



North Country Gardening

The annual Food from the Farm, our local food event is taking place on Saturday, March 5. There will be four chefs from local restaurants preparing tasty samples for you, many producers, farmers, and CSAs represented, as well as cooking demonstrations, live music, and activities for the children. This popular event will be held from 2:00pm to 5:00pm at the Rec center on the oval. See page 4 for details!.....Jolene



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It's All in the Name

By Jolene Wallace

There is a group called Celtic Thunder whose music I really like. I listen to one or more of their CDs on my way to and from work almost every day. One of the songs is called The Hunter's Moon and is one of my favorites. I got to wondering what a Hunter's Moon is so did some research. I found a great site at www.almanac.com/content/full-moon-names that taught me a great deal about full moons and how they got their names.

Native Americans named full moons to help keep track of the seasons. Different tribes had various names and length of lunar periods. They served the purpose of marking the year and were named according to the characteristics of that time of year. Some Colonial Americans, finding the names accurately descriptive, adopted these names and applied them to the Julian, then later the Gregorian, calendar. The full moon names used in the Almanac article are from the Algonquin tribes, native from New England to Lake Superior. These were the names most often adapted by the Colonists.

Would it surprise you to know that the full moon for March is called the Full Worm Moon or the Sap Moon? The Sap for obvious reasons, and the Worm due to the thawing ground and renewed earthworm activity. Here are the rest of the names cited in this Almanac article.

April— Pink, Egg, or Sprouting Grass Moon May—Full Flower or Corn Planting Moon June— Strawberry, Rose, or Hot Moon

July—Buck or Thunder Moon August—Sturgeon or Green Corn Moon
September—Corn or Barley Moon

October—Hunter's, Travel, or Dying Moon November—Beaver or Frost Moon
December—Cold or Long Nights Moon January—Wolf or Old Moon
February—Snow or Hunger Moon



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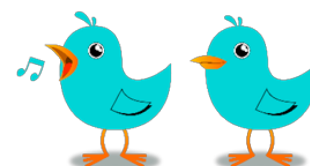
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Amy's Tips for March

By Amy Ivy

Bluebird Boxes

Once March arrives, the first male bluebirds will begin looking for suitable nesting sites for the coming season. If you left your bluebird boxes up last year, now is the time to clean them out to make them appealing to the house-hunting birds. If you intend to put up new boxes this year, now is also the time. In some years we have a couple of feet of snow on the ground in early March and the ground is usually frozen so setting up boxes now can be a challenge. But do what you can to get ready.



The boxes need to be mounted on a post, 5 to 6 feet above the ground. Do not fasten them to tree trunks, they need to be on stand-alone posts. Bluebirds feed mostly in short mown grass

so try to locate your boxes along the edge of your back lawn or meadow that gets mown at least occasionally. Set the boxes so the opening faces the mowed area, and put them at least 200-300 yards apart. Tree swallows like the same conditions as bluebirds so many boxes will be taken over by tree swallows. They are nice birds as well so one way to handle this competition is to set up your boxes in pairs, about 15 feet apart. Bluebirds won't nest near each other but they will nest near tree swallows. By setting up these pairs 300 yards apart, your chances will improve of having both species in your yard. What a treat!



For more information on bluebirds visit the North American Bluebird Society website: <http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org>

Flowers from Seed

Perennial flower plants are quite pricey, so you might be tempted to start your own from seed. For those easy to grow from seed, this is an economical way to expand your collection. They may not bloom their first year and it may take them a couple of years to catch up to potted nursery plants but if you're patient this might be an option.

Perennials relatively easy to grow from seed include: Shasta daisy, rudbeckia, Echinacea, dianthus, columbine and lupine. Perennials that are not feasible for home gardeners to grow from seed include: hosta, phlox, astilbe, iris, bee balm, heuchera (or coral bells) and sedum.

Some annual flowers are relatively easy to start from seed but many need to be started indoors under growlights several weeks before the last frost in order to have a plant mature enough to flower before fall. Annuals that do well when started 6-8 weeks before planting outside include ageratum, marigold, celosia, gomphrena and red salvia. Pansies, bedding begonias and seed geraniums take well over 12 weeks to be ready from seed so these are not practical for most home gardeners without a heated greenhouse. Some annuals that are very quick to flower from seed and don't have to be started indoors include zinnia, bachelor button, cosmos, nasturtium, sweet alysum and sweet pea. I still try to start seeds from this group about 2 weeks before planting them outside to give them a head start on our short season, but it isn't mandatory.



Note: Instructions for building your own low-cost growlight system are available in our office.

Get Ready for the Growing Season

By Jordy Kivett, Nutrition Educator

As a reader of North Country Gardening, you are likely awaiting spring to do your own planting. I am looking forward to sitting down with the kids and picking a few vegetables to plant from the seed catalogue (watermelon radishes?) But as an eater, I am also really excited for the growing season to get back into full swing.



I do enjoy root vegetables and squash, thus have been eating locally to some degree through the winter. I have to say, that I came across pea shoots recently, grown very close to home, and though the temperatures were well below freezing, I felt like I could taste spring. If you read that last sentence and thought it was odd to eat pea shoