Herb Society of Manitoba News

Winter 2025 Newsletter of the Herb Society of Manitoba

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Mark Your Calendars!

The Herb Society of Manitoba meets the third Monday of each month, or the fourth Monday if a holiday falls on the third (except December, July and August) at 7:00 p.m .Meeting room of the Mennonite University, SOUTH CAMPUS. Free admission for members. Non-members pay $5.00 per person.Each meeting consists of an array of herbal snacks, an Herbal Marketplace, door prizes, and a special speaker to end off the evening.

The Herb Society of Manitoba is dedicated to promoting knowledge, use and enjoyment of herbs through education, programs, research and sharing the experience of its members with the community.

Editors' Message

Hello,

We are awaiting spring and planting our gardens!!! Some of you may have started planting seeds, which is great!!! We look forward to sharing photos of your gardens in future issues. We had some excellent guest speakers to help us through the long winter months. Thank you to Ash Cooper, Bob Krul, Bob Shearer and Shauna Dobbie for your informative presentations. Hopefully, some of you were able to make it out to Seedy Saturday. Thank you to Cindy and Shelly, who managed the Herb Society table. Herbfest will take place Saturday, May 17 at the Leaf. We hope to see everyone there. If you are interested in helping, please contact Shelley. Fingers crossed, the weather will warm up and we can have early planting!!!

Kathleen Land and Ellen Locke
Editors, Herb Society of Manitoba News

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Common Sense Warning
Any information in the ***Herb Society of Manitoba News*** is not intended to prescribe or diagnose in any way or meant to substitute for professional help in any way. The intent is to offer general information & historical use of herbs.

President's Message

I was inspired by Niigaan Sinclair's column on March 21, 2025, titled "The Many Teachings of Spring". He describes the indigenous beliefs that the week of the spring equinox ushers in a time of balance, renewal and growth.

The indigenous nations here call the spirit of spring "ziigwan" and associate it with change. The snow disappears, the ice turns to water, and the cold gives way to warmth. Since autumn, indigenous communities lived with a large group of relatives. By spring the community has endured the most difficult time of the year: food and medicine have grown short and perhaps also patience and kindness.

In spring, the sap starts to flow as trees thaw and you can harvest maple sugar. The geese return from winter homes. In every part of the season one witnesses constant, consistent motion. The old gives way to the new. New buds appear on the trees and seed grows into the food and medicine of the future months.

I agree with his proposal that in the spring, as we witness the tumultuous change and challenging motion, it would be good to rebuild our community.

These are the teachings of spring:

• recommit to loving your neighbour and trying a new path.

• relearn the value of those beside, in front and behind you.

Are you ready to learn the many teachings of spring?

Shelley Walker
President, Herb Society of Manitoba

Membership

We currently have a total of 48 members. 19 members and 7 guests attended the March meeting. If you know of anyone who is interested in a topic, please feel free to invite them as a guest. Since we are in the 2nd half of the year, membership is reduced to half price: $12.50. Wishing everyone a happy spring!

Diane Wall
Membership Chair, Herb Society of Manitoba

HerbFest 2025

Mark the date in your calendars!!

Saturday, May 17, 2025 - 10 am to 3 pm
at the Tannis Richardson indoor and outdoor classrooms at The Leaf,
145 The Leaf Way, Assiniboine Park

Theme: Living Herbally

What will be going on

There will be herb plants for sale. Come out and talk to our members about growing, using and storing herbs. Get a quick start on your herb garden!

There will be baking for sale and herb infused refreshments to try. Perhaps you will find a new favourite.

In addition there are vendor tables with herbal products and workshops to inspire you about different ways to use your herbs.

You can help

Please consider donating baking to our Bake Sale and drop it off on the day of HerbFest at the classroom in the Leaf. And share your recipes for baking and refreshments with us and visitors!

Talk to all your friends and acquaintances to promote HerbFest. Invite them out! Plan to come yourself!

Volunteer for a shift - 9:30 to 12:30 or 12:30 to 3:00.
To volunteer, contact:
Shelley Walker at sdwalker@shaw.ca
Cindy Louer at cin7cin7@hotmail.com

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

25 members attended the November Annual General Meeting.
We had three demonstrations; Ash described benefits of the herbs she uses in her cooking, Dawn made an edible rosemary wreath and Kathleen showed us the Decorative Art of Flower Hammering.
Donations were collected for Willow Place, for which Shelley received a very nice thank you letter.





HSM MEMBER GARDENS

Kathleen Land





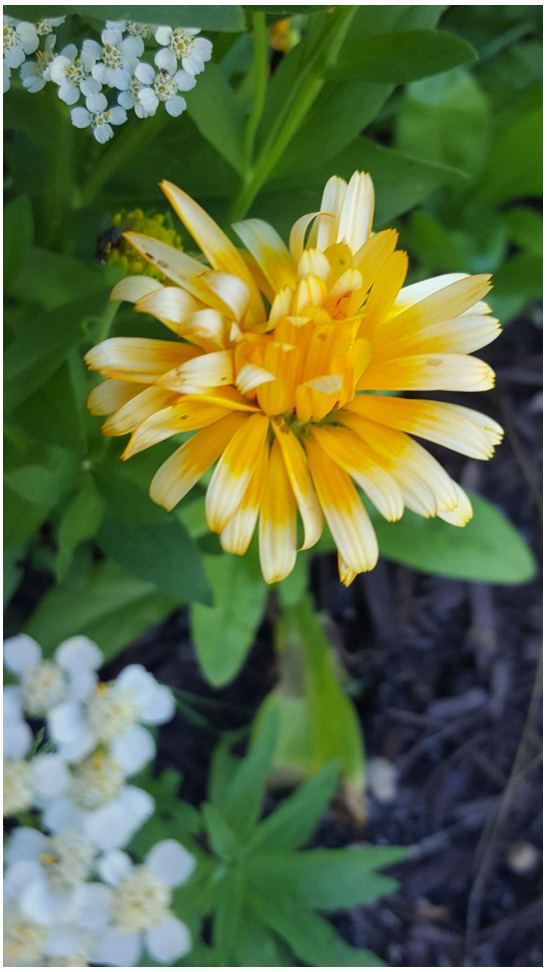


Agnes Leung



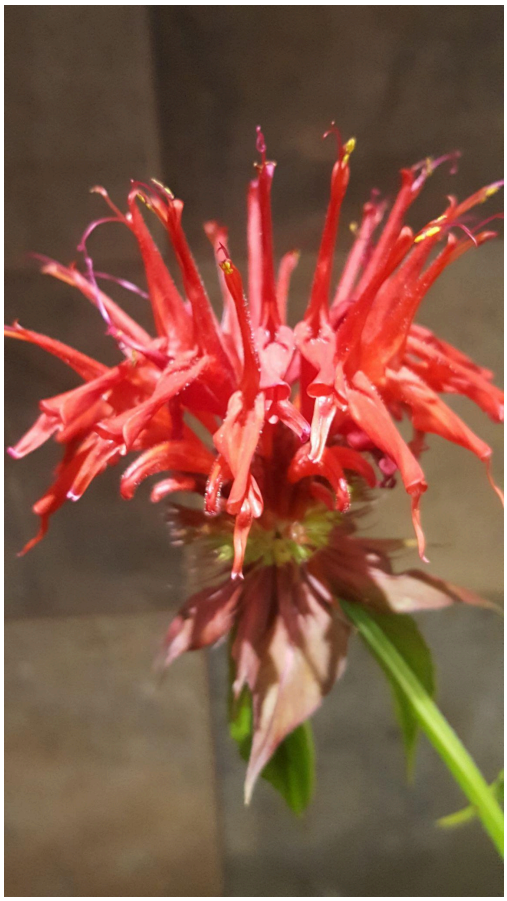






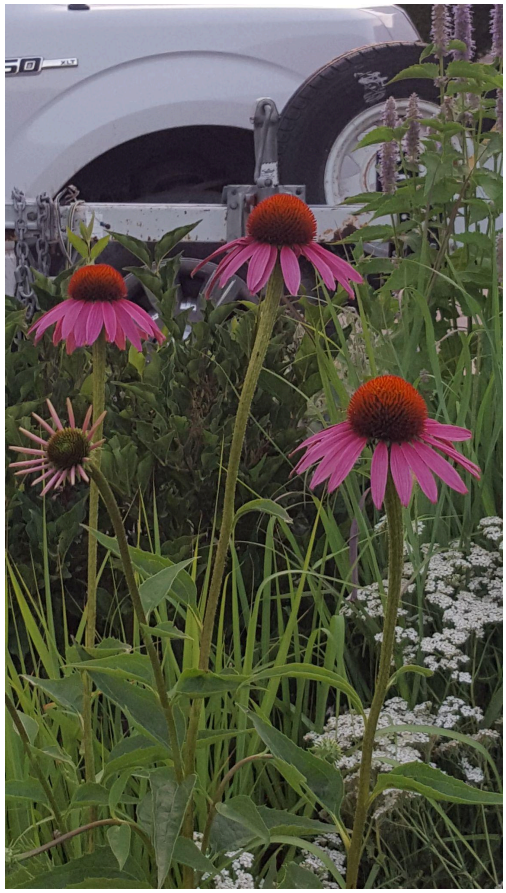




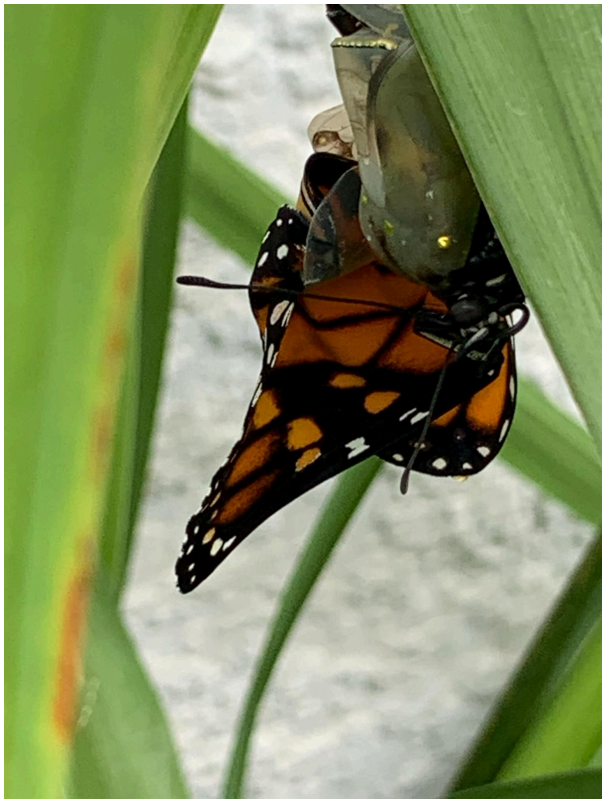


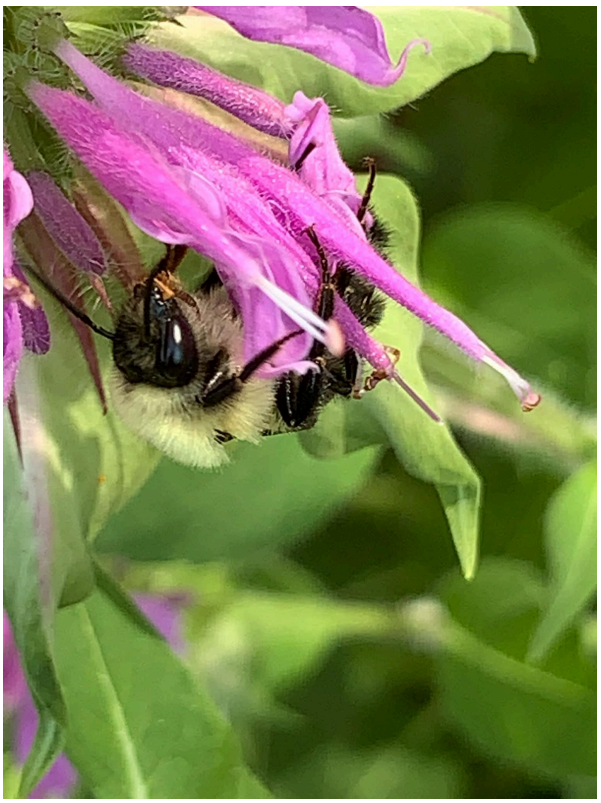




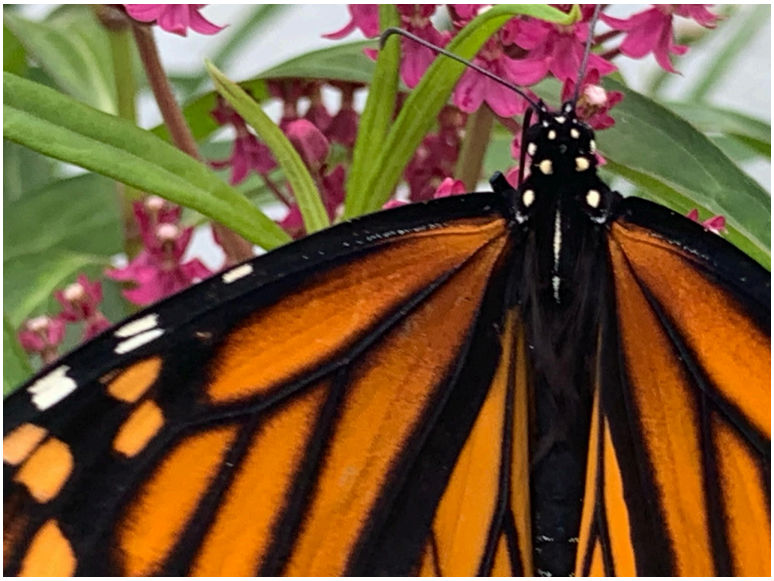


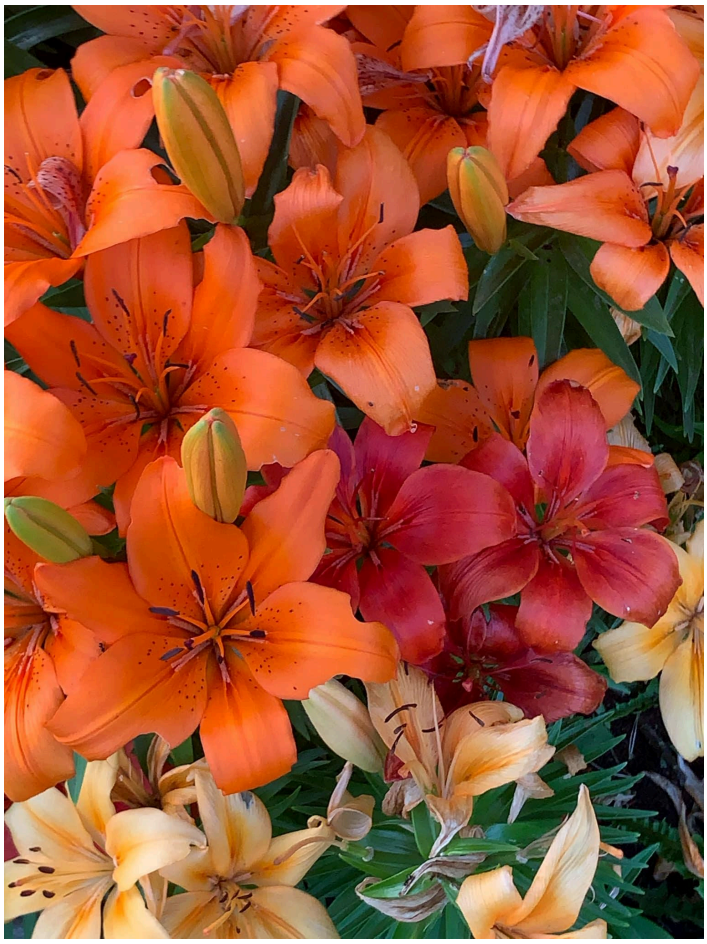
Ellen Locke

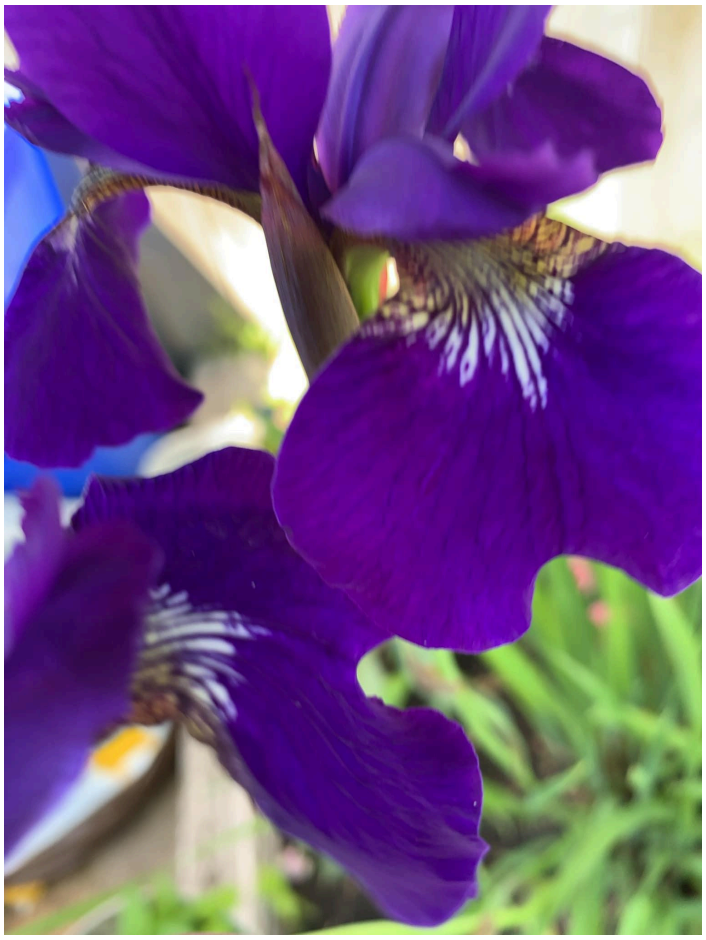












Seedy Saturday



January Speaker - Bob Krul Cornelia Bean

Born in Acton, Ontario and schooled in the Guelph, Ontario area. Bob has a BA (honours) from U of Guelph and has been in Finance and sales of Tractors, Consumer Goods, Industrial Chemicals, Plastics Converting. He started a novel tea and coffee concept in Winnipeg called Cornelia Bean, focused on loose leaf tea and coffee beans in order to promote healthy beans and leaves.
Bob developed the BREWT* tea dispenser and designed The Wall* glass tea infuser for better taste and cleaner delivery. Cornelia Bean just celebrated 20 years in retail business.

Married to Cory and raised three children in the last 38 years to be a part of another generation of tea drinkers.

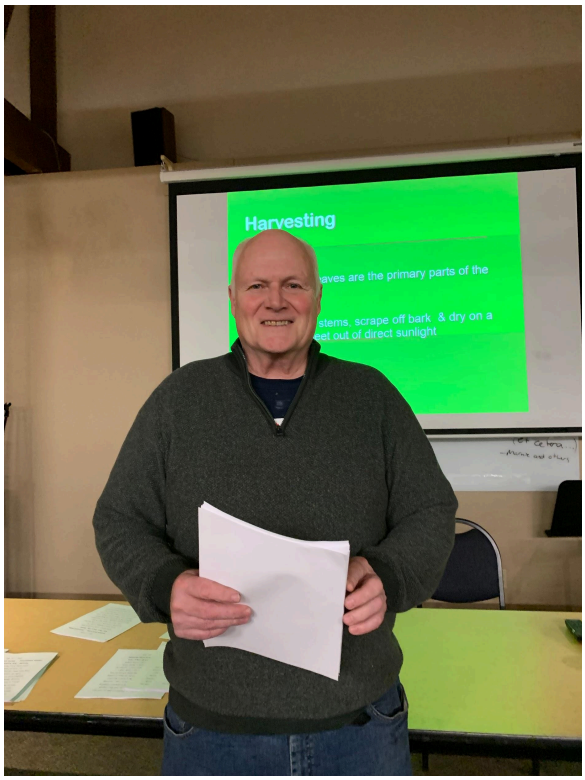
Presentation

Know your plants, the future of specialty tea and coffee with special emphasis on native plants in Boreal Forest and the Arctic for better health and very unique taste. Cornelia Bean is proud to promote Manitoba history of tea and effective ethical and sustainable foraging around our province.





