former: *Majorana hortensis*) - sweet marjoram, marjoram

Origanum vulgare - oregano or wild marjoram

Origanum onites - pot Marjoram

Origanum heracleoticum - winter marjoram

Origanum dictamnus - dittany of Crete, hop marjoram

Coleus amboinicus (*Plectranthus amboinicus*) - Cuban oregano

Mexican oregano: several plants, eg. *Poliomintha longiflora*, *Lippia graveolens*, and *Monarda fistulosa* var. *menthifolia*

Also see 2.29.4, Cuban oregano, and 2.29.4, Mexican oregano.

2.29.1 Growing marjoram and oregano

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:
Marjoram grows as an annual up to two feet tall in most parts of the United States due to climate, but it is a perennial in its native north Africa, Portugal, and southwest Asia.

Marjoram prefers a light, fairly rich, well-drained, slightly alkaline

soil, with a pH from 7 to 8. It like full sun.

Marjoram is easily grown from seed that is sown in spring, or by cuttings taken in the summer. It can be induced to be perennial by overwintering indoors in pots. When grown indoors it has a tendency to trail that makes it good for hanging baskets. Marjoram makes a good companion plant for eggplant, pumpkin and zucchini.

The genus *Origanum* contains about 20 species, of which five are common in herb gardens. Oregano (*O. vulgare*) is a perennial, native to Asia, Europe, and northern Africa. Pot marjoram (*O. onites*) is a close relative of sweet marjoram that is native to the Mediterranean, and *O. heracleoticum* is native to southeast Europe.

Oregano grows to 2.5 feet tall, and flowers from late July until September. It is a sprawling herb and is therefore not well suited for growing indoors. Pot marjoram grows to two feet tall, and neither it nor dittany of Crete are hardy in cold climates. Dittany of Crete grows to one foot tall, blooms in summer or autumn, and like Pot marjoram, grows as an annual in cold climates. Dittany of Crete grows well indoors due to its small size and its flavor is very similar to that of common oregano.

Oregano likes light, well-drained, slightly alkaline soil with full sun. Rich, moist soil makes the aroma and flavor of oregano weak.

Oregano can be grown from seeds, stem cuttings, or root divisions, but seeds are sometimes slow to germinate. Also, plants grown from seed may not be true to the flavor of the parent plant, or may even be flavorless.

Oregano makes a good companion plant for cauliflower but should not be planted with broccoli or cabbage.

2.29.2 Harvesting marjoram and oregano

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:

Marjoram: harvest the leaves as soon as blooming begins. They dry easily and can be frozen, but some people believe that drying the leaves actually improves the flavor, making it sweeter and more aromatic. Its flavor when fresh is closer to that of oregano.

Harvest oregano leaves as plants begin to bloom.

2.29.3 Using / preserving marjoram and oregano

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:
Marjoram is great in tomato dishes, and with meats, onions, brussel
sprouts, or mushrooms.

Oregano is good with potato salad, fowl stuffing, peas, soups, scrambled
eggs, omelets, tomato dishes, meats, beans, deviled eggs, spaghetti, chili,
hamburgers and pizza. It is essential to Italian, Spanish, and Mexican
dishes, and combines well with basil.

Chicken Corn Soup with marjoram

2 cups chicken stock
2 cups chopped potatoes
2 cups fresh corn kernels
2 cups chopped cooked chicken
1/2 cup finely chopped fresh marjoram
salt and pepper

Bring stock to a boil, add potatoes, cover, cook until potatoes are barely
tender. Add corn and cook for 5 minutes. Stir in chicken and marjoram, add
salt and pepper to taste. Cook for about another 10 minutes.

2.29.4 Which oregano do you have?

From: Chris McElrath <Mcmariah.AOL.COM>:
The word oregano comes from the Greek "oro" meaning mountain and "ganos"
meaning joy. The generic stuff that nurseries sell is *Origanum vulgare*
which is attractive, but of little culinary value. Many of you may have
noticed that your oregano plants don't have much flavor. True greek oregano
is the same as what is often called wild marjoram. In fact, I usually use
marjoram in place of oregano in my recipes. Many nurseries interchange the
labels freely. Greeks felt that the sweet smell was created by Aphrodite as
a symbol of happiness. Bridal couples were crowned with it and it was
placed on tombs to give peace to the departed.
O. vulgare -- basic oregano, spreads by rhizomes, grows wild in England
O. onites is an upright plant -- called pot marjoram
O. heracleoticum -- winter marjoram, peppery and volatile flavor

Cuban oregano:

From: Ann McCormick <McCORMICK9.AOL.COM>

>I have recently purchased some Cuban oregano, with botanical name of "Coleus ambionicus". It has thick, almost fleshy leaves that are 1 to 2 inches long with a somewhat fuzzy surface. It has a wonderful fragrance that reminds me of oregano with a kick.

>The garden shop owner told me she knew very little about it other than some of her customers use it in cooking and that it should be grown like an annual here (Zone 6, Central New Jersey). From the botanical name (and its appearance) it is obviously not a true oregano. Have any of you grown this plant? Any information would be appreciated.

From: Rastapoodle.newsguy.com (Rastapoodle)

It is Plectranthus, a tropical substitute for Oregano. It is totally safe, and very pungent, so a little goes a long way. Richters Herb in Canada should sell it. Here in Miami, it's almost a weed, as all of the Caribbean and Latin American residents treasure it. It grows easily from cuttings, prefers sun/semi-shade during the hottest part of the day.

From: sotrembi.saims.skidmore.edu (stephen otrembiak)

>Someone just told me they purchased "cuban oregano" they wanted to know more about this intriguing plant. Apparently it is a succulent and has a very strong oregano flavor. He thought it was a strange plant and is reluctant to use it for culinary purposes.

>If anyone has more info on this plant or knows where it can be purchased I would appreciate the info.

From: weed <avril_tolley.berlex.com>

I don't know where you would get it in New York, Steve. Here in Northern California, it is sold in the herb section, usually in 4-inch pots. It's hairy, which is why I think you wouldn't want to use it in cooking. It's very pungent, though, great smell. There are enough good oreganos for cooking, I like to leave the really ornamental ones for growing. This plant needs *excellent* drainage, full sun and not too much water or it will bite the dust. I have one growing in a pot, and one growing in an old sandbox I'm turning into a rock garden. You can just break off a stem and put it in a pot for a new plant. I've given lots of them to people. I would bet that it's tender, and you'd have to bring it indoors in winter (we don't get cold enough here for me to find out). I had one growing on the bright, hot windowsill in my kitchen for a long time before planting it out, so that works, too.

From: mouvedre.ix.netcom.com (BETH W SPROW)

Cuban oregano is an excellent plant. I've used it in cooking and it is wonderful. Especially in salsas with tomatillos, tomatoes peppers etc. As a house plant it's great. It needs practically no watering and its

variegated with cream around the edge of creamy green leaves.

From: ae.meer.net (Arthur Evans)

Here's one shot in the dark ... In *The Art of Mexican Cooking*, Diana Kennedy describes the various kinds of oregano used in regional Mexican cooking (there are apparently at least 13 kinds), including the following:

"There is [...] a large, juicy-leaved oregano grown and used fresh in the Yucatan Peninsula and Tabasco, mostly with fish. It is *Coleus amboinicus* (I have also seen it growing in Hawaii) and it is referred to in Tabasco as oreganon."

Juicy-leaved could mean succulent, and something that grows in the Yucatan might well grow in Cuba ...

Mexican Oregano:

From: Chris McElrath <Mcmariah.AOL.COM>

Mexican oregano is a general name for several plants, all of which have a strong oregano flavor: *Poliomintha longiflora*, *Lippia graveolens*, and *Monarda fistulosa* var. *menthifolia*. These are probably the most common but there are others.

So, it comes down to: Mexican oregano is a common name which is used for several different species that grow in the southwestern US and Mexico. If you can find one, it probably has more flavor than the ubiquitous *O. vulgare*.

2.30 Caraway

Latin name: *Carum carvi*

2.30.1 Growing caraway

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:

Caraway is a hardy biennial native to Europe and western Asia. It grows to 2 1/2 ft. tall. Caraway like full sun, and does well in dry heavy clay soil that has a moderate amount of humus (pH between 6 and 7.5). It doesn't like having its roots disturbed.

Caraway is easily grown from seed that is sown in either early spring or in the fall. Seeds planted in September will flower and produce seed the following summer. It occasionally matures in the third summer of growth.

Plant seeds 1/4 to 1/2 in. deep, they will germinate in 7 to 21 days, or more. Space seedlings 12 to 24 in. apart.

2.30.2 Harvesting caraway

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:
Harvest seeds as soon as they begin to ripen to avoid shattering of the fruits. They ripen from June to August of the second year.

2.30.3 Using / preserving caraway

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:
Roots taste like a combination of parsnips and carrots, and they can be boiled like a vegetable.
Young shoots and leaves can be cooked with other vegetables or can be chopped into salads.
The dry seeds are used in rye bread, sauerkraut, cheeses, applesauce, soups, salad dressings, apple pie, cabbage dishes, potatoes, and stew.
Seeds contain small amounts of protein and vitamin B.

2.31 Catnip

Latin names: *Nepeta cataria* and other *Nepeta* species.

2.31.1 Growing catnip

>From snielsen.orednet.org (Susan L. Nielsen):
To all catnip culture hopefuls... my own tale of woe.

I guess the point was mainly to grow it for the cats, but I had anticipated waiting until the holidays and using it for gifts.

The first time, I naively plunked the catnip among the mints and

pennyroyals. The poor little transplant never pushed its roots out from the pot-shaped ball they came in. The neighbor cats ripped it out of the ground and played football with it all afternoon -- this I judge from its condition when I arrived home from work the second evening.

Silly me, I thought then that a bit of wire would keep the cats off it. I tenderly re-planted the invalid Nepeta with a bit of poultry wire arranged over the top and staked into the soil. I have always wondered what happened to the wire...

After this second violation, the plant did not look a likely candidate for survival. In medical terms, its condition was 'grave.'

So I brought home another, and planted it in the top of a large, heavy imported Italian terra cotta pot. Filled with soil, this pot weighs in at about 75 pounds. Imagine my horror, when I returned home the following evening, to find the pot overturned, the soil excavated, the catnip plant nowhere to be found, but significant tufts of animal fur scattered among the wreckage. It passed through my mind that this might not be an ordinary cat at work, but, perhaps, Something Larger? The yellow tiger-colored hairs did, however, suggest a domestic visitor over an apricot catamount.

I next (jaw set, grim determination in my eye) planted catnip in a plastic pot hung by 3 chains from the cross-bar of the clothesline. With pliers I closed the hook that passed through the eye of the bar. I arranged new chicken wire over the top of the pot. I put cast-off barbed wire at the base of the clothesline pole, and anchored it with iron stakes driven in at angles. I stood back to admire my work. It looked like an industrial construction project on the perimeter of a prison.

I have always prided myself on effective design in the garden...

On the following evening, I probably need not tell, the catnip had again been ravaged. The scene was improbable. The pot, still attached by one of three chains, hung at a debauched angle. Its contents had spilled into the barbed wire at the base of the installation.

Among those wires were traces of catnip leaves, and quantities of yellow and white fur, soft fur, tinged with spots of blood. Bits of perlite from the potting medium clung to the red spots. The catnip, and the nipped cat, were nowhere in evidence.

I adopted a philosophical outlook then, as I surveyed the result of the day's work. I decided it might be a better thing to not grow catnip in the garden.

SuN.

>From Judi Burley <jburley.TRIANON.WORLDTTEL.COM>:
Regarding Catnip. I use a cage over mine. Just an old birdcage. Then the cats can get at what grows out of the cage but the base plant is safe. By the way I put the cage over the plant and then drive the cage into the ground well. Works great.

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:
Catnip is a very hardy perennial that is native to the dry regions of the Mediterranean, inland Europe, Asia, and Africa. Cataria grows to 4 feet tall and somewhat resembles stinging nettle. Mussinii grows to 1 foot, sprawls. It has a citrus-like scent and is sometimes called catmint. In order to keep cats away from catnip avoid bruising the leaves, which releases the oils. "If you sow it cats won't know it, if you set it cats will get it," is an apt saying.

Catnip loves full sun but can tolerate partial shade, and does well in almost any garden soil (pH between 5 and 7.5). It is more pungent when it is grown in sandy soil with full sun.

Catnip is easily grown from seed, and can also be propagated from root division. Plant seeds 1/4 in. deep or shallower, they will usually germinate promptly. Space seedlings 18 to 24 in. apart, they transplant fairly happily. (However, transplanting them brings them to the attention of the felines.) Catnip grows well in pots and windowboxes, and even though it is a perennial, it may have to be re-planted a couple times a year to replace those plants ravaged by the cats.

2.31.2 Harvesting catnip

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:
Harvest as needed for fresh leaves. Harvest flowering tops for drying, usually in July and September.

2.31.3 Using / preserving catnip

>From Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>:
Catnip can be used to add an unusual flavor to sauces, soups and stews.

2.32 Lovage

Latin name:

Lovage: *Levisticum officinalis* (*Ligusticum levisticum*)

Scotch lovage: *Ligusticum scoticum*.

2.32.1 Growing lovage

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

This is a broad-leaved, tall (6-10') and (for an umbellifer) long-lived perennial. It has deep fleshy roots, and prefers deep, well-drained soil with some moisture in a light but not necessarily sunny position.

It dies down completely in the winter and will survive the top inch or so of the soil freezing solid. It may be grown from seed, small plants, or by splitting older ones in its dormant season. It spreads slowly but is not invasive.

>From HeK:

If you give it good soil and plenty of sun it'll go for the height record in your garden - I've seen plants that were over 3 m (10') high. On the other hand, in a poor spot it'll only get to about 50 cm (2'). The roots will be enormous no matter where it grows. You can propagate it from pieces of root, and it's an 'easy to garden' plant - nothing will crowd it out and I have yet to see an unhealthy plant.

2.32.2 Harvesting lovage

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

The leaves can be used fresh or dried in the usual way, or the seed can be harvested for winter use. An established plant produces huge heads of seeds.

>From HeK:

The roots are used in cooking in Europe. Dig them, take a step or two back, try to dig again. Give up, and at least try to break off a chunk or two. Dry these in small chunks and powder before use. Caution - very little goes

a long way.

You pick the seeds when they turn brown; dry them and add as a spice to your foods.

You pick a leaf a year (they have a very strong taste and are -really-large), dry it and use it as a spice.

You can pick a leaf- or flowerstalk and shoot peas - it's much more fun than weeding the garden, and you might hit a fly or two, too ;) or you can use it as a drinking straw.

2.32.3 Using / preserving lovage

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

It has a taste rather like celery with a hint of yeast extract, and is a traditional flavour enhancer; it can be used in quite large quantities.

The young leaves are excellent chopped in salads, but the normal use is to put the older leaves or seeds in soups, stews, casseroles, stock etc.

The seeds will keep for a year or two (for cooking) in a tightly closed jar. It is an extremely useful herb.