February Speaker - Bob Shearer



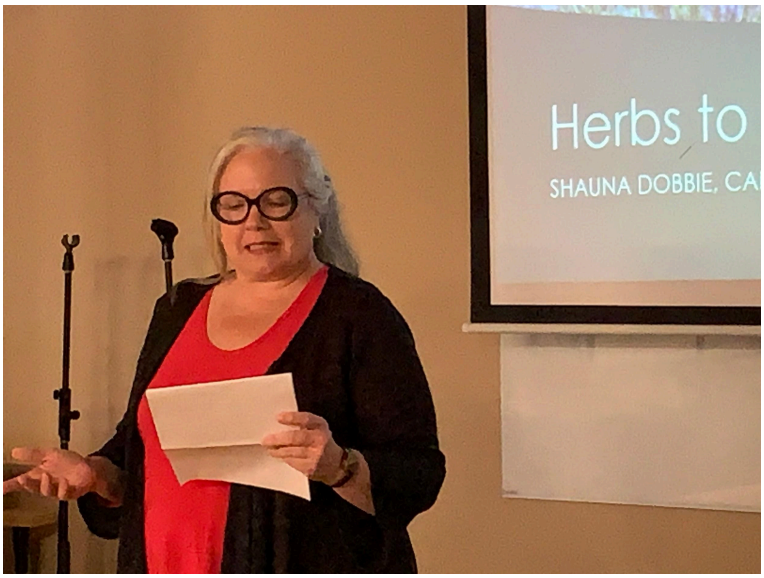
Devils Creek Berry Farm was started in 1990 by Bob and his wife Wendy Roosen. They were able to be involved in the Veggie Market in downtown Selkirk for 4 years, where they displayed and sold cucumbers, plums, potatoes, beans, beets, squash, onions and many other vegetables. They currently farm 2 acres of black currants, and are expanding to 3 acres soon. They farm between 1 to 3 acres of vegetables, depending on the year. The farm is focusing their research on the benefits of black currants and their significant health benefits (twice as many antioxidants as blueberries and 4 times as much Vitamin C as orange juice). The farm currently operates a U-Pick (for over 33 years) which includes vegetables and black currants, various herbs (commercial selling of basil) and experiments with raspberry leaf tea.

Devils Creek Berry Farm is located 44 km North of Winnipeg off Hwy 59 (Google Earth Map for an exact location) near St. Clements MB.

Topic: Black Currants – How are they beneficial to us?

Bob spoke about the various changes and challenges the farm has experienced over the more than 30 years of farming and lessons learned along the way.

March Speaker - Shauna Dobbie
Editor and Publisher, Canada's Local Gardener



For around 20 years, Shauna has been writing and editing *Canada's Local Gardener* magazine, sharing a deep passion for horticulture and storytelling with readers across the country. With a background in drama—holding both a Master's and a BA in the field— she brings a unique narrative touch to writing about plants, making gardening both informative and engaging. After spending 25 years in Toronto, Shauna returned to Winnipeg three years ago, reconnecting with prairie landscapes and the joys of cold-climate gardening in a much bigger yard. Whether uncovering the quirks of uncommon plants or exploring the challenges of growing in Canada's diverse regions, she is dedicated to bringing inspiration and practical advice to gardeners of all levels.

Topic: Herbs for a Restful Night

As herb growers, you may know that some of the best natural sleep remedies can come straight from your own backyard. This talk explores herbs that are reputed to help you sleep better and considers any science behind those claims. Chamomile (both kinds), lemon balm, lavender, valerian, hops… there is no end to the number in use. We'll look at any special requirements for growing them and how best to harvest, preserve and prepare them for a good night's sleep.

Plant	Active component	Best for	Pros	Cons
Chamomile	Apigenin	Mild sleep disturbance, relaxation	Gentle, non-habit forming, good for digestion	Mild, may not be strong enough
Lavender	Linalool, linalyl acetate	Stress-related sleeplessness	Relaxing aroma, reduces blood pressure	Best in aromatherapy, not ingestion
Valerian root	?Valerenic acid?	Anxiety-induced sleeplessness	Fast acting, helps with nervousness	Can cause grogginess, smell
Lemon balm	Rosmarinic acid, terpenes	Restless sleep, mild insomnia	Helps digestion, reduces stress	May be too mild
Hops	Xanthohumol, myrcene	Restlessness and anxiety	Pairs well with valerian root	Tastes bitter, grogginess
Passionflower	Flavonoids	Anxiety related sleep issues	Good for racing thoughts	Not well studied
Tart cherries	Melatonin, tryptophan, anthocyanins	Regulating circadian rhythm	Good for inflamation	Requires regular use

JANUARY HERB OF THE MONTH - GINGER

What Is Ginger?

Ginger (*zingiber officinale*) is a tropical plant known for its aromatic rhizomes, which are the underground stems used as a spice. Fresh ginger has a spicy, peppery flavour with a hint of sweetness, making it a staple in many cuisines around the world, from Asian stir-fries to baked goods. Besides its culinary uses, ginger is also celebrated for its potential digestive and anti-inflammatory benefits.