>From HeK:

It's the main spice in all those dried soups - in Germany it has been called the Maggi-herb, after one big dried soup firm over there. I add it to all kinds of stews and soups, and it fits nicely in a spicemix with ginger, sweet pepper, cayenne, turmeric, garlic powder... sorry, have to go cook something now. And oh yes, you can also candy young stems of lovage. I wouldn't vouch for that taste, though. Anyone want to try? Let me know how many you managed to eat ;)

Lovage overdose -> nausea

>From Chrissie Wildwood:

Ignoring my common sense, I followed the advice given in one of my herbal cook books - that is, to use lovage 'like spinach'. This implies that the herb is safe to use in quantity. So I used four stems of fresh lovage leaf, mixed with a much larger proportion of spinach, and used this as a basis for a cheese flan. Even though the flan tasted delicious, less than an hour later we (myself, partner and a friend) began to feel nauseous. I sensed lovage was the culprit. Fortunately, I had some peppermint oil tablets available. We chewed two tablets each and this quelled the nausea within a few minutes.

The herb's emetic side-effect is largely overlooked. Indeed, only one

reference book in my vast herbal library offers a warning against over use of lovage: 'The Illustrated Book of Herbs, Their Medicinal and Culinary Uses', by Jiri Stodola and Jan Volak, published by Octopus, 1984 (a translation from the Czech). Here we are warned: 'If taken internally in excess, lovage may cause nausea and vertigo.'

But what constitutes an 'excessive' dose? Undoubtedly, four leafy stems shared between three adults (even though cooked for an hour in a pastry case with spinach, beaten egg, cream and cheese) can make you feel very queasy. Thankfully we didn't experience vertigo as well.

2.32.4 Which lovage do you have?

>From Henriette:

Scotch lovage can be used like lovage. Can't say how it differs from lovage, though, as it doesn't grow here. I imagine the taste is milder - how else can you explain that the English make a stew out of lovage leaves?

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/lovage.html>

2.33 Savory, summer and winter

Latin name:

Summer savory: *Satureja hortensis*

Winter savory: *Satureja montana*

2.33.1 Growing savory

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

Summer Savory: This is a medium-sized (1') annual, and needs reasonably warm, damp conditions for germination, but needs only a little water thereafter. It has small seeds, so don't sow it too deep. It may be possible to sow it for succession in warmer climates than the UK, but it isn't here.

Winter Savory: Treat it exactly as common thyme (*thymus vulgaris*), which it closely resembles; however, it is slightly more compact, darker leaved and has white flowers. Like thyme, it makes a good edging plant.

From: Esther Czekalski <E.Czekalski.MA02Q.BULL.COM>

Summer savory is sometimes called the bean herb because it goes so well with green beans. It is a much more delicate plant than winter savory and in my experience, can handle a little more shade. In my zone I can only grow it as an annual; winter savory will overwinter and stay almost evergreen if it's mulched a bit.

2.33.2 Harvesting savory

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

Summer Savory: The leaves can be used fresh or dried in the usual way.

Winter Savory: The leaves can be used fresh or dried in the usual way, but it is evergreen in the UK (again, exactly like thyme).

2.33.3 Using / preserving savory

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

Winter Savory: It has a flavour somewhere between thyme and summer savory, but is slightly bitter. It can be used as an alternative for either, and makes an interesting change, but be careful not to use too much. It is nothing like as bitter as hyssop.

Summer Savory: It has a special affinity for beans and is known as the "Bohnenkraut" in Germany - adding it to bean salad turns horse food into a delicacy! It can also be used in salads, and for other flavouring.

From: Esther Czekalski <E.Czekalski.MA02Q.BULL.COM>

I like to get a bite of summer savory in salads, too, lettuce salads, potato salads, whatever. The leaves are fairly small so I just strip them from the stem and throw them in; chop them if you don't love herbs as much as I do. You can use it in soups and things but the flavor is so delicate that you might not know that you did! It would be better served chopped as a topping to hot dishes. (Put the winter savory in while it's cooking.) The winter savory can be kept whole, tied with other herbs and taken out of the soup before serving.

Has anyone ever used savory for it's smell? I wonder if it wouldn't add a nice note to a lemony mixture. I just don't know if it lasts. Also, I have never preserved either variety so can't tell you what works best.

2.34 Rue

Latin name: *Ruta graveolens*

2.34.1 Growing rue

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

It is a short-lived (c. 5 years) evergreen perennial 1-2' high, and seems totally indifferent to soil. It takes incredibly easily from cuttings and responds very well to being hacked back when it gets leggy.

Apparently it can also be grown from seed. Jackman's Blue is the most decorative variety, and tastes the same as the common green one. It is hardy in the UK, but I don't know how much frost it will take.

2.34.2 Harvesting rue

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

Don't bother, unless you are Italian!

2.34.3 Using / preserving rue

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

It is extremely bitter, and is used in very small quantities in Roman (ancient) and Italian cookery - but do experiment, because it really does add something. There is an Italian liqueur called (surprise!) *Ruta*, which has a branch of rue in the bottle, but is too bitter for most foreigners to drink :-)

>From HeK:

It is also considered slightly toxic nowadays. Sensitive people can develop photosensitivity due to the coumarins in the plant when handling it; these folks should not ingest it. Otherwise, small amounts not too often should

be OK - but if you can't take it then don't take it.

2.35 Rocket

Latin name: *Eruca sativa*

2.35.1 Growing Rocket

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

It is a quick-growing annual about 2' high, and even in the UK will produce seed in well under a growing season. Sow it every few weeks for succession, and leave one early sowing for seed. It will probably escape, but is not a pernicious weed. A late sowing will last until the first severe frosts.

2.35.2 Harvesting rocket

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

Use its leaves fresh.

2.35.3 Using / preserving rocket

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

It has a smoky taste, and is used to enliven salads - it gives some flavour even to supermarket Iceberg lettuce! It is probably the best of the traditional (but now neglected) salad plants, and is well worth the space even in a very small garden.

2.36 Angelica

Latin name: *Angelica archangelica*

2.36.1 Growing Angelica

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

This is a broad-leaved, monocarpic biennial or perennial (i.e. it takes 2-5 years to flower, and then dies) 6-10' high. It likes half shade (to reduce the grass cover), and damp, rich soil. Given the right environment, it will self seed and keep itself established. If you have a very hot, dry garden, don't bother with it. It looks very much like lovage, but smells entirely different.

>From HeK:

If you keep the flowerstalk down (break it off every time you see it emerge) the plant will be perennial - until it does flower.

2.36.2 Harvesting angelica

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

Cut the side-shoots (which can be quite thick stems) before they become stringy - this is in May or June in the UK, and is just as the flower heads start to open. You can also cut the flower shoots off a little earlier, which will have the effect of keeping the plant alive for a year or so longer, but it will die after about 5 years anyway.

2.36.3 Using / preserving angelica

Candied angelica stems

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

Cut the shoots into strips about 6" long and 1/2" wide, and remove untidy bits. Blanch them (i.e. bring them to the boil and throw away the water). Then candy them, using gradually increasing strengths of sugar syrup. When they are done, dry them and keep them, but don't throw away the syrup; it keeps for at least a year in the refrigerator and for a long time just in a jar.

They can be used for decoration, in fruit salad, in ice cream and so on.

The syrup can be used for sweetening such things, and adds a strong

angelica taste. I recommend angelica ice cream, made with the chopped stems, syrup and Chartreuse (an angelica-based liqueur) - this recipe is my own invention, incidentally, and this is the first publication :-)

The young leaves and stems are also naturally sweet, and can be used in stewed fruits or other puddings, or used in pot pourris.

Home Candied Angelica

From af961.james.freenet.hamilton.on.ca (Helen Peagram), quoting Philippa Davenport in "Country Living" (British), May 1987.

1 lb Angelica

1 lb Granulated sugar

The most important thing about candying angelica is to choose stalks that are young and tender. In other words, angelica is only worth candying in April or May when the shoots are new and softly coloured. Trim the young shoots into 3-4 inch lengths, put them into a pan, cover with water and bring to a boil. Drain and scrape away tough skin and fibrous threads with a potato peeler, rather as you might prepare celery. Return the angelica to the pan, pour on fresh boiling water and cook until green and tender. If the shoots are as youthful as they should be, this will take 5 minutes or less. Drain the stalks and dry them. Put them into a bowl and sprinkle granulated sugar between layers, allowing 1 pound of sugar for every 1 pound of angelica.

Cover and leave for 2 to 3 days.

Slide contents of the bowl into a heavy-based pan. Bring very slowly to the boil and simmer until the angelica feels perfectly tender and looks clear. Drain, then roll or toss the shoots on greaseproof paper thickly strewn with sugar, letting the angelica take up as much sugar as will stick to it. Then dry off the angelica - without letting it become hard - in the oven, using the lowest possible temperature. I place the stalks directly on the oven shelves (with trays underneath to catch any falling sugar) and find they need about 3 hours. Wrap and store after cooling completely. Packed into pretty little boxes, home-candied angelica makes a charming present.

Angelica stem survey:

Have you eaten candied angelica stems? Did you like it? Would you eat them again? Answers to the survey, so far:

* From Ingolfur Guðnason <engiherb.smart.is>:

Since you are asking: yes, I have tried to make candied angelica from young leaf stalks. It is very nice. I keep a jar in my refrigerator and serve it to guests as a curiosity.

In the times of the Vikings candied angelica was in very high esteem, sold as a candy in the streets of Norway and British Isles etc.

* From Francoise Chevallier Allard <fcallard.univ-lyon1.fr>:

It is commonly used for cakes in central Europe, and in Italy for icecreams. I think it is nice, but perhaps a little strong.

* From "Mike Toop" <miketoop.uniserve.com>

I just made candied angelica (A. archangelica) for the first time. It has... an interesting flavour. I would try it again. In fact, I'm willing to try just about anything to use up the stuff... it is growing like crazy in my garden!

* From david.inf.rl.ac.uk (David Johnston)

Yes, I have eaten Candied angelica stems. When I was small, my mother would decorate the top of an iced cake using angelica and glace' cherries. The combination of the red and green detail on a ground of white icing is very attractive visually. The trick was to cut the (expensive) candied stems into thin slices to make it go further.

When I'd grown up, I bought some candied angelica for my own larder, and permitted myself a taste in isolation. The taste is superb, and memories from my childhood flooded back! I would eat candied angelica all the time if it wasn't so expensive. As a result, I've been trying to grow angelica for about 10 years. Finally, last year a seed germinated and now I'm attempting to candy the stem. That is why I looked up the FAQ!

* From "Duane Harding" <hardid.calmvs.ercb.gov.ab.ca>

My dad use to buy it in New York City in the early 1970's. We used it to flavour Christmas pudding.

2.37 Sweet Cicely

Latin name: Myrrhis odorata.

2.37.1 Growing sweet cicely

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

You have a wild garden, a long way away from anywhere else? No? Then don't grow this. Sweet cicely likes half shade and a moist, rich soil (like angelica), but is horribly invasive when it likes the conditions. It is a perennial 2-3' high, with deep roots. Like most umbellifers, the individual plants are short lived, but it seeds itself like crazy. Its leaves are a pretty mottled green, and are large and fairly deeply cut.

2.37.2 Harvesting sweet cicely

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

Its leaves can be dried, though this is tricky, or its seeds can be collected.

>From Henriette: the seeds taste of anise only if they are still greenish. Completely black seed have no taste whatsoever.

2.37.3 Using / preserving sweet cicely

From: nmm1.cam.ac.uk (Nick Maclaren):

It is naturally sweet (like angelica), but has a mild aniseed flavour; very pleasant, if you like aniseed. It can be added to stewed fruits, other puddings etc., or used in pot pourris.

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/sweet-cicely.html>

2.38 Mexican Mint Marigold (MMM) / Mexican tarragon

Latin name: *Tagetes lucida* (T. florida).

Common names: Mexican Marigold Mint, Mexican Mint Marigold, Mexican Mint Tarragon, Mint Marigold, Texas Tarragon, Sweet Marigold, Cloud Plant, Yerbanis, Hierba anis, Coronilla, Pericon

2.38.1 Growing MMM

From: Chris McElrath <Mcmariah.AOL.COM>

The following descriptive information is taken from "The Herb Garden Cookbook" by Lucinda Hutson.

Characteristics of MMM: "Glossy lance-shaped leaves, finely serrated:strong anise scent; brilliant golden marigold-like flowers in fall; perennial".

MMM likes "loose, well-draining soil; full sun"

Propagation: roots easily in water; readily reseeds Plant seeds in the

fall, germination in a few days.

Mature plant will be appr. 2 feet tall and 1 foot wide.

Especially good in hot, dry conditions where French tarragon won't grow.

2.38.3 Using / preserving MMM

From: Chris McElrath <Mcmariah.AOL.COM>

MMM is the best available substitute for Tarragon (see 2.11). The french word for tarragon is "Estragon" which means "little dragon". MMM lacks the fiery flavor of tarragon, but its anise flavor is more pronounced. In Mexico MMM is used as a medicinal tea to calm stomachs and nerves, cure colds, alleviate hangovers. Allegedly, the Aztecs used MMM in a numbing powder which they blew into sacrificial victims' faces to calm their fears. Besides as a tarragon substitute, MMM can be used as a pleasant tea flavoring. It is tasty added to sangria, punches, mulled cider. Also good in vinaigrettes.

Recipes

From: Chris McElrath <Mcmariah.AOL.COM>

Mexican Mint Tarragon Chicken

This recipe I have tried and it is quite good. It comes from Lucinda Hutson's "The Herb Garden Cookbook"

4 boneless chicken breasts
salt and pepper to taste
3 green onions, with tops
2-3 cloves garlic, minced
2-3 Tbsp fresh marigold mint, chopped
3 Tbsp Dijon mustard
2 tsp. honey 2 Tbsp butter, softened
1 Tbsp white wine

Slightly flatten chicken breasts and trim excess fat. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Combine the remaining ingredients to make a thick paste. Place appr. 1 1/2 Tbsp. of the paste on each breast. Roll up tightly. Place seam side down on a lightly oiled baking dish and dot breasts with any remaining herb

mixture.

Bake in preheated 350 degree oven for about 30 minutes. Slice into medallions to serve.

Marigold Mint Vinaigrette

1 egg yolk
1 large clove garlic, minced
2 1/2 tsp Dijon mustard
1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper
1 tsp honey
1/4 cup MMM vinegar or tarragon vinegar
1 Tbsp chopped MMM
1/2 cup olive oil
pinch of salt and cayenne

Blend the egg yolk, garlic, mustard, pepper and honey with a fork. Add the vinegar and chopped herbs; mix well. Slowly whisk in the oil in a steady stream until thickened. Adjust seasonings.

Tomatoes Rellenos

4 med. size tomatoes
Salt
3 cloves garlic, minced
4 Tbsp fresh lime juice
3 Tbsp MMM vinegar or tarragon vinegar
1/4 cup olive oil
1/2 tsp dried mustard
1 Tbsp tomato paste
1 tsp brown sugar
1/2 tsp crushed dried red chile
3 tbsps marigold mint, finely chopped
2 tbsps parsley, minced
1 1/2 cups cooked corn kernels, chilled
2 small zucchinis, chopped
4-6 green onions, chopped
1 green or red pepper, chopped
salt and pepper to taste

Peel tomatoes (if desired) by plunging them in boiling water for 30 seconds, then immediately immersing them in cold water. Cut tops off tomatoes and remove some of the pulp. Lightly salt the shells and invert them on paper towels to drain.

Make the vinaigrette by combining garlic, lime juice, vinegar, olive oil, dried mustard, tomato paste, brown sugar, and half of the fresh herbs. Dribble a small amount of vinaigrette (reserve half) into each shell, and chill.

Combine corn, zucchini, green onion, bell pepper, salt, pepper and the remaining herbs. Mix with remaining vinaigrette and chill for several hours.

Generously stuff each tomato with the corn/squash mixture, and drizzle any remaining vinaigrette over the top.

From: Fran <frich.TENET.EDU>

Following is a really good marinade using Mexican Mint Marigold. It's from our herb society's soon-to-be-published cookbook. I made it yesterday and marinated some chicken breasts in it before grilling. Delish!

But first a comment about Lucinda Hutson, from who's book Chris took the MMM info. She has come down from Austin (to San Antonio) several times to speak to our club. She is one of the most delightful people! The first time she had slides of her house and garden - to die for! The next time she talked about her newest book on tequila and had slides of her travels in Mexico researching it. She obviously had a *lot* of fun.

Now for the marinade.

Herb Marinade

(Marjie Christopher)

1 cup red wine vinegar
1/2 cup olive oil
1/4 cup lemon juice
1 tablespoon dried onion flakes
2 tablespoons sugar
2 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano leaves
2 tablespoons chopped fresh Mexican Mint Marigold or French Tarragon leaves
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon paprika
1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

Pour wine vinegar into blender jar. Add remaining ingredients; blend at low speed for 10 seconds. Pour into jar with tight cover and refrigerate.

Makes 1 3/4 cups. Good as marinade for poultry, beef, pork, or lamb.

Best of the herbal forums:
<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/marigold.html>

Latin name: *Perilla frutescens*

Japanese name: Shiso (Varietal names are aojiso and akajiso)

Other names: Fanciful names exist, e.g. cinnamon plant, beefsteak plant

2.39.1 Growing Shiso

Shiso definitely demands to be treated like a warm weather annual plant. Set it out in pots or plant it outside when it's warm, in full sun. Or keep it as a houseplant or in the greenhouse. Shiso seems to have no particular pests apart from earwigs, and is not eaten by deer.

We have had shiso grow successfully in a variety of conditions, from constantly wet soil near a pond, to very well- drained soil - having dried out because one of us always forgets to water. But shiso can't stand crowding, and it does need an adequate quantity of good soil, unlike many herbs.

2.39.2 Harvesting Shiso

Just pluck a few big, healthy shiso leaves when you want to eat 'em.

2.39.3 Using / Preserving Shiso

Shiso is popular in Japan to give flavouring and/or colour to just about anything: tempura, sashimi, tofu, pickles.

The leaves of the green variety, aojiso, may be served as a garnish like parsely, and may be sprinkled with shoyu (soy sauce). They can be used in salads and to flavour sweetpotatoes.

In Japan, we have also enjoyed home-cooked tempura with leaves of shiso cooked in it, just like a vegetable. Young shiso shoots are eaten with sashimi (raw fish). Shiso leaves are included with mixed vegetables

preserved in miso (a paste of fermented soy and cereal).

The saved seeds from shiso are sometimes used on baked goods, like sesame seeds, and are referred to as egoma.

The red or purple variety, akajiso, is the preferred variety in Japan for adding flavour and scarlet colour to umeboshi -pickled sour plums- and preserved ginger.

Some people find the taste very strong at first, so it's worth tasting just a part of a leaf.

Other uses include red or pink food colouring and an edible oil from the seed (which has also been used for paints).

Shiso leaves rapidly lose flavour and aroma when dried, so this is not a suitable way to preserve shiso.

2.39.4 Which Shiso do you have?

There are two varieties:

1. Aojiso, Green Perilla
2. Akajiso, Purple Perilla (or sometimes Red Perilla)

Selections have been made for ornamental features. For example, the 'lanciniata' variety of akajiso has more deeply serrated leaves than common akajiso.

2.40 Capers

By Miriam Kresh, in Tsfat, Israel

Latin name: *Capparis spinosa*, capers, thorny butterfly

Also see Pickled Nasturtium Pods or Seeds, ch. 2.12.3.

2.40.1 Growing Capers (or watching it grow, as it were)

Every day, I pass wild gardens thriving in the old walls of my town. In late winter and spring, the succulent green disks of navelwort vie for place with pellitory of the wall, dandelions, pink cyclamens, and sometimes small, flowering almond trees. The wild mustard seeds itself willingly between the stones and doesn't mind the proximity of white veronica, henbit, or the lovely, and poisonous, henbane. These, and other herbs make their appearances on the town walls over the weeks of our short rainy season, making a rich display to marvel at every year, regretfully to be saluted as the days once more lengthen into summer. After a few really hot days, the tender, moist vegetation dries, shrinks back, and disappears.

By mid-June, Tsfat's walls are adorned with skeletons of the henbane, still elegant, although dusty brown where their springtime yellow and purple enticed the eye before. Seedlings of figs entrench themselves between the cracks, and the pellitory, far less lush-looking than in spring, still clings, holding its own against the dry heat. A welcome visitor to town and field now is the prickly, but extravagantly beautiful caper bush.

Capparis spinosa is an edible weed of the *Capparaceae* family, with a history stretching back to Pharaonic times. Tightly rooted in its wall crack or rock crevice, it bushes out gallantly during the most arid months of the Mediterranean summer. Small buds, closed tight as fists, spring daily from the long shoots, opening eventually into exquisite white flowers with violet pistils and stamens; they look like butterflies at rest. The small, thumbnail-shaped leaves descend the reddish stem at short intervals, armed at the joint with subtle, small hooks which discourage grazing animals; it's known that not even a camel will eat the caper. Caper fruit resembles a small cucumber hanging down, and may be also be pickled, after having been soaked. An innocuous red shoot, thrusting out from some crevice in the sidewalk, may become quite a large bush which will catch at your clothing with its thorns as you pass by.

The literature on the subject of capers is most concerned with its rubefacient (skin-irritating) property, as the plant yields isothiocyanates, or mustard oils, upon being crushed. That's probably another reason grazers stay away; I myself am prepared to come home with hands pricked and stinging from a caper-picking expedition. Folk medicine, however, knows the fruit and tender tips to be alterative, astringent, diuretic, expectorant, and carminative. (With regard to the last, on searching through the Net for pages relating to capers, I found a Portuguese site devoted entirely to plants which relieve flatulence, where capers were among herbs mentioned.) Some cultures consider capers a specific for rheumatism. A Maltese study suggests that the presence of the flavinoid rutin makes the caper a valuable medicinal herb, as it "improves capillary function" (Rita Spiteri, University of Malta).

I also saw mention of an experiment with guinea pigs who had been sensitised with a variety of animal and vegetable allergens. Those treated

with a preparation of caper root survived, while those who went untreated died of shock (Khakberdyev et al., 1968).

Other edible capers are: *Capparis corymbifera*, *C. decidua*, *C. mitchellii*, and *C. sodala*. These are capers harvested locally and not exported. Known best as a culinary herb, *Capparis spinosa*'s pickled buds are a gourmet item whose cost is justified by the laborious and painful process of hand-picking. The smallest buds, viewed as the choicest, are the most expensive. (Large buds are those which are close to blooming, and could become mushy in the pickling process.) Despite this, a new, giant variety is gaining popularity. It is known as the caperberry, and can be substituted for olives in many recipes. Spain and Africa supply most of the world's pickled capers, although they are cultivated (or grow wild) all along the Mediterranean through Turkey, Iraq, and Egypt. In effect, climates where olive trees thrive are those good for capers. Rarely is the caper found in the United States, although parts of Florida or California are possibly suitable. It is known as an "exotic": I have seen prices as high as \$2.50 for five seeds.

Capparis has a family of an estimated 250 species. Here are ways to identify it in other languages:

French: prier, pres,

German: Kapper, Kapernstrauch

Italian: cappero, capperone (fruit)

Spanish: alcaparro

Portuguese: alcaparra

Hebrew: Tsalaf

Hindi: kiari, kobra

Ancient Jewish sources (The Bible and the Mishnah) mention capers as a titheable crop, giving specific Hebrew names to each edible part; buds, fruit and the tender new shoots. The Sages of ancient times compared the Jewish people to the caper for their ability to survive even after being cut down to the roots, and to thrive in the most inhospitable conditions. The Western Wall of the Second Temple in Jerusalem is host to seven species of herbs, the caper among them. Although henbane is the most common, when people ask, "What's the flower growing out of the Wall?" they mean the eye-catching white and purple flowers of the caper bush.

2.40.3 Using / preserving Capers

You have to be dedicated to pickle the caper. Harvesting it means bearing a certain amount of prickly agony. Tiny green buds appear daily on the

bushes, which must be constantly monitored for new appearances. The small, closed bud with no streak of white on it is what you pick, if you want a firm but tender product. For pickling the shoots, cut them into finger-sized lengths and peel them. If picked too mature, the fruit's seeds will be large and bitter, rendering it unpalatable, so pick only the smaller fruit.

Then your crop must be soaked for two days, changing the water once; this allows a flavorful fungus which is on the plant to develop (good cheese also needs fungus). Finally, get out your mason jar and cure the caper: any simple salt or vinegar pickling recipe will do. The flavor of the finished product will be piquant; bitter-sour. The walls of my small town in Northern Israel provide me with all the caper I have desire to pickle. Following, however, is an easy recipe using the capers you can buy in little jars.

Butter Sauce with Capers

4-6 servings

Ingredients:

4 tablespoons butter

2 tablespoons lemon juice

1/4 cup capers

1/2 teaspoon salt

Melt the butter, stir in remaining ingredients. Remove from the flame. Serve over vegetables or fish, or incorporate into mayonnaise to perk it up. Try stirring a small amount into cream cheese for super lox and bagels.

It's worth viewing this lovely flower - here are some photos.

Images of the Capparacea family:

<http://www.csdl.tamu.edu/FLORA/imaxxcpp.htm> and

Anyone living where the caper bush grows will know that the flower, once picked, is so frail as to almost dissolve in the hand. A beautiful way of enjoying the bloom at home is to pick several maturing buds (for this you actually want a white streak in them); put them in a glass bowl with water almost up to the rim. They will open like Japanese paper flowers and float there, reminding you less of butterflies than of water lilies. Put them in a sunny place - window ledge or table - to highlight their exquisite colors.

End of part 5 of 7

Henriette Kress, AHG Helsinki, Finland
Henriette's herbal blog: <http://www.henriettesherbal.com/blog>

From spamtrap.hetta@spamcop.net Fri Jan 21 17:01:48 2005

Newsgroups: rec.gardens.edible,alt.folklore.herbs,rec.food.preserving,alt.answers,rec.answers,news.answers

To:

Subject: Culinary herbFAQ part 6/7

From: Henriette Kress <spamtrap.hetta@spamcop.net>

Date: Fri, 21 Jan 2005 17:01:48 +0200

Archive-name: food/culinary-herbs/part6

Posting-Frequency: monthly (on or about 20th)

Last-modified: 27Jul03

Version: 1.17b

URL: <http://henriettesherbal.com/faqs/culi-cont.html>

3 Gardening

3.1 Herbs for groundcover

Also see Growing chamomile, 2.7.1, above.

From: jera.ksu.ksu.edu

I've found the following plants useful as groundcovers. Unless otherwise noted, all are perennial, and hardy in my Zone 5 (north-central Kansas) garden.

* pennyroyal, *Mentha pulegium*

Don't fertilize this regularly, it doesn't need the encouragement).

NON-EDIBLE.

* lemon thyme, *Thymus x citriodorus*

Otherwise known as the thyme that ate Cleveland; semi-evergreen in my garden.

* mother-of-thyme, *Thymus serpyllum*

Semi-evergreen, turns a lovely bronzed-purple color in the winter.

* caraway thyme, *Thymus herba-barona*

Used in the late Middle Ages to flavor baron of beef, hence the name.

A very low, flat, spreading plant with a fascinating fragrance & flavor.

* oregano thyme, *Thymus* sp.

Grows much like mother-of-thyme, wonderful oregano scent and flavor.

* Aztec sweet herb, *Lippia dulcis*

Low, sprawling annual; odd, resinous scent; it's supposed to self-seed readily, cuttings root fairly easily.

* oregano, *Origanum vulgare*

May be a bit tall for a groundcover, especially after 2-3 years; spreads vigorously; attractive flowers.

* germander, *Teucrium chamaedrys*

NON-EDIBLE but fun, a broadleaf evergreen; great for rock gardens and retaining walls; attractive flowers.

* mints, *Mentha* sp.

These may be a bit tall for many uses, but for a moist spot that's hard to mow, or that washes out frequently, give them a try - I've found that the candy-scented varieties are somewhat less invasive.

* chamomile, *Anthemis nobilis* + *Matricaria recutita*

These don't grow well in my area, it's too hot and dry; one is annual, one perennial.

>From mflesch.mail.cornell.edu (Mary A. Flesch):

I can't believe no one has mentioned the mint family in this group. At my last house, I planted a tiny spearmint plant to have in iced tea (I'm originally from Louisville, KY and was also planning on juleps). By the time I moved 2 years later, I was able to dig it up and give to four friends while still leaving plenty for the new owners!

3.2 Herbs you can't get rid of (= easy gardening)

Also see Growing horseradish, 2.20.1, above.

From: ecoli.cix.compulink.co.uk (Peter Harris)

Marigold and nasturtium. Just sprinkle a few packets around and your only future problem is thinning them down each year.

From: hetta.saunalahti.fi

Then there are the mints (*Mentha* sp.), horseradish, *Artemisia ludoviciana*, bouncing bet (*Saponaria* sp.) and comfrey. They should be planted in containers which are dug into the ground to avoid them taking over the garden, and to make it possible to get rid of them if you decide to. Among the wild seeders are motherwort (*Leonurus cardiaca*), catmints (eg. *Nepeta cataria*, *Nepeta grandiflora*), wild oregano (*Origanum vulgare*), valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*), mallows (eg. *Malva moschata*, *Malva rosea*), and hyssop.

A prolific annual is California poppy, *Eschscholtzia californica*.

3.3 Tall herbs

From: ecoli.cix.compulink.co.uk (Peter Harris)

Fennel is the obvious one, the tinted variety is nice although I only have the ordinary. Really good fun is lovage, it can be huge. It is known in Germany as the "Maggi Herb" and is a constituent of that proprietary food enhancer. It has a pretty strong "dark" taste and was used to "extend" stews. I.e. it made a stew taste as though there was more meat in it than there really was!

Latin names: Lovage = *Levisticum officinale*. Fennel = *Foeniculum vulgare*.

From hetta.saunalahti.fix

Some nice tall medicinal herbs: *Angelica archangelica*, if permitted to flower; *Inula helenium*, with nice yellow flowers; *Valeriana officinalis*, especially if it gets lots of nutrients; *Verbascum thapsus* and some other mulleins; some of the mallows; motherwort (*Leonurus cardiaca*), Russian tarragon (*Artemisia dracuncululus*); and some of the *Rudbeckia* sp., like *Rudbeckia laciniata*. More? Sure, but I can't remember any offhand. Can you?