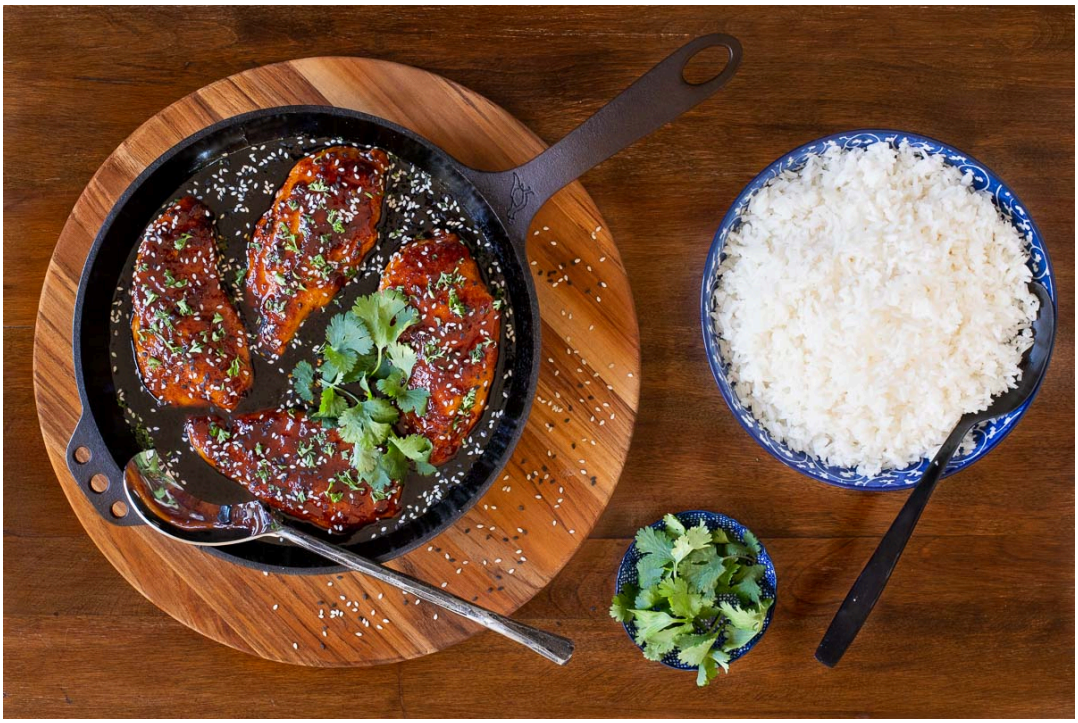
Growing Ginger in Your Garden

Ginger thrives in warm, tropical climates, but with a little care, it can also be grown in containers in cooler regions. Here's how to cultivate this versatile spice:

1. **Site Selection:** Ginger loves warmth and humidity. Choose a location with partial shade to full sun. If growing indoors, a sunny spot or grow light will work well.
2. **Soil Preparation:** Plant ginger in rich, well-drained soil. Add organic matter like compost to enrich the soil and improve its moisture-retention capabilities.
3. **Planting Rhizomes:** Start with fresh ginger rhizomes from a garden center or grocery store. Choose plump, firm rhizomes with visible "eyes" or buds. Plant them 1-2 inches deep in the soil, spacing them about 8-12 inches apart. If using containers, select a large pot to accommodate the rhizomes' spreading roots.
4. **Watering:** Keep the soil consistently moist but not waterlogged. Ginger needs regular watering to maintain its vibrant growth, but ensure good drainage to prevent root rot.
5. **Maintenance:** Ginger is relatively low-maintenance. Keep the area weed-free and apply mulch to help retain soil moisture and regulate temperature. In cooler climates, consider using a greenhouse or indoor growing setup to provide the warmth ginger needs.

Harvesting and Using Ginger

Ginger takes about 8-10 months to mature. Harvest when the plant's leaves turn yellow and begin to die back. Carefully dig up the rhizomes, then rinse and dry them. You can use fresh ginger immediately or store it in the refrigerator for later use. To store longer, dry the rhizomes thoroughly and grind them into powder.



30-Minute Honey Ginger Indonesian Chicken

Ingredients

For the sauce:

- ½ cup honey
- ½ cup low-sodium soy sauce
- ¼ cup dark brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons hoisin sauce
- 3 tablespoons finely grated fresh ginger
- 6 medium cloves garlic finely minced

For the rub:

- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon garlic salt
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika

For the chicken:

- 1 ½ pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts about 1 ½ pounds (4 medium-size breasts)

- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon butter

For serving:

- sliced baby cucumbers if desired
- sliced mini bell peppers if desired

Instructions

1. Combine the sauce ingredients in a medium size bowl, stir to combine and set aside. Don't worry if the mixture is a little lumpy at this point.
2. Combine the rub ingredients in a small bowl and set aside.
3. Place the chicken on a large plate and sprinkle evenly on both sides with the rub.
4. Heat a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add the olive oil and the butter and swirl the pan until it's coated and the butter mixture is hot and bubbly. Add the chicken, smooth side down. Chicken should sizzle a bit when it hits the oil. Cook for 4-5 minutes or until the underside is a nice golden color. Turn and cook for another 1 minute. (The chicken will not be done at this point, but will finish cooking in the sauce.) Remove chicken from the pan to a clean plate.
5. Add the sauce to the pan and bring to a boil. Cook uncovered for 3-4 minutes until the sauce starts to thicken. Add the chicken, cover and turn off the heat. Allow the pan to sit for 10 minutes before uncovering and serving. (If your chicken breasts are really large, either slice them in half horizontally before cooking OR let them cook in the bubbling sauce for 1 minute before covering the pan and turning off the heat.)
6. Serve with jasmine rice, sliced cucumbers and mini bell peppers. Garnish with sesame seeds if desired.

https://thecafesucrefarine.com/wprm_print/30-minute-honey-ginger-indonesian-chicken/

FEBRUARY HERB OF THE MONTH - CINNAMON

Cinnamon: A Spice with History

Cinnamon, derived from the inner bark of trees in the Cinnamomum genus, has been cherished for centuries not just for its delightful flavor but also for its numerous health benefits. Originating from Sri Lanka, this spice was highly prized in ancient Egypt and continues to be a staple in kitchens around the world.