3.4 Herbs for shade

From: eberts.donald.uoregon.edu (sonny hays-eberts)

Sweet cicely and woodruff are two I've had good luck with, in heavy shade. Most culinary herbs prefer full sun. Those that are shade tolerant, as a general rule, are not as heavy on flavor.

From: mrooney.mrooney.pn.com (Michael Rooney)

Many of the broader leaf herbs will grow in the shade, especially the ones that tend to bolt. A good example of this is cilantro or parsley.

3.5 Growing herbs indoors

> I love cooking with fresh herbs so I tried growing my own. I planted basil, chives, dill, and parsley in June. The chives are doing fine.

From: Catherine A Hensley <hensley.lims1.lanl.gov>

I have bad news. The chives will eventually begin to look sickly, because they will become root-bound and they will also be expecting a cool spell. When this happens, remove them from the pot, break off a chunk of plant and roots, and move these to a new pot. Then put them in the refrigerator for a week or two, and then back out on the window sill.

> The basil is OK; however, it is not growing as tall and thick as I had imagined. I suspect that it needs more sunlight.

Basil that needs more light tends to get leggy--long spindly growth and few leaves. Is that the problem? Another possibility is that the basil is root-bound. How large is the pot, compared to how large the plant is? If the pot is in danger of falling over from the weight of the plant, or if the plant is dropping leaves, move the whole thing to a larger pot.

> My parsley looks like it is dying a slow death. It is not really growing, and the leaves near the bottom have yellowed and sort of mushed into the soil! Did I overwater? Is it the temperature? I keep the AC on.

Parsley in the soil grows a long tap root, like a carrot (same family). In a shallow pot, it can't do that, so the root splits into many thinner roots and go around and around the pot until it runs out of soil. Yup, root-bound again. Next time try to find a narrow but deep pot.

> My dill looks about the same as the parsley. I know I should not have planted it in the summer. It went to seed almost immediately. Should I throw it out? Is there anything I can do?

Going to seed immediately is a sign of stress, although I don't know if dill usually has a tap root too. Anyway, as an annual herb, it's now past its prime and can't be made to get young again. <g>

> Should I not be growing these herbs inside? Are there any herbs or peppers that are good to grow indoors? If so, what are they, and when should I plant them? I am especially interested in cilantro, mint, and jalapeno peppers.

In spite of its problems, many people grow parsley inside, so that's okay. Dill grows to about 3 ft, so that is probably not a good choice. Basil is good, but it is an annual, so expect to sow some more as the seasons pass. I grow rosemary inside successfully, but before I gained some experience I killed three in three years. Peppers can be grown inside, but they like bright light, and in order to have fruit the flowers must be hand-pollinated (not as hard as it sounds, sometimes you can just thump the flowers with your fingertip to encourage self-pollinating). I also grow

lemon-scented geranium and ginger inside over the winter, although they live outside during the summer.

3.6 Growing herbs from cuttings

> Has anyone ever tried to root lavender before? I am trying it and I'm not quite sure if I'm doing it right. I have taken long woody stems from my outdoor plant and have placed them in damp sand in potting pots indoors. I believe I am just to keep the soil moist, is this correct? Also, how long should it take before roots develop and I am able to transplant them?

>From ceci.lysator.liu.se (Ceci Henningsson):

This is something about lavender that I wrote for rec.gardens some time ago. It works well with most herbs. For particularly watery-stemmed plants (think impatiens) putting them in a jar with water, like you describe works well. If you add just a teeny-weeny pinch of rooting hormone to the water, you'll be surprised at how quickly the cuttings develop lots of roots.

Lavender is one of the easiest plants (along with fuchsias) to take cuttings from, so it's a good idea to start with them if you're not familiar with the technique.

In addition to what you do, I do the following: I take fairly new stems and pinch out the flower buds. New stems root easier than older, woodier stems. For this reason cuttings are often taken in spring when there are lots of new stems. If your cuttings fail now, try again in spring. (Disregard that if you're in the southern hemisphere.) The reason I pinch out the buds, is that I want the plant-to-be to concentrate on making roots, not on flowering and setting seed. I cut the stem from the plant just above a leaf pair, and then I cut the stem just below a leaf pair. It may seem wasteful to throw a large portion of the stem in the compost, but it won't grow any roots anyway (or at least not as easily as the part just below the leaves). I also remove the leaves below soil level.

Start by watering the growing medium. I usually water it so that water comes out at the bottom. That means it is fairly wet. Then I level the surface before coming back to the cutting. I use what my local nursery sells as "sowing soil". It is potting soil with 1/3 sand added.

Before I insert the stem into the growing medium, I dip the lower part (the one that will be below the surface) in a rooting hormone, that will aid the formation of roots. If you don't have any rooting hormone at home, you can get it at your garden center. It doesn't cost much, and lasts a lifetime, so it's really a cheap investment. Because you now have the powder on the

stem, you can't just push the stem into the growing medium, or you will rub off the powder. Instead you poke a hole into it, and insert the stem. Make sure there is contact between the stem and the growing medium. That is called "firming in". Then I take a clear polythene bag, cut a few small holes into it and put it over the pot. Place the pots in the shade. Too much sun and heat will dry out the plants before they have formed any roots to take up water with. Rooting usually takes a few weeks.

Some general advice:

- * Think about hygiene. This is something to do on the clean kitchen counter, rather than on the lawn, because you want to introduce as few germs and fungus spores as possible. Since soil and plant material from the garden carries a lot of microbes which are harmful to people (tetanus and parasite eggs for instance), it's vital for your health that you clean the counter afterwards. If you have a greenhouse or potting shed you can do this in, that's probably the best place.
- * Check on the cuttings from time to time. They won't need any water for the first few weeks until they have formed roots if you have them under plastic bags. You can see that roots have formed when there's new (light-green) growth on the cuttings. Have patience and don't put them in the garden at once. They need to be a bit more established first. I suggest that, depending on the size of the pot you're using and how exposed to sun and winds the site is, to wait for maybe 1 month after new growth is showing before planting out.
- * Place as few cuttings as possible in each pot. That way, if you get a fungus infection in one pot, the whole lot won't be ruined. Also, use small pots. Soil that is not "used" by roots has a tendency to get stale, and that's something you have to avoid here.
- * When planting out, remember that lavender plants get quite big, although the cuttings seem tiny. I know from experience that it's easy to be tempted into putting them quite close to each other.

This is getting to sound quite complicated, though, in real life, it isn't. I've taken maybe 10 lavender cuttings at 3 occasions, and none of them failed. Lavender cuttings seem particularly tough. Some times I've been convinced that they had died when they were bone-dry, but they've always come back to life with the help of some water.

3.7 Warning signs of soil nutrient deficiencies

From: Jennifer A. Cabbage <fxjac.camelot.acf-lab.alaska.edu>
This is information obtained from Charles Knight (my soils professor).

Element Function Deficiency symptoms in plants

Macronutrients:

N - nitrogen Component of all amino acids, enzymes, proteins, etc. Uniform yellowing appears first on lower leaves. Growth ceases.

P - phosphorous Essential for ADP, ATP, DNA, RNA. Involved in protein synthesis. Purple veins. Some plants: uniform ashy color. Stunted growth.

K - potassium Regulates water uptake. Component of cell walls. Tip-burn, brown spots appear first on lower leaves. Weak stems.

Ca - calcium Component of cell walls. Involved in cell division. Uniform yellowing appears first on young leaves. Growing tips (roots and shoots) die. Plants dwarfed.

Mg - magnesium Component of chlorophyll. Enzyme activator. Yellowing of the veins. Yellowed areas die. Component of all proteins.

S - sulphur Important in enzyme reactions and photosynthesis. Uniform yellowing in whole plant. Thin lateral stems (exception: Cruciferae).

Micronutrients (only a few GRAMS per acre needed)

Fe - iron Component or co-factor of many oxidases. Essential for Yellowing of the veins. Larger veins stay green.

Mn - manganese photosynthesis, N-metabolism, N-assimilation. Yellowing of the veins in younger leaves.

Zn - zinc Promotes growth hormones, seed maturation and production Rosette. Small yellowed leaves. Scalloped leaf edges. Important in photosynthesis, Pale yellow-bleached leaves.

Cu - copper protein and carbohydrate metabolism. Essential for cell division Leaves and stems not firm. Tip and stem dieback. Yellowing of younger leaves.

B - boron + development. Synthesis of nucleic acids, plant hormones. Internal browning of cork of stems and fruit. Many flowers abort.

Mo - molybdenum Essential for N-fixation and assimilation. Uniform yellowing of whole plant. Extreme curling of leaves.

Cl - chlorine Influences photosynthesis and root growth. Unknown.

Co - cobalt Essential for N-fixation. Unknown.

3.8 Etc.

3.8.1 Fungicides in general and for damping off

>I need help identifying a whitish fuzz that's causing our rosemaries to shrivel and die back. Then I need help figuring out what to do about it. I have tried washing it off, but it keeps returning within a week. One of the big ones seems to have died completely from this already, the others have mostly only new growth left alive. Is it possible that the fuzzy mildew from our neighbor's grape vines could have taken hold on rosemary?

From: Joyce Schillen gardenpg.cdsnet.net:

What you describe certainly sounds like a fungus, of which powdery mildew is one. A very good fungicide is 3 tablespoons baking soda, 2 1/2 tablespoons horticultural oil (also called ultrafine oil or summer spray oil) and 1/2 teaspoon liquid soap mixed in a gallon of water. Spray all surfaces about every ten days. This has been tested extensively by Cornell U. for black spot on roses, and in Israel for powdery mildew on squashes. Some plants are sensitive to the oil, so test it on a small section first to make sure there's no phytotoxicity.

Another good fungicide is strong chamomile tea. This works great on damping off disease in seedlings:

Pour 1 cup boiling water over 1/4 cup chamomile blossoms and let steep until cool. Then strain into a spray bottle. Spray on seedlings AND soil whenever evidence of damping off disease or other fungus appears.

I swear, this is nearly magical. I've seen it completely knock down that white cottony growth that shows up on soil surfaces and makes seedlings keel over and die. The tea only keeps a week or so before turning rancid, so that's why I make such small quantities.

From: Kathryn M. Bensinger kbensin.MAIL.STATE.TN.US:

What you will find inside any plant suffering from fungus is the vegetative body know as mycelium. What you see above the stem surface is actually the fruiting body of the fungus. The mushrooms you eat are just the fruiting body, the rest of the "plant" is below ground. If you slice open a twig or

stem of an infected plant (dying or dead) and find squiggly line which resemble threads or fine root hairs, you have fungus. Most mycelium is whitish or tannish but may be other colors depending on which fungus; one toadstool has blood red!

Both vinegar and baking soda will work by altering the pH of the plants surface; one to very acid, the other to very alkaline. This allows the plants natural resistance with an edge so it can throw off the fungus. Baking soda is used most often with powdery mildew because this fungus likes cool, humid, acidic environments. It works best before the "powder" shows. Here in TN the summers are always so humid it feels like you could wring the air and I spray my bergamont and other suseptible plants with baking soda/ water mix once a week from before any sign of fungus til humidity levels drop (about the end of June til end of Sept). It works.

Vinegar works everywhere baking soda doesn't - this is my choice when I don't know which fungus I'm dealing with.

Healthy plants never get fungus. Too much fertilizer causing too lush growth, light conditions which are low and (plants get leggy), night temperatures that are too cool or too hot, and (especially in winter)waterlogged soil due to poor drainage, etc. are all stress which weaken the plant and allow fungus the opportunity to move in.

4 Processing herbs

4.1 Vinegars

Also see at least 2.4.3 Chive Vinegar and 2.9.3 Mint Vinegar.

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/vinegar.html>

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/dill-dip.html>

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/nasturtiums.html>

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/vinaigrette.html>

From: adawson.ehs.eduhsd.k12.ca.us

Hmm...I have made many herbal vinegars for my own home use and have always

used cedar vinegar. This, for me, has always seemed quite sufficient and is very economical. Is there any reason why cedar vinegar is not acceptable? Have I unknowingly been committing a culinary crime? Also, I have found bay leaf and rosemary to produce a very well flavored vinegar.

From: HerbalMuse.aol.com

Not at all...I use either apple cider vinegar, or white vinegar, depending on what kind of herb/flower is to be infused.

From: christopher.gn.apc.org (christopher hedley)

I use cider vinegar.

How about Rosemary vinegar which can be used as a hair rinse as well as in cooking and Garlic vinegar which is a good general antiseptic as well as excellent salad dressing.

Good looking labels are an important final touch.

After asking about uses for a combination of parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme I got the following reply:

From: kate.netway.net (Kate Blacklock):

It makes great flavored vinegar!

From: mrooney.mrooney.pn.com (Michael Rooney)

Basically, if you like it as an herb, put a good sized sprig of it in some white vinegar and wait a couple of months and try it. This works with sage (don't leave it too long), oregano, tarragon, thyme (may have to leave it longer) and chives that I can think of.

Rose petal vinegar

From: Baker.325.magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu (Gwen Baker):

1 c rose petals

3 whole cloves

2 c white wine vinegar

Trim away white part of rose petals. Wash and drain thoroughly. Slightly bruise petals and place with cloves in a wide mouth canning jar. Place vinegar in a medium saucepan bring to a boil. Pour vinegar over petals, cover at once with metal lids, and screw bands tight. Let stand at room temp for 1 week. Strain vinegar into decorative jars, discarding rose petals. Seal jars with a cork or other airtight lid. Makes 2 cups.

From: Silkia.aol.com
Herbed Vinegars

Cayenne Vinegar

Put from a 1/4 to 1/2 ounce of the best cayenne pepper into a bottle. Pour on it a pint of strong vinegar. Cork it closely, and shake it well every 23 days. It may remain any length of time but will be ready in about 2 weeks.

Celery Vinegar

Add to a pint of boiling vinegar a few grains of cayenne pepper, or 1/2 oz peppercorns, a teaspoon of salt and 2 C white portion of the roots and stems of fresh celery, sliced thin. Let boil 2-3 mins, turn into a stone jar and close tightly as soon as cold. It may be strained off and bottled in 3-4 weeks with out injury.

Chili or Capsicum Vinegar

Put an oz of chilies or capsicums into a pint of vinegar, cover closely and let stand 2 weeks. After straining the vinegar will then be ready to use.

Cucumber Vinegar

First wipe then without paring, slice young cucumbers into a stone jar. Pour on sufficient boiling vinegar to cover. Add a t of salt and 2/3 the quantity of peppercorns to 1 1/2 pints of vinegar. The mixture may remain thus for a month, or even two months if well protected from the air. It should then be strained, allowed to settle, and poured quite clear into small dry bottles, which should be tightly corked. A mild onion may be mixed with the cucumbers, if it is desired.

Horseradish Vinegar

On 4 oz of young and freshly scraped horseradish pour a quart of boiling vinegar, and cover closely. The vinegar should be ready in 3-4 days. But the mixture may remain for weeks or months before straining. An oz of shallot, minced may be substituted for one oz of horseradish if the flavor is preferred.

Mint Vinegar

Slightly chop or bruise the young leaves of freshly gathered mint pack in bottles, filing nearly to the neck, pour in vinegar to; cover the mint. In 50 days strain off and bottle for use.

Nasturtium Vinegar

Loosely fill a quart jar with clean nasturtium flowers. Add a finely chopped shallot, a very small piece of garlic, and a piece of red pepper. Fill the jar with cold vinegar, and let stand 2 months. Add 1 t of salt, strain through several thicknesses of cheesecloth and store in sterilized jars closely sealed.

Raspberry Vinegar

Crush 4 qts raspberries and cover with 4 qts mild vinegar. After 2 days strain through doubled cheesecloth and pour the same vinegar over a further 4 qts of berries. Let stand again for 2 days. Strain, measure. Add 2 # sugar for each quart of liquid, bringing slowly to boiling point. Boil 10 minutes then skim, turn into sterilized jars and seal. (Use 2-3 T in a glass of icewater for a pleasant summer drink)

Raspberry strawberry Vinegar

Use the same recipe as for Raspberry Vinegar only half the quantity for each fruit.

Shallot Vinegar

Over 46 oz shallots peeled and bruised, pour a quart of good vinegar. Cover closely and in 23 weeks vinegar may be used after straining. A few drops is sufficient flavor for sauces and dressings.

Onion Vinegar

Same as for shallot.

Garlic Vinegar

Make the same as for shallot using only 1/2 the quantity of garlic.

Tarragon Vinegar

Strip the tarragon from the large stalks. Put into small stone jar or wide necked jar, and in doing this, twist some of the branches so as to bruise the leaves and tear them apart. Pour in enough very pale vinegar so as to cover the top. Allow to infuse for about 2 months or more. Strain into small bottles and cork.

From: edbw.unixg.ubc.ca (Edgar Wickberg)

All homemade herb or vegetable flavoured oils have doubtful safety if they are not refrigerated immediately and kept in the refrigerator. The reason for concern is botulism. Clostridium botulinum, the organism that makes the deadly poison that results in botulism, grows in airfree environments. It is only when it grows that it produces the toxin. Putting anything up in oil produces a really great airfree (oxygen-free) environment and therefore the risk of toxin production. Clostridium botulinum is a very common organism in all of our environments, but the organism itself isn't dangerous to us. It requires, besides the airfree environment, a low acid one and temperatures above fridge temps. This is probably more than you ever wanted to hear about why not to make garlic flavoured oil. Why not dry most of your garlic so it will last and make just a little oil and keep it in the fridge. To make the kind that you store in the fridge, just heat a small quantity of oil (of your choice), put a few peeled cloves of garlic in a small bottle, pour the hot oil over, cool for half an hour, cover and refrigerate.

From: baker.325.magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu (gwen baker)

Take the cleaned herbs and place into a jar (a mason jar will do). Heat the oil to just warm (too hot and you will cook the herbs instead of extracting the taste), pour the warm oil over the herbs and let set. Check every 3 days to once a week, straining and adding additional herbs until the desired flavor is reached.

Henriette's comment: keep in refrigerator until desired flavor is reached, and thereafter.

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/basil-pres.html>

4.3 Drying your herbs

From: aks3.cornell.edu (Amy Smith):

You don't need anything terribly high tech to dry herbs...

For leaves you can use old window screens in a DRY DARK place (like the attic). If you are growing seedlings, place the screens on the top of the fluorescent lights.

For roots you might want to use the oven on low. Chopping the roots first helps. Food hydrators are better for roots.

Flowers are like leaves but you MUST be careful about keeping it dark. (the sun leeches the nutrients out of herbs and they disintegrate too.)

You can also hang bunches of leaves on string in a dark place outside (if you are in a fairly low humid climate) Or put flowers or leaves in paper sacks and hang them to dry (shake them or stir them periodically so they don't stick together inside the sack.)

From: ?:

Never store herbs in completely airtight containers unless you have access to a desiccant (like you get in pill bottles) to store with them since you will never perfectly dry them and therefore they need to breathe.

From: jrogow.ridgecrest.ca.us (Judith Rogow), in response to above:
An old remedy - tie a few grains of rice in a bit of cheese cloth and add it to the bottle if you must keep it tightly closed.

>From Henriette:

Never use a microwave to dry herbs. First, timing is different for different microwave ovens, second, the taste isn't that good, and third, you can end up with a fire in your kitchen.

If you use a dehydrator never go above 40 deg. Celcius. Most herbs are tasty because of volatile oils and in high temperatures these volatile oils get volatile and your herbs get tasteless.

And, if you use the bunched-herbs -method outlined above, strip the leaves off the stalks after your herbs are dry. Stalks aren't that tasty in soups, and can be tossed on barbecue coals to give some taste there.

4.4 Freezing your herbs

From: mrooney.mrooney.pn.com (Michael Rooney)

The best way to do it is to cut the leaves off and then put them into a

tight container and freeze them. If you are in a hurry you can put in the stems too and cut the leaves off later.

>From HeK:

I've found the best way to freeze parsley is to cut it fine before freezing. Then you can scrap some directly from the jar into your soup/sauce/whatever without having to cut it while it's frozen / going mushy on you. I've done this for the others I've frozen as well - dill at least is way too stringy to be easily cut when frozen.

From: baker.325.magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu (gwen baker)

Chop the herbs into the desired size and place into a ice cube tray. You can fit a premeasured amount in so you know how much in each segment (I use a tblsp). Then add just enough water to cover the chopped leaf and freeze. You can pop out the cubes and store in bags and have the flavor of fresh herbs year round.

From: mrooney.mrooney.pn.com (Michael Rooney)

Another great way is to make them into pesto. Try different herbs with pignoli nuts, pecans (dill and pecan is one of my favorites), walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, etc. until you find the combinations you like. We freeze the pestos by putting saran wrap over a pint ice cream top (yes, the plastic one from a Dutch sounding one made really in NJ :-)), forcing in as much pesto as we can, and putting the saran wrap over the top. Then we wrap it in aluminium foil and label it and put it in the freezer. The best part is we have it all winter long and it tastes great on many things, especially pasta, chicken, pork, shrimp, fish, etc.

(also see Pesto, 4.9.2 below).

4.5 Herb butter

Herb Butter

>From Henriette:

1 part butter (room temperature)
1 part oil (room temperature)
2-5 parts water (room temperature) (optional)
either finely chopped fresh herbs, or crushed dry herbs, to taste
salt?

Blend butter and oil together, add finely chopped herbs to taste, add water

in drops (like you add oil when you make mayonnaise).

Can't say if you need to add some salt to this recipe, but I'm used to it, as Finnish butter always contains salt.

My favorite herbs to add to this: parsley, or lovage, or celeriac leaves, or fresh black currant leaves (*Ribes nigrum*) - Yum! Don't restrict yourself to garden-grown herbs, there's lots of good stuff growing in the woods and fields. And let your taste buds decide.

I make a larger batch and freeze what I won't use right away - if you add water this will only keep for about a week or so in the fridge.

Basil herb butter

From "Susan K. Wehe" <swehe.ix.netcom.com>

On using basil: mix with chives, parsley and butter to form an herb butter. Different basil creates different tastes.

1/2 lb margarine

1 TLB chives

1 TLB parsley

1 TLB basil

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/herb-butter.html>

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/herb-butter-1.html>

4.6 Jelly, syrup and other sweets

>From es051447.orion.yorku.ca (Joseph St.Lawrence):

An excellent book with info on edible flowers is **The Harrowsmith Salad Garden** by Turid Forsyth and Marilyn Simonds Mohr. Another good one is **Flowers in the Kitchen** by Susan Belsinger.

4.6.1 Flower / herb jelly

also see 2.9.3 for mint jelly, 2.17.3 for garlic jelly and 2.20.3 for horseradish jelly.

> PS... Anyone like basil jelly? B-)

From: Sallie Montuori foxdale.widomaker.com

Haven't tried that yet, but I really like herb jellies. After trying rosemary jelly, I will never put mint sauce on lamb again!!! And I found that thyme jelly makes a terrific sauce for chicken.

But what does one do with basil jelly? None of my knee-jerk reactions for basil includes "sweet."

From: Judy Martin-Spiker judyms.lsid.hp.com

My fiancee puts it in peanut butter and basil jelly sandwiches! He loves them! Personally, I think its a little revolting, but Basil jelly would go nice with pastas or italian cuisine, maybe even on garlic bread. Maybe an addition to pesto? The recipe is as follows:

Basil jelly

1 cup (lightly packed) fresh basil leaves - the fresher the better!

1 cup white vinegar

1 Tbsp lemon juice

2 cups water

6 1/2 cups sugar

Two 3 oz. pouches Certo liquid pectin

Green food coloring (just enough to give it a nice emerald green color, about 7 drops or up to 1 teaspoon full)

Place the basil leaves, lemon juice and vinegar in an 8 to 10 quart sauce pot. The larger size is necessary since this recipe boils up a LOT. Let the basil, lemon juice and vinegar stand while you are measuring the two cups water. Add the water and food coloring. Heat almost to boil, stirring to blend, then add all the sugar at once. Stir to dissolve sugar. Bring to hard boil, add two 3-ounce pouches of Certo liquid pectin, 6 ounces total. (Make sure to get as much of the 6 ounces as you can into the kettle, and not all over your hands and stove, like I normally do! The jelly will not set without all the pectin.) Bring back to boil, boil hard for 1 minute or until jelly point is reached. Remove from heat. Remove basil leaves with slotted spoon. Pour immediately into hot, sterilized 1/2 pint jars, seal and process 10 minutes in boiling water bath. Makes 6 to 7 half pints. This recipe produces a nicely set jelly that is sweet, but with a real kick to it! Personally, I like to use 4 different types of basil leaves in the recipe to add up to one cup, but you may use what you like. This recipe can also be used for other herbs, like oregano, rosemary, mint, parsley, thyme, etc.

Hope you enjoy it. I am proud enough of it to enter it in the county fair this year.

Basic flower jelly recipe - can also be used for other herbs

From: bhaile.leo.vsla.edu (Bess Haile):

2 cups flower infusion: steep 2+ cups moderately packed flowers in 2 cups boiling water at least 30 minutes

1/4 cup lemon juice (E. Toley says not to use bottled, but I do)

4 cups sugar

3 oz of liquid pectin (this will be 1/2 box of liquid Certo)

Bring first 3 ingredients to a boil you can't stir down. Add pectin and boil 2 minutes. Ladle into hot sterile jars. Seal in preferred manner.

Note (Bess Haile): I prefer the liquid certo to the powdered. It seems to jell better with flowers. Also, I find the extra minute of boiling helps to create a stiffer jelly, though 1 minute will create a clear jam-like texture. I always use the 4 oz canning jars because I can give away some of the jellies without running out of all my stock. Not everyone likes jelly from flowers. My own family HATES rose jelly which is one of my favorites. Also, note, rose petals have a bitter white bit where the petals join the flower. Cut these off. I do this by holding the flower, step up, and cutting around the flower, leaving all the bitter bits on the flower. I've used Rose, Honeysuckle, Lavender, and many herbs too. Rosemary makes a good jelly for a glaze on roast pork (and probably lamb). Lemon verbena and spearmint are great too!

Rose petal jelly

From: Baker.325.magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu (Gwen Baker)

1 1/2 c rose petals

1 1/2 c white grape juice

1/2 water

3 1/2 c sugar

1 pkg liquid fruit pectin

Trim away white part of rose petals, wash petals thoroughly, and drain. Combine rose petals and grape juice in a sauce pan. Bring to a rolling boil, stirring constantly; cook 1 min, stirring frequently. Add fruit pectin; cook stirring constantly, until mixture returns to a rolling boil. Continue boiling 1 min, stirring frequently. Remove from heat, and skim off foam with a metal spoon. Quickly pour jelly into hot sterilized jar leaving 1/4 in headspace; cover with metal lids and screw tight. Process in boiling water bath for 5 min. Makes 3 pints.

For fun leave the rose petals in and you can tell folks you are eating roses - they end up with the funniest looks on their faces.

Rose petal jelly II

From: Baker.325.magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu (Gwen Baker)
2 quarts fresh rose petals, loosely packed (about 3 dozen roses)
1 quart boiling water
4 cups sugar
3 tablespoons lemon juice

Place petals in a large bowl. Add boiling water. Cover and steep for 20 minutes, or until all color is out of the petals. Strain liquid into a shallow pan. Add sugar and lemon juice. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until sugar has dissolved, and mixture comes to a rolling boil. Maintain boil until mixture gives a jelly test (2 drops form on side of spoon, then flow together). Skim. Pour into hot sterile jars. Cover with melted paraffin (or use your preferred sealing method). Makes 8 x 6-ounce jars.

Note (Gwen Baker): The rose petal jelly I have had used added pectin. This recipe thinks rose petals have enough of their own.

Violet flower jelly

From: Baker.325.magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu (Gwen Baker)
Violet infusion:

2 cups violet blossoms (don't have to pack tightly, just nicely full cups will do)
2 cups boiling water

Pour boiling water on blossoms and cover 12-24 hours (If you can't get to the cooking within 24 hours, store in the refrigerator).

Jelly recipe:

2 cups infusion
1/4 cup lemon juice
1 pkg. powdered pectin
4 cups sugar

Bring first 3 ingredients to a rolling boil (one you can't stir down). Add sugar all at once and bring back to rolling boil. Boil for 1 minute. Remove from heat and let boiling die down. Skim off foam with large spoon. Pour immediately into hot sterilized jars and seal. Makes 4-5 cups of jelly. I use the half cup jars so I can give away samples without giving away everything.

Note (Gwen Baker): I've made two batches of this jelly and it is delicious! The lemon juice turns the blue infusion the most glorious amethyst color. No fruit jelly I've ever made has this color. It is tart and lemony, but

does not taste exactly like lemon. My violets are not parma violets, just plain old Virginia weeds.

Apple jelly with herbal variations

From: gcaselton.easynet.co.uk (Graeme Caselton),
taken from "Preserves & Pickles", by Heather Lambert, publisher: Octopus Books Ltd.

Apple jelly is quite pleasant plain, especially with hot, buttered scones. Add herbs and it becomes a delicious jelly to serve with hot and cold fish, meat and poultry dishes.

1.75 kg (4 lb) cooking apples
1.75 litres (3 pints) cold water
750g (1 1/2 lb) sugar (approximately)

Cut up the apples, discarding any bruised parts. Put in a pan with the water and bring to the boil, then simmer until very soft. Mash with a wooden spoon and strain through a jelly bag. Test the juice for pectin; it should form a firm clot. Put in a pan and add the sugar. Heat gently, stirring, until dissolved, then boil rapidly until setting point is reached, stirring occasionally. Remove any scum, pour into small, hot sterilized jars and cover. Makes about 1.5 kg (3 1/2 lb)

Variations

Some of these jellies, particularly the rosemary and mint ones, can be melted and poured over ice cream or added to fruit salads.

- * Sage jelly: Add 4 tablespoons chopped sage after removing from the heat.
- * Rosemary jelly: Add 8 large rosemary sprigs with the water. Set a further sprig in each pot.
- * Dill jelly: Add 4 tablespoons chopped dill or 2 tablespoons dried dill weed after removing from heat.
- * Thyme jelly: Add 8 large thyme sprigs with the water. Set a further sprig in each jar.
- * Mint jelly: Add a small bunch of mint with the water. Add 6-8 tablespoons chopped mint after removing from heat.
- * Bouquet Garni jelly: Tie 1 parsley sprig, 2 bay leaves and 1 small thyme sprig with a length of sterilized kitchen string. Put one in each jar of jelly.