Growing Cinnamon in Your Garden

Cinnamon is traditionally grown in tropical regions.

Harvesting Cinnamon

Harvesting cinnamon requires a bit of patience and know-how. The spice is obtained from the bark of the tree, which is stripped off in thin layers. For best results, harvest the bark from mature trees, usually after 2-3 years of growth. The inner bark is then dried and rolled into cinnamon sticks or ground into powder.

Fun Fact

Did you know that cinnamon is also known for its medicinal properties? It has been used traditionally to aid digestion, support cardiovascular health, and even as an anti-inflammatory agent.

Culinary Uses

Cinnamon is incredibly versatile in the kitchen. Use it to add warmth and depth to sweet and savory dishes alike. Sprinkle it on oatmeal, stir it into curries, or use it in baking. It pairs wonderfully with apples, pumpkin, and chocolate.

Honey Bun Cake



Ingredients

1 box Betty Crocker™ Super Moist™ Yellow Cake Mix
2/3 cup vegetable oil
4 eggs
1 container (8 oz) sour cream
¾ cup packed brown sugar
½ cup chopped pecans
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 cup powdered sugar
1 tablespoon milk
1 teaspoon vanilla

Instructions

Heat oven to 350°F (325°F for dark or nonstick pan). Spray bottom and sides of 13x9-inch pan with cooking spray.
In a large bowl, beat cake mix, oil, eggs, and sour cream with an electric mixer on medium speed for 2 minutes, scraping bowl occasionally. Spread half of the batter in the pan.
In a small bowl, stir together brown sugar, pecans and cinnamon; sprinkle evenly over batter in the pan. Carefully pour and spread remaining batter evenly over pecan mixture.
Bake for 28 to 32 minutes or until golden brown and toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven to cooling rack.
In another small bowl, stir together powdered sugar, milk, and vanilla until thin enough to spread. If the powdered sugar mixture is too stiff to spread, add additional milk 1/4 teaspoon at a time. Poke the entire surface of the warm cake with a fork. Carefully pour and spread powdered sugar mixture over the warm cake. Cool completely, about 2 hours. Store covered.

https://www.bettycrocker.com/recipes/honey-bun-cake/fd374cd7-3f59-41f4-98d9-05b5e8bfef6f

MARCH HERB OF THE MONTH - BLACK PEPPER

Black Pepper: The King of Spices

Black pepper (*piper nigrum*) is often referred to as the "king of spices" for good reason. Native to the tropical forests of India, black peppercorns have been prized since ancient times for their pungent heat and complex flavor. They are used in virtually every cuisine, making them a must-have in any herb garden.

Growing Black Pepper

Black pepper thrives in warm, humid conditions, making it best suited for tropical or subtropical climates.**Climate**: Black pepper plants need a warm climate with temperatures consistently above 60°F (15°C).

Harvesting Black Pepper

Peppercorns are harvested from the plant's spikes when they are green and just starting to turn red. To harvest, the spikes are cut from the vine and dried for a few days. Once dried, they are removed from the spikes and stored in airtight containers.

Fun Fact

Did you know that black pepper was once so valuable that it was used as a form of currency? Its rich flavor and versatility have made it a treasured commodity throughout history.

Culinary Uses

Black pepper adds a distinctive sharpness and depth to a variety of dishes. Whether you're seasoning a steak, spicing up soups, or adding a kick to vegetables, black pepper is a versatile ingredient that enhances flavors and brings dishes to life.

Pickled Grapes with Cinnamon and Black Pepper



1 pound red or black grapes, preferably seedless
1 cup white wine vinegar
1 cup granulated sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons brown mustard seeds (hm, mine might have been yellow? I was unconcerned.)
1 teaspoon whole black peppercorns
1 (2 1/2-inch) cinnamon stick, cut in half (if using two jars, otherwise leave whole)
1/4 teaspoon salt

Rinse and dry the grapes, and pull them carefully from their stems. Using a small sharp knife, trim away the “belly button” at the stem end of the grape, exposing a bit of the flesh inside. Divide the grapes among 2 pint-sized clean, dry canning jars.

In a medium saucepan, combine the remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil over medium heat and then you have two choices. The original recipe has you pour the bring mixture over the grapes and let them cool together. I personally prefer a cold brine on certain foods, not wanting to wilt the fresh fruit, so I cool the brine completely before pouring it over. The former will yield a more tender pickle, and it will pick up the brine’s flavor faster. The latter will take a bit longer to souse, but the grapes will stay more firm. Both will be delicious.