From: Baker.325.magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu (Gwen Baker):

Rose petal syrup

1 c rose petals
1 c water
1 1/2 c sugar
3 whole cloves

Trim away white part of rose petals was and drain thoroughly. Combine rose petals and water in a sauce pan bring to boil. Then simmer for 5 min. Add sugar and cloves. Simmer until sugar dissolved (do not reboil) strain petals, refrigerate. Makes 1 2/3 cup.

Use this for

Rose cooler

1/2 c rose syrup
2 c club soda
fresh rose petals.

Combine soda and syrup garnish with rose petals. Makes 2 1/2 cups.

Violet Syrup

From: TOIVO.aol.com

You need to collect as many violet flowers as you can find. This is the hardest part--I can almost never find enough. (recipe based on a quart of violets, increase or decrease according to what you could find. You could increase the proportion of violets to syrup, making a stronger syrup, but I wouldn't recommend making it much weaker than this) You may wish to wash the flowers, depending on where you found them.

The only important piece of information: go through and remove all the green parts from each flower. Cooked, the green parts taste strong and spinachy. Just a little green stuff can ruin your whole batch. We learned this the hard way...

In a double boiler dissolve and heat 2 cups sugar and 3 cups water. If you like thick syrup, add more sugar, or less if you like thin. Make sure it's all the way dissolved and very hot. Fold in the flowers. Put on the lid. Turn down heat so that bottom pan is just boiling - you don't want any

steam to escape from the top pan at this point (if you can help it). Let it cook for another ten minutes. Take off heat. Let cool. Put it in a jar.

Ta-dah. You're done. You could strain out the flowers if you wanted. I recommend keeping the syrup in the fridge. I bet you could use any edible flower instead of/in addition to violets, but I haven't tried it.

Gulkhan - rose petal syrup

From: raghu.hocpb.ho.att.com (-K.RAGHUNANDAN)

A delicious, medicinally effective recipe using rose petals, is simple to prepare. Called "Gulkhan" in India, this is used as a flavoring in sweet dishes and is also eaten as such or with butter. Among its virtues are a nice flavor, mild sweet taste, good for reducing boils, keep skin and blood circulation clean.

Procedure: Peel fresh petals of 1 Rose flower, spread them in a container. Sprinkle a spoon of sugar. Repeat this process each day until, the quantity is about 250 grams (or to fill a 10 oz jar). Choose only pink/red variety of rose which has a fine flavor. Over a period of 10-20 days the petals dry out and the sugar layer melts to form a syrup. At this stage, take out the entire contents and make a paste (use mortar pestle). Put this mixture in a jar with a lid. The GULKHAN is now ready to use.

Mint syrup

>From Trey Jackson, <trey.cs.berkeley.edu>:

Here's an Iranian mint syrup; it doesn't use a huge amount of mint --so dry some to make tea with too. I don't know about canning it, but it lasts well in the fridge for up to a year. Actually we use those German ale bottles with the ceramic "corks".

2 cups sugar

1 cup water

1/2 cup white vinegar

1/2 lemon juiced

6 large sprigs of mint (4-5" in length)

Stir sugar and water over medium heat to boil until sugar dissolves. Add vinegar and lemon juice and return to steady boil. Boil over medium heat 15-18 minutes (skimming as required). Wash and drain the sprigs of mint and add to the boiling syrup. boil one minutes. Take off heat and let cool to room temperature. Store in closed container in refrigerator. One

traditional way to use this is to dip leaves of lettuce in it and eat. It is also good to drink: use a little bit in a glass of cold soda water.

4.6.3 Miscellaneous sweets

From bobas.freenet.vancouver.bc.ca (Waldek Trafidlo)

When I was a kid in Poland years ago my neighbor would prepare a rose petal spread by simply grinding rose petals with sugar, adjusting the proportions to taste as she went. I believe it required some days for the taste to settle but even during preparation it had a wonderful, "elegant" taste. She would often use in baking, also to sweeten and flavour tea.

4.6.4 Edible flowers

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/pansies.html>

4.7 Potpourris and other non-culinary uses for herbs / flowers

Meaning non-culinary uses, in this culinary herbfaq.

4.7.1 Stovetop potpourri

From: clayton2.ix.netcom.com (Jeffrey Clayton):

My favorite potpourri recipe is:

dried orange peel, dried pine needles, dried mint, cinnamon sticks (broken into pieces), cloves

This is a stove top potpourri -- the kind you put in water and simmer.

Aromatherapy says this combination of scents is supposed to keep colds away.

4.7.2 Dry potpourri

From: hag.aisb.ed.ac.uk (Mandy Haggith):

I've been making pot-pourri since I was about 7 and still use the same method I used then - shoe boxes under the bed. I find that the number one ingredient is rose petals, best of all from wild dog roses, but any smelly rose will do. You'll need **MASSES** of rose petals. Lavender is also wonderful. Pick the flowers (and herb leaves) when they're warm and dry and smelly, stick them loosely in the shoe boxes (either mixed up or not, depending on what you want to do with them) and stir them with a warm dry hand a couple of times a day (or more). The petals will gradually dry out and you can use them in pot-pourri recipes after a few weeks. Under the bed is a good place because it is usually pretty dry, it's dark (so the petals keep some of their colour) and the smell of the drying petals gives you sweet dreams! I find the airing cupboard is too hot and dries the leaves out too fast leaving them shrivelled and not so sweet smelling.

From: christopher.gn.apc.org (christopher hedley)

Ideas for Christmas:

Potpourris made by mixing 20 drops of essential oils into 2 teaspoons of Orris root powder added to a couple of handfuls of dried flowers - remember you can use aromatic woods as well.

4.7.3 Drying flowers whole for potpourri

From: diana.politika.tenforward.com (Diana Politika):

If you want to dry the peony intact, either bury it in silica gel or use a 50/50 mixture of borax and cornmeal. Leave it buried for about 2 weeks and then tilt the container to get the mix to shift off the flower. Silica works best, but the other is a lot cheaper. If using the borax mix, use a small soft paintbrush to get all the dust off. I've used many of these in arrangements and everyone goes nuts over them.

From: baker.325.magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu (gwen baker):

When drying flowers using silica be careful. It can speed the drying process, but it can also cause discoloration and leave a residue behind. In about the same amount of time the flowers can be dried naturally. Silica does allow you to keep a flower whole or to preserve a shape. There is also a liquid (I think it is a glycerine) that will preserve greenery and keep it soft and flexible.

4.7.4 Bath salts

From: christopher.gn.apc.org (christopher hedley)

Bath salts made by mixing 10-15 drops of essential oils 'personally selected' in 2 teaspoons of baking soda, mixed well with 3 handfuls of sea salt.

From: Ken Fitch <docfitch.telis.org>

Here is my recipe for bath salts. It is simple and great:

Mix 2 cups Borax, 1/8 cup Sea Salt, and 1/8 cup White Clay together. Use a fork or fingers to thoroughly mix. Shake in about an ounce of essential oil. Cover with a cloth for at least an hour. Mix the bath salts again to distribute the oil. Store in glass.

I hope you enjoy. You can experiment with various essential oils, or pick up a book on aromatherapy for some recipes.

From: HENCHPA.AOL.COM (donna):

To one box of epsom salt mix 1/2 cup baking soda, 12 drops of lavender essential oil, 3 drops each of red and blue food coloring. Add a scoop to the bath water after the tub is filled, not during filling.

From: JoAnne Hildebrand <hildebra.europa.umuc.edu>

While running warm water in the tub, add 1/2 cup baking soda. After filling the tub, add a few drops of essential oil to the water, allowing it to float on top where you can most enjoy the fragrance.

This is a most soothing bath. Easy too!

From: SuseB.aol.com

These are recipes I have for bath salts and herb crystals, respectively, although I have not tried making them myself as of yet:

Basic Bath Salts:

Put 1 cup rock salt in a container with a lid. Drop essential oil or fragrance oil (about 20 drops) onto salt and stir or shake well. Next add food coloring, if desired (approx. 15 drops per cup).

Herb Crystals:

1/2 c. sea salt
1/2 c. Epson salts
1/2 c. fresh herbs or flowers
1/4 c. baking soda

Blend the above in food processor. Add a few drops of food coloring. Spread mixture onto cookie sheet to dry. Add essential oil and stir well. Try several drops of spruce, lemon, patchouli, rosemary, ylang ylang and eucalyptus.

Good luck, and let me know how they come out!

4.7.5 Rose beads

The rose beads have moved to the Best of the Herbal Forums:
<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/rose-beads.html>

End of part 6 of 7

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Henriette Kress, AHG Helsinki, Finland
Henriette's herbal blog: <http://www.henriettesherbal.com/blog>

From spamtrap.hetta@spamcop.net Fri Jan 21 17:01:50 2005
Newsgroups: rec.gardens.edible,alt.folklore.herbs,rec.food.preserving,alt.answers,rec.answers,news.answers
To:
Subject: Culinary herbFAQ part 7/7
From: Henriette Kress <spamtrap.hetta@spamcop.net>
Date: Fri, 21 Jan 2005 17:01:50 +0200

Archive-name: food/culinary-herbs/part7
Posting-Frequency: monthly (on or about 20th)
Last-modified: 06Nov04
Version: 1.17d
URL: <http://henriettesherbal.com/faqs/culi-cont.html>

4.7.6 Misc.

From: baker.325.magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu (gwen baker)
Dried herbs can also go into herb pillows and sleep pillows.

4.8 Beverages

4.8.1 Wine

From: Baker.325.magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu (Gwen Baker) (who got it from Terry Pelley on rec.winemaking)

Rose petal wine

One day before you prepare the must you should make a yeast starter:

For one gallon of wine:

4 oz. Water

1 tsp. sugar

1/4 tsp. nutrient

Pinch of citric acid

1/4 tsp. yeast

For five gallons of wine:

2 cups water

2 tbs. sugar

1/2 tsp. nutrient

1/4 tsp. citric acid

1 package of yeast

Mix all the ingredients in an appropriate size bottle and shake to combine.

Loosely cover the bottle, do not seal it tight; a cloth held in place with a rubber band will work fine. After sitting for a day this mixture should be fermenting and can be added to the must.

The must:

6 cups rose petals (fresh) whites removed

1/4 lb. chopped white raisins

5 3/4 cups sugar

2 tsp. yeast nutrient

2 tsp. acid blend

1 Campden Tablet (crushed)

Yeast - All purpose or Rhinewine

Boil one gallon of water and combine with rose petals, raisins, and sugar

in your primary fermenter. Allow the mixture to cool to around 75 degrees and add yeast nutrient, acid blend and campden tablet.

4.8.2 Ginger ale / ginger beer

From: Jeff Benjamin <benji.fc.hp.com>

I normally post this to homebrewing newsgroups or mailing lists, so for those who are fermentationally challenged, here are a few notes on the recipe below:

- * "Sanitized fermentation vessel" simply means a glass container, like a gallon juice jug, that has been sanitized with a dilute bleach solution. Fill the container with a mixture of two tablespoons of bleach per gallon of water. Let sit for 15 minutes, then drain. Rinsing with clean water is optional, although if you do not rinse, let air dry completely before using.
- * An airlock, in this case, is used to allow CO2 produced during fermentation to escape while not letting air (and airborne bacteria) in. There are a couple of different varieties; you may remember the S-shaped ones from high school biology. You can pick up one of these at your local home-brew supply shop. If there isn't such a shop in your area, simply cover the top of the jug with some plastic wrap and tie *loosely* with string, so that it's not completely sealed.
- * On yeast: again, you can get packages of dry ale yeast from your home-brew supply shop. The fancy varieties of liquid yeast are overkill; a 99-cent package of dry yeast (Red Star, Edme, M&F, etc.) will do just fine. Bread yeast would probably work fine, although I've never tried it.
- * On bottling: sanitize the bottles before filling, just like the fermentation vessel. If you use any auxiliary implements, like a funnel, it wouldn't hurt to sanitize them too. You can re-use the white plastic screw caps on the 2l PET bottles; sanitize them as well.

Geez, now I've probably made the whole operation sound like nuclear physics. Well, it ain't. It is a little more like canning or pickling, in that there are some safety concerns, although the sanitizing is more to prevent off odors and flavors than to prevent deadly diseases. Honestly, it's really pretty easy to do. As the homebrewers all say, "Relax, don't worry." Have a ginger ale.

Ginger Ale

- 1 gallon water
- 1 pound white sugar (either granulated or corn will do)

1/2 oz cream of tartar
1 oz grated ginger
1 lemon
your favorite ale yeast

Boil water, stir in sugar, cream of tartar, ginger, and zest of lemon (yellow part of peel). Cool to pitching temperature (<75F), add juice of lemon. Transfer the whole mess to a sanitized fermentation vessel, pitch yeast, and cap with an airlock.

Bottle after 48 hours, using strong bottles (champagne or 2l soda pop bottles work well). Let condition at room temperature for 2-3 days, then refrigerate.

Helpful Hints:

- * You can use more ginger (up to 3-4 oz per gallon) to get spicier ginger ale.
- * The jury is still out on whether it is necessary to peel the ginger. I peel it simply because it's easier to grate that way.
- * Don't second guess the fermentation time, and don't be worried if the air lock is still perking after 48 hrs. If you let it go past 48 hrs, you will probably end up with somewhat flat, not-very-sweet soda.
- * Please don't use regular beer bottles. Champagne bottles are much stronger. 2l PET bottles work very well because you can squeeze them to see how carbonated they are, and relieve pressure if you're worried.
- * Make sure you store the ginger ale in the fridge. This will help minimize any unwanted further fermentation.
- * Make in small quantities and drink soon. The refrigerating will *minimize* fermentation, not stop it, so eventually you will run the risk of gushers or grenades.

Ginger Beer

>From Sam Waring <waring.infomail.com>:

6 oz Ginger, fresh; bruised
3 qt Water
5 lb. Loaf sugar
1/4 lb. Honey
1/2 c Lemon juice
17 qt Water
2 Drachms essence of lemon (about 2 ts)
1 Egg

Put ginger and 3 quarts water into a very large kettle and boil for 30 minutes. Add sugar, honey, lemon juice and 17 quarts more water.

Strain through a cloth and when it is cold, add essence of lemon and egg.
Let stand for 3-4 days before bottling. Yield: 1 serving.

>From Sam Waring <waring.infomail.com>:

Homemade ginger beer

1 oz Ginger, fresh; peeled & -crushed
1/3 c Lime juice
Lime peel; of 3 small
1/2 c Sugar
3 3/4 c Water, boiling
1/4 tsp. Yeast
1/4 c Water, lukewarm

Combine the crushed ginger, lime peel, juice and sugar in a jar or at least one quart capacity. Pour in the boiling water. Cover loosely and let cool to room temp. Dissolve the yeast in the lukewarm water and add. Seal the jar as tightly as possible and let stand at room temp overnight. Chill, strain and serve. Yield: 1 quart.

From: yorksman.teleport.com (David S Inman)

Ginger Beer on Dried Ground Ginger

This recipe doesn't use ginger root - but it is good! First you need a starter . . .

Either Half fill a jam jar with tepid water, stir in one teaspoonful sugar and one teaspoonful ground ginger, plus one teaspoonful dried yeast; or, as above without yeast. Add one teaspoonful sugar every day and leave uncovered in jar until fermentation starts by natural yeast spores in the air. Then add one level teaspoonful ginger and one of sugar to starter and stir well each day for six days. On the seventh day strain and halve the starter (keep one half for the next batch).

To strained liquid add twelve English cups (120 fluid ounces) of cold water, three cups sugar melted in four cups boiling water and juice of two lemons. Bottle and cork (do not use screw tops, bottles might explode) and keep for four days. Result is mildly alcoholic!

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/herbal-tea.html>

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/herbal-tea-1.html>

Best of the herbal forums:

<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/archives/best/1996/sun-tea.html>

For 'tea' -tea (*Camellia sinensis*) check out the FAQ of rec.food.drink.tea.

For 'herbal' teas look here.

From: Rick Jarvis <JARVISR.WOOD-EMH1.ARMY.MIL>

(On uses of cinnamon basil:)

I use cinnamon basil primarily in tea. (Not many people think of basil as a tea herb.) Cinnamon basil mixes well with mint, catnip, scullcap, etc. in bedtime teas. I use licorice basil in combination with the above herbs, and often throw in some anise hyssop. Lemon basil gets mixed into any number of lemony mixes, that also incorporate lemon balm, lemon verbena, lemon grass, and lemon catnip.

If you enjoy herb teas (actually, technically they're infusions, because they don't contain any real tea), try using some basil.

(after being prompted for more info:)

I do have some advice on developing your own recipes. Take an herb that seems like it would make good tea, make some tea and try it. If you like it, keep using it. After you have tried a few herbs that you enjoy, try mixing them. If there's an herb with certain properties that you want to use (such as catnip or scullcap for a sedative effect at bedtime), but you don't like the taste, mix it with an herb you like that will mask the flavor. The important thing is to keep records of what you put into the blends that you like, so you can reproduce them when you run out.

I make most of my herb teas from dried herbs, although I do make some sun teas using fresh herbs combined with pekoe tea bags. To start, use what you have available. Experiment some, too. (I wouldn't have thought to use flavored basil for tea until my wife tried it and we liked it.) Some of the herbs we use or have experimented with in tea are various mints, flavored basil (lemon, cinnamon, licorice), anise hyssop, lemon verbena, calamint, catmint, catnip, lemon catnip, lemon grass, chamomile, sage, pineapple sage, lemon balm, clary sage, scullcap, sweet marjoram, and thyme. There are *LOTS* of others. Have fun!

>From dgholston.aol.com (DGholston):

The fresh or dried leaves of pineapple sage can be used as a mild-flavored substitute for common sage in cooking or to make herbal tea.

>From Paul Kentaro Matsumoto <kentaro.gladstone.uoregon.edu>:

> I am looking for recipes that use lavender flowers to make herbal teas.

A real simple and delicious recipe: a tablespoon of dried lavender, a couple sprigs of sage (fresh or dried), a couple sprigs of pineapple mint or apple mint, and just a little rosemary. Hope you like this one!

From curtis nehring bliss (nobody.nowhere)

If you want a wonderful tea with a citrusy kick that tastes great hot or cold try this:

Forgotten Harvest Herbal Tea

1 part hibiscus flowers
2 parts lemon grass
3 parts raspberry leaf

Let steep for twenty minutes. It's a very refreshing blend when served ice cold to help you get through these summer days

From: sjahner.sojourn.com (Barbara Jahner)

- * Equal parts of sage, thyme, marjoram, oregano and chamomile is nice and it will help you fall asleep too.
- * Also: 5 oz dried red rosebuds, 2 oz dried balm, 1oz dried rosemary.
- * Also mix in equal parts: balm leaves, rosemary, lavender, spearmint, and cloves. Personally I like a little less cloves but it's up to you.

Enjoy!

4.9 Recipes calling for lots of herbs

4.9.1 Gazpacho

White Gazpacho

From: phuyett.CCTR.UMKC.EDU (Donna Beach)

one qt buttermilk
2 tbs. cider or herb vinegar
1 tbs. sugar or honey
4-6 drops of Tabasco or one teaspoon white pepper
2 green onions
1 small sweet red bell pepper, diced
1-2 cloves garlic
2 stalks celery, cubed
1 large cucumber, Peeled & seeded
1 tbs. fresh dill chopped,
1 tbs. fresh tarragon, chopped.

Put garlic and white parts of onion into food processor and chop. Then add cuke and celery with vinegar and process till fairly smooth. Combine buttermilk, sugar and white pepper or Tabasco. Slice green parts of onion. Combine all ingredients and chill before serving. May be garnished with chopped red leaf lettuce or chopped tomatoes.

4.9.2 Pesto

Also see Using / preserving basil, 2.1.3, and Freezing your herbs, 4.4.

From: jnilsen.minerva.cis.yale.edu (jnilsen)

1 cup fresh Basil leaves, tightly packed
2-3 cloves garlic
1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
1/4 cup pine nuts
1/4 cup olive oil

Process (or finely chop and mix) all but oil. Slowly add oil. Use.

From: phuyett.cctr.umkc.edu (Donna Beach)

I never really follow a recipe when I make pesto. I usually put 4-6 cloves of garlic in the food processor with 1/4 cup of olive oil and a couple of tablespoons of herb vinegar and then chop the garlic. Then I add at least 3-4 cups packed fresh sweet basil leaves and 3-4 tablespoons of ground almonds. Some people use ground pine nuts. And 1/4 cup or more of grated parmesan cheese (I like it fresh best). All this gets processed till the basil is chopped fine.

I have seen this basic pest recipe to include one-to-several peeled tomatoes--which is a great way to use up an abundance of tomatoes from your garden.

Later in the year when there's not as much sweet basil, you can put parsley into the mix. I have even seen a winter "pesto" made with fresh sage, but to me, it's not pesto without fresh sweet basil, with or without the tomatoes.

From: wfink.iastate.edu (Ruth J Fink-Winter)
This is one of my favorite pestos.

Asian Pesto

1 clove garlic
1" piece ginger root, peeled
2 tsp. toasted sesame seeds
2 bunches cilantro, stems removed
1 tsp. soy sauce
1 tsp. mirin or apple juice
juice of 1 lime (about 3 tsp.)
1/4 tsp. Tabasco sauce
3 tsp. sesame oil (or less)
8 oz. soba noodles, cooked

Turn on food processor. With motor running, drop garlic and ginger into feed tube. Add seeds and cilantro; pulse til finely chopped. Add soy sauce, mirin or juice, and then slowly add oil in steady stream until pesto is desired consistency. Toss with hot noodles.

From: stewball.utxvms.cc.utexas.edu (ANDREAS GUENIN)

Sundried Tomato Pesto

1/2 cup blanched sundried tomatoes
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

2 Tbs. tomato paste
3/4 cup olive oil
1/2 tsp. dried thyme
2 cloves of garlic
1/4 cup toasted pine nuts

Combine everything except the oil in a food processor, and then slowly add the olive oil while pureeing to the proper consistency.

From: gcook.chem.Stanford.EDU (Gregory R. Cook)
For a low fat (or no fat) alternative, cut down (or eliminate) the olive oil and add fresh squeezed lemon juice until you get the right consistency. Personally, I like to use a little bit of olive oil for the texture. Also, walnuts are often substituted for pine nuts.

From: DonW1948.aol.com

Pesto (Sorrel-Chive Herb Paste)

1 c Sorrel
4 tbs. Shallots; finely minced
4 tbs. Pine nuts; ground
3 tbs. Parsley; chopped
3 tbs. Chives; chopped
Grated peel of 4 oranges
1/4 Onions, red; chopped
1 tbs. Mustard, dry
1 tsp. Salt
1 tsp. Pepper, black
1 pn Pepper, cayenne
3/4 c Oil. olive

Wash the sorrel and dry it well, by hand or in a salad spinner. Chop the sorrel coarsely, and again squeeze away any liquid. Blend the sorrel, shallots, pine nuts, parsley, chives, orange peel and onion in a food processor or blender. (If using a blender, make sure these ingredients are already finely chopped.) Add dry mustard, salt, pepper and cayenne, and mix again. SLOWLY drizzle in the oil while the blade is moving. Transfer to tempered glass jars and store in refrigerator (for up to 8 to 10 weeks) or in the freezer for up to a year.

NOTES: Sorrel's peak season is summer, although you can find hothouse sorrel year round in some stores. You may reduce the amount of orange peel by 1/4 or 1/2 if you'd like to emphasize the sorrel or other flavors.

Walnuts or almonds may be substituted for the pine nuts.

>From mflesch.mail.coin.missouri.edu (Mary A. Flesch):

Yet another pesto idea. I am always trying to lower the fat in my diet, so last summer I tried "Rosie's Pesto" from "In the Kitchen with Rosie" (Oprah's cook) mostly because it had no oil in it (1 1/2 c fresh basil leaves, 2-5 garlic cloves to taste, 1/4 c pine nuts, 1/4 c fresh parmesan and 1/4 cup lemon juice). However, I only had bottled lemon juice (BIG MISTAKE, I highly recommend fresh) and it turned out way too lemon-y. So I diluted it with ricotta, and it turned out excellent over fettucini! I think it would also be a good mixture to stuff manicotti with. The mixture was approximately 1 tablespoon pesto to 1/4 c manicotti.

> ... pesto turning brown ...

From: Xiaoyan Ma <xma.haas.berkeley.edu>

I grow sweet basils to make pesto. But for some reason my pesto always turns brown (the surface only) within 2 minutes.

This is the recipe I have:

1/2 cup chopped basil
3 tbs. parmesan cheese
4 tbs. olive oil
2 tbs. pinenut
1 clove of garlic
salt

I put 3 times of each ingredient into the blender and blend it for 2 minutes then store the pesto in a jar. I have tried a few times, the same thing happens each time. The pesto tastes good but looks awful. When I mix the pesto with pasta, the whole thing turns brown right away. Can someone tell me what causes the problem?

From: macrakis.osf.org (Stavros Macrakis)

Pesto (like guacamole) turns brown by oxidation. One way to prevent oxidation is to pour a thin layer of oil on top, or cover with plastic wrap (touching the pesto).

Your pesto will probably also turn out better if you use a mortar and pestle instead of a blender. In fact, even a food processor seems to work better than a blender. And the traditional cheese to use is not parmesan, but pecorino sardo (Sardinian ewe's milk cheese).

Unfortunately, good pecorino sardo is hard to get in the US, so you might have to substitute pecorino romano, also known as just "romano".

> I would like to hear from others about alternatives for using pesto.

From: wlgardne.magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu (Wendi L Gardner)

I grow lots of basil and make tons of pesto. what to do with all of that pesto? yes pasta, yes bread, but other fun things to do with pesto...

- * smash it into cream cheese (the ratio of pesto to cream cheese that I prefer is 1:3, but you can go more or less, obviously.) add garlic, some plumped (blanched) sun dried tomatoes, whatever else you fancy - yum!
- * toss pesto with white beans and vidalia onions, serve this concoction hot on a bed of fresh spinach.
- * mix pesto with vegetable broth, toss in whatever veggies you have in the fridge and some macaroni, (I like broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, and rotini for this) and you have soup.
- * find the juiciest beefsteak tomato you can...slice in half, slather with pesto, broil till bubbly. messy, but with a good quality tomato--- more than worth the mess!
- * fill mushroom caps with pesto plus a cheese (the pesto cream cheese mixture in #1 is good for this) sprinkle with bread crumbs and broil.

From: rscw081.uacsc1.albany.edu (Sarah G.):

- * Pesto and potatoes: On baked potatoes, swirled into mashed potatoes, mixed into homefried potatoes, used as a dipping sauce for French fries.
- * Make soup and swirl a spoonful into each bowl before serving.
- * Blend the pesto with vinegar and oil, or your favorite vinaigrette, and use as salad dressing
- * Make into soup... sautee some veggies, add broth and pesto, and simmer for pesto soup.
- * Thin it and use as a marinade for tofu, potatoes and veggies, then grill.
- * Use it for garlic bread filling (or is that what you meant?) Or you could use it to smear over homemade bread before it comes out of the oven as a glaze
- * Sliced ripe tomatoes layered on a plate with pesto, and fresh waterpacked mozzarella.
- * It's easy to make a dairy free pesto. Instead of using cheese, either use a mild flavored miso paste or SoyMage pretend grated cheese, which is completely vegan (no casein). I usually just leave the cheese out altogether, letting the flavor of the basil, garlic, olive oil and nuts show through.

From: norrisj.boalt.berkeley.edu (Jennifer Norris)

I make a potato salad with it. Instead of the usual mayonnaise, I add pesto. Besides potatoes, I add fresh snap peas, green onions, and if I want to make it a really substantial meal, black beans. Gets rave reviews....

From: MiKe McClain

Uses for pesto not mentioned: I put it in omelettes, quiche and deviled eggs, mac and cheese, and gravies. I also mix a tps. of pesto with 3-4 Tbs. mayo for a sandwich spread.

From: Matthew Shapiro (MattheSh.MEDCENTER.UCSF.EDU)

Black Bean Pesto

a terrific, easy-to-make, savory dip for chips, served warm.

1 can black beans
garlic cloves (as anti-vampiric as you like)
dried basil (you can use fresh, but use more)
romano cheese (or the sardo cheese, if you can get it)
black walnuts, heated dry in a pan until fragrant
juice of 1/2 to 1 lemon
fresh ground pepper
a little salt, to taste*
olive oil

Preheat oven to 250-degrees.

Combine black beans (including water), garlic, basil, cheese, walnuts, lemon juice, pepper and salt, and add a little olive oil to get it started. Process and through the hopper, slowly add more olive oil until the mixture just turns creamy.

Pour out dip into oven-safe (like Corningwear) baking dish and pop in the oven. Bake until the top isn't wet anymore, and the inside is warm to hot. Serve with your favorite corn chips.

*Watch out with the salt addition. The corn chips and the cheese may make it all salty enough without adding more.

I wasn't real specific about the amounts of basil and nuts and such because it's adaptable to anyone's taste or existing favorite pesto recipe, and I don't normally measure them out. Note, too, that it's easy to except the cheese and make this a great vegan recipe.

4.9.3 Miscellaneous

Potatoes with Tarragon

From: phuyett.CCTR.UMKC.EDU (Donna Beach)

one large onion

1 tbs. oil

4 medium potatoes.

1 bay leaf

3 tbs.-1/4 cup vinegar

salt & pepper to taste

one tbs. chopped fresh tarragon

Chop onion and sautee till transparent. Peel and slice potatoes, 1/4" thick. Add to onions and sautee for a couple of minutes, then add bay leaf, tarragon, salt and pepper. Add about 1/2 cup water to the skillet, bring to a boil, then cover and simmer for 30 minutes or so--till the potatoes are done. Stir from time to time to make sure they aren't sticking and adding extra water if needed. Serve with the pan drippings.

I've seen a similar recipe using rosemary instead of tarragon.