Once cool, chill the grape and brine mixture in their jars in the refrigerator for at least eight hours or overnight. Serve cold, perhaps at a cheese course, and I say you should let people figure out for themselves what they’re eating.

https://smittenkitchen.com/2009/04/pickled-grapes-with-cinnamon-and-black-pepper/.

APRIL HERB OF THE MONTH - MUSTARD

Mustard: A Seed with a Kick

Mustard (*brassica spp.*) is a plant known for its seeds and leaves, which are used to add a distinctive heat and flavor to dishes around the world. From spicy mustard condiments to nutritious mustard greens, this plant is valued for its culinary and health benefits. With its rich history dating back to ancient times, mustard continues to be a favorite in kitchens everywhere.

Growing Mustard in Your Garden

Mustard is a cool-season crop that thrives in a variety of climates, making it a great addition to many gardens. Here's how to get started with growing mustard:

- **Climate**: Mustard grows best in cooler weather, ideally between 60-70°F (15-21°C). It can be planted in early spring or late summer for a fall harvest.
- **Soil**: It prefers well-draining soil rich in organic matter. Mustard is relatively low-maintenance, but a bit of compost or well-rotted manure will help boost growth.
- **Watering**: Keep the soil consistently moist, especially during dry spells. Mustard plants do not like to sit in waterlogged soil, so ensure proper drainage.
- **Sunlight**: Mustard enjoys full sun but can tolerate partial shade. Aim for at least 4-6 hours of sunlight per day for optimal growth.

Care and Maintenance

Mustard plants are relatively easy to care for. They grow quickly and can reach maturity in as little as 30 days for greens and 90 days for seeds. Thin out seedlings to allow adequate spacing, and keep an eye out for pests such as aphids and caterpillars. Regularly check for signs of disease and treat any issues promptly.

Harvesting Mustard

- **Mustard Greens**: Harvest leaves when they are young and tender, typically around 4-6 weeks after planting. For a continuous supply, you can cut the outer leaves and allow the inner leaves to continue growing.
- **Mustard Seeds**: Seeds are ready to harvest when the seed pods turn brown and dry on the plant. Cut the pods and allow them to dry further before removing the seeds. Store seeds in a cool, dry place.

Fun Fact

Did you know that mustard seeds are one of the oldest spices known to humanity? They've been used for thousands of years, not only for their culinary uses but also for their medicinal properties.

Culinary Uses

Mustard is incredibly versatile in the kitchen. Use mustard greens in salads, soups, or as a flavorful side dish. Mustard seeds can be used whole, crushed, or ground to make homemade mustard condiments or to add a spicy kick to recipes.

Black mustard seeds add a distinctive, spicy flavor to a variety of dishes. They are commonly used in pickling, spice blends, and Indian curries. To release their full flavor, briefly toast the seeds in a dry pan before adding them to your recipes. They can also be ground into a paste or powder for use in sauces and dressings.

Scandinavian Mustard Dill Sauce - Cindy Louer

Used on Fish (mostly Salmon) or for vegetables

Ingredients

6 Tbsp Swedish or Dijon Mustard
¼ cup snipped Dill
2 – 4 Tbsp Sugar
¼ cup Fresh Lemon Juice or Red Wine Vinegar (or to taste)
Salt & Pepper to taste
Generous pinch of Ground Cardamom

Directions

Whisk together all ingredients in a medium bowl until smooth.
Cover & let stand for 2-3 hours to allow the flavours to develop. Serve at room temperature or chilled.
Sauce will keep covered & refrigerated for up to 2 days.

2024 - 25 General Meetings

Monday, April 28, 2025
Speaker: Trina Semenchuk
Topic: Vertical Gardening: How to Set One Up

Monday, May 26, 2025
Speaker: Wendy Pearce
Topic: Foraging for Wild Herbs

Monday, June 16, 2024
Speaker: Terry from Sweet Petals Farm

DISCOUNTS FOR MEMBERS 2024-25

Membership card must be presented before purchase

1. Shelmerdine Garden Centre, 7800 Roblin Blvd.-10% on regular priced merchandise (not valid on gift cards)

2. Sage Garden Greenhouses, 3410 St. Mary's Rd. - 10% on plants and seeds only

3. St. Mary's Nursery & Garden Centre, 2901 St. Mary's Rd.- 10% on all merchandise

4. Kackenhoff Nurseries, 1317 Hwy. 75 St. Norbert- 15% off all plants, annuals, perennials and herbs under 7 gallons and store items. (Does not apply to soil, landscape items or gift cards)

5. Schriemers's Home and Garden Showplace, 1505 Molson St.- 10% off plants and giftware

6. Jensen's Nursery and Garden Centre, 2550 McGillivray Blvd.- 10%

7. Jardins St- Leon Gardens, 419 St. Mary's Rd. - 10% off transplantable plants (bedding plants, individuals, annuals, perennials, shrubs, etc. until July first, unless other promotions apply to the specific item.)

8. Ron Paul Greenhouses & Garden Centre, 2641 St. Mary's Rd.- 10% on all plants and shrubs, and soil

9. Red Valley Plant Market & Landscaping, 3091 St. Mary's Rd.- for every $10.00 you spend, you receive a Red Valley Buck to use on your next purchase

10. T & T Seeds, 7724 Roblin Blvd. – Spend $50.00 and receive 10% off your purchase