> I'm seeking a recipe for ginger salad dressing (like you get at a Japanese steak house)

Ginger Dressing

>From Sam Waring <waring.infomail.com>:

2 T Ginger, fresh; peeled & -coarsely chopped

2 T Dijon mustard

2 tsp. Hoisin sauce

1 T Balsamic vinegar

1 T Soy sauce, light

Cayenne pepper; to taste

1 T Sherry

2 T Sesame oil

1/4 c Oil

Blend ingredients in blender or processor. Makes about 1 1/2 cups.

Fuvesleves (Herb Soup)

From: DonW1948.aol.com

1 tsp. Marjoram leaves
1 tsp. Thyme leaves
1 tbs. 1" pieces of Chives
1 tsp. chopped Applemint
4 tbs. unsalted Butter
1 tbs. all-purpose Flour
6 c Water
1 tsp. Salt
a pinch of black Pepper
3 Egg yolks
1 tbs. Sour cream
3 hard Rolls, cut in half, toasted

Cook all the herbs in 2 tablespoons butter for 2-3 minutes. Sprinkle with flour, then stir and cook another 4 minutes. Set aside. Pour 6 cups of water into a pot and bring to a slow simmer. Add salt and pepper.

Mix egg yolks, sour cream and remaining butter; whip into the simmering soup. Cook soup over low heat, stirring, until it thickens. Add herbs and simmer another few minutes.

Place half of a toasted roll in a soup plate and ladle soup over it.

Notes: This recipe comes from Gyula Vasvary, master chef in the 1820's of Hungary.

Spice rubbed Turkey

>From mflesch.mail.coin.missouri.edu (Mary A. Flesch):

I got this recipe from our local newspaper over Thanksgiving and used the last of my summer sage, marjoram and thyme (dried of course) to make this:

2 T dry mustard
2 t ground sage
1 t garlic powder
1 t thyme
1 t marjoram
1 t paprika
1 t salt
1 t fresh ground pepper
1/2 t ground ginger

Mix together well. Makes enough to season a 10-12 pound turkey. I think this would also be good on pork chops.

Herb Garden Dressing (uses dried, which will tide us all over til summer)
>From Mindy Vinqvist <mvinqvist.mta.ca>:

1 c dried oregano
1 c dried basil
1/2 c dried marjoram
1/2 c dried dill weed
1/2 c dried mint leaves
1/2 c onion powder
2 tbs. dried mustard
2 tsp. salt
1 tbs. freshly ground pepper

Combine ingredients, keep in sealed jar to use as needed
Dressing - 2 tbs. dried mix, 1 1/2 c extra-virgin olive oil, 1/2 c cider vinegar.
Mix and let stand 1 hour before serving. Mix again just before serving.
Can also be used dried and sprinkled over things (I recommend food things)

4.9.4 Spice mixes and herb blends

From: DonW1948.aol.com

Cajun Spice

9 tsp. Pepper, cayenne
4 1/2 tsp. Pepper, black
4 1/2 tsp. Salt, sea
6 tsp. Oregano, dried, ground
6 tsp. Thyme, dried
6 tsp. Fennel, dried
6 tsp. Cumin, ground
6 tsp. Cardamom, ground
6 tsp. Garlic powder
6 tsp. Chile powder
6 tsp. Coriander, dried

Whirl in blender or mix all together by hand and fill up jar to store.

From: DonW1948.aol.com

Cajun Spice Mix

1 c Sweet paprika
1 tsp. Paprika
1 tbs. Pepper, black
1 tbs. Pepper, white
3 tbs. Pepper, Cayenne
1 tbs. Garlic powder
1 tbs. Onion powder
1 tbs. Salt
1 tbs. Rosemary

Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend together. I usually put in twice the amount of cayenne for my taste.

From: DonW1948.aol.com

Jim Echols' Cajun Spice

1 tbs. Paprika
1 tsp. Salt
1 tsp. Onion powder
1 tsp. Cayenne powder
1 tsp. Garlic powder
1 tsp. Crushed chilies
1 tsp. Ginger powder
3/4 tsp. Pepper, white
3/4 tsp. Pepper, black
1/2 tsp. Thyme
1/2 tsp. Oregano

Mix all ingredients together in a small bowl. Store in an airtight container. Use in preparing blackened (Cajun) trout. -- A special surprise for guests at shore lunches. Also try it in hamburgers, on sauteed chicken or turkey, and on popcorn.

From Calgary Herald, by Terry Bullick (89.05.03)

From: DonW1948.aol.com

Sazon Preparado (Prepared Seasoning)

3 medium Onions; chopped
1 green bell Pepper; seeded, chopped
1 red bell Pepper; seeded, chopped
4 large Garlic cloves; peeled, chopped
1 tbs. Oregano
1 cup Scallions; chopped, both green and white
1/2 cup Parsley; coarsely chopped
1/2 cup Coriander; chopped
1 tsp. Tabasco sauce
1 tbs. Paprika, sweet
1 c Tomato paste
1 c Oil, olive
1/2 c Vinegar, white
Salt to taste

Combine all ingredients and blend, bit by bit, to a puree in blender. Pour into saucepan and simmer, stirring constantly, for 5 minutes. Cool and bottle. Used to flavor stews, beans, rice and vegetables. Easy to make and useful to have on hand. Yield: 6 cups

From: DonW1948.aol.com

Seasoning Mixture

2 medium Onions; chopped fine
2 tbs. Chives; chopped fine
3 Garlic cloves; crushed
1 red hot Pepper; seeded, mashed
1 tsp. Oregano
1/2 tsp. Cloves, ground
1 tsp. Salt
1 tbs. Lime juice

Mix all ingredients together thoroughly.

For suckling pig, use 1 cup rubbed well into the inside of the pig prepared for roasting. To season whole cleaned fish, gash 2-3 times on each side of backbone. Any fish or meat may be seasoned with this mixture. Cook as directed in the individual recipes. Yield: 1 cup.

From: DonW1948.aol.com

Sweat Sauce

16 habanero chilies; stemmed, seeded
1 can Plums (17 oz)
1 can Apricots (17 oz)
1 c Pimentos
2 c granulated sugar
1 c Plum Jam
1 c white vinegar

HEAT SCALE = HOT

This is a hot, spicy sauce for meats, poultry, or fish, or add it to soups, like you would add Tabasco sauce. Place all the ingredients in a blender and puree until smooth. Simmer over a low heat for 20 minutes, stirring constantly.

From chili pepper magazine, reposted by DonW1948.aol.com

Yield: 6 servings

Here is some recipes that Denise Rounds <rounds.ionet.net> posted to rec.food.cooking in May 96. Thanks to Karen Gann <jkgann.ix.netcom.com> (<http://www.anaserve.com/~gann/>) for sending these recipes over:

Herbs de Provence

1 tsp thyme
1 tsp summer savory
1/2 tsp lavender
1/4 tsp rosemary
1/2 tsp oregano or basil 1/4 tsp sage

Herbs de Provence is made up of every herb that grows easily in the south of France. The mix is best if made with dried herbs as when used and cooking is longer than 20 minutes; fresh herbs tend to lose their flavour while dried holds it.

This blend is wonderful mixed into 1/4 lb. of butter. It is great in soups, on potatoes, on rice, pasta, fish and bread. Try it on an oiled chicken that you then bake. Or make oven fries with it! Yummm.

It is not easy to find the lavender so you may have to ask around a bit for that ingredient. You want an edible version that has not been sprayed with any chemicals.

Try preparing roasted vegetables using the Herbs de Provence blend. Cut up red peppers, green and yellow, too, eggplant, zucchini and summer squash, and leeks (shallots or any onion) into bite sized pieces. Pour some extra-virgin olive oil (just enough to oil the veggies so the herbs have

something to "stick" to) over the veggies along with 2 tsp. of the herbs de provence blend (that has been crushed between your palms as you let it fall into the veggies). Stir to mix the oil and the herbs evenly. Put into a 9 x 13 inch pan in a 400 degree f. oven (or 375 F if your oven runs hot). Let roast for 15 to 20 minutes. This is delicious and impressive! And so EASY!

Fines Herbs

- 1 sprig fresh parsley, minced
- 1 sprig fresh tarragon, minced
- 1 sprig fresh chervil, minced
- 1 fresh chive, minced

Pull leaves off of herbs by pulling in the opposite direction they are growing in. Chop all finely in a food processor. Use in classic French foods. This is good in vegetable soups, potatoes, butters.

Add 2 recipes of this to 1 cup of unsalted butter. Blend and use of potatoes, rice, pasta, fish, or bread.

Bouquet Garni

- 3 sprigs fresh parsley
- 1 sprig fresh thyme
- 1 dried or 2 fresh bay leaf

Wrap these together with kitchen twine. Add to recipes during the cooking but be sure to remove before serving the food! Good in soups, stews, chicken and dumplings, and in goulash.

Use this to make a delicious Tuscan White Bean dish: Heat a large saucepan and add some olive oil. Add one chopped leek or some yellow onions and shallots. Saute 'til soft and then add six cans of white beans, 5 to 6 roma tomatoes, 1-1/2 cups of chicken broth and one bouquet de garni. Cook at simmer for 1/2 hour or longer.

Garam Masala

- 2 tsp cardamon seeds
- 2 tsp coriander seeds
- 1-1/2 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp peppercorns
- 1/2 tsp whole cloves
- 1/2 whole nutmeg (you will grate a part of it)
- 2 inch piece of a cinnamon stick, broken up

This is a northern India blend. The mixes are slightly stronger in the southern section. Bake the seeds in an oven until they are darker in colour. Use a 350-degree oven and keep close watch on them. Put the seeds and all the remaining spices into a food processor. Grind it finely.

Use this blend in vegetable stew to which you have added some apple juice or apple cider, try with potatoes, vegetable stock, over rice, in quick breads such as pumpkin and apple.

4.9.5 Mustards

Also see Using / Preserving Horseradish, 2.20.3.

From: Christel Reeve <Creeve.banyan.com>:

Whole Grain Mustard

1 T. whole coriander seeds
6 T. whole mustard seeds (black and yellow)
1 T. green peppercorns
1/2 t. dried thyme
3/4 c. water
2 t. honey
1/4 c. red wine vinegar

Toast coriander seeds in dry skillet. Crush mustard seeds, peppercorns and coriander seeds in a mortar. Mix seeds, thyme and water in upper pan of double boiler. Let stand at least 3 hours. Heat water to boiling. Stir in honey and vinegar and cook 10 minutes or until desired consistency.

Herb mustard

1/4 c. black mustard seeds
1/4 c. yellow mustard seeds
1/4 c. dry powdered mustard
3/4 c. cold water
1/4 c. dry white wine
1/4 c. white wine vinegar
1 t. dried herb
1/8 t. ground allspice

Mix seeds and mustard with water in upper pan of double boiler. Let stand at least 3 hours. In another pan, mix wine, vinegar, herb and allspice and bring to a boil. Strain the liquid into the mustard and blend well. Cook in double boiler until desired consistency.

English Pub Mustard

1 c. dry mustard
1/2 c. firmly packed brown sugar
1 t. salt
1/4 t. turmeric
6 oz. flat beer or ale

Put all but beer in food processor or blender. With machine running, pour in beer in steady stream. Let sit in cool place for 2 weeks, then refrigerate.

Horseradish Mustard

1 c. dry mustard
1/2 c. powdered sugar
1/2 t. salt
1/2 c. white wine vinegar
1/4 c. oil
1 T. fresh lemon juice
1/4 t. grated lemon peel
5 T. horseradish

Blend all ingredients. Let age in cool place for 2-8 weeks, then refrigerate.

Dijon mustard

2. dry white wine
1 large onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, pressed
1 c. (4 oz) dry mustard
3 T. honey
1 T. oil
2 t. salt

Combine wine, onion and garlic in a non-aluminum saucepan. Heat to boiling and simmer 5 minutes. Cool and discard solids. Add liquid to dry mustard, stirring constantly til smooth. Blend in honey, oil and salt. Heat slowly til thickened (watch fumes!) stirring constantly. Cool in covered jar. Age 2-8 weeks in cool place, then refrigerate.

Bavarian Brown Mustard

1/2 c. whole brown mustard seed
3/4 c. dry sherry
1 c. dry mustard
1/4 c. brown sugar
1/4 t. salt

Combine seed and sherry and let stand 2-3 hours. Blend until almost smooth. Add remainder of ingredients. Let age 2-8 weeks (in cool, dark place), then refrigerate. The longer you let it sit out before refrigerating, the milder it will be.

From: Sam Waring <waring.ima.infomail.com>:

Sweet German Mustard

1/4 c whole Mustard seeds
1/2 c hot tap Water
1/4 c cold tap Water
2 T dark brown Sugar
2 small peeled and halved Garlic cloves
2 pinches ground Cloves
5 T Dry mustard
1 c Cider vinegar
2 slices of Onion
1 1/2 tsp. Salt
1/4 tsp. ground Cinnamon
1/4 tsp. ground allspice
1/4 tsp. crumbled dried Tarragon
3 T light Corn syrup
1/4 tsp. Dill seeds

Soak together the mustard seeds, dry mustard, hot water, & 1/2 cup of the vinegar for at least 3 hours. Combine in a saucepan the rest of the vinegar, cold water, onion, brown sugar, salt, garlic, cinnamon, allspice, dill seeds, tarragon & cloves. Bring to a boil, boil for one minute & cover. Let stand one hour.

Scrape soaked mustard mixture into a blender. Strain into it the spice infusion, pressing solids into a strainer to extract all flavor. Process the mustard (covered) till like a coarse puree with a definite graininess. Pour mixture into the top of a double boiler set over simmering water & cook 10 minutes, stirring often till the mixture is noticeably thicker. Remove from heat, add the Karo and pour into a storage jar. Let it cool uncovered, then cap and store. Can be refrigerated or not. Makes about 1-1/2 cups.

-- Better than Store-Bought by Schneider and Colchie

5.1 FTP sites

I keep archives of alt.folklore.herbs, the culinary herblist, the medicinal herblist and the herbinfo list on MetaLab by ftp, or try the mirror in Japan: ftp ibiblio.org (or SunSITE.sut.ac.jp)
/pub/academic/medicine/alternative-healthcare/herbal-medicine/archives

Both alt.folklore.herbs and the medicinal herblist have more traffic on medicinal herbs than on culinary herbs; for herb gardening and culinary uses the usual place to find information is rec.gardens.edible or the culinary herblist.

Lawrence London keeps archives of rec.gardens on MetaLab by ftp, or try the mirror in Japan: ftp ibiblio.org (or SunSITE.sut.ac.jp)
/pub/academic/agriculture/sustainable_agriculture/gardening/discussion-groups/rec.gardens/

There's a lot of other newsgroup archives on MetaLab, too.

5.2 WWW pages

The only pages needed here are those with comprehensive forward links. With these you should be covered:

- * Henriette's Herbal Homepage has some links:
<http://www.henriettesherbal.com>
- * The Garden Net homepage: <http://gardennet.com>
- * The Garden Gate: <http://garden-gate.prairienet.org>
- * The Gardening Launch Pad: <http://www.gardeninglaunchpad.com>
- * The Internet Chef (Real Neat Site): <http://www.ichef.com>

THE END.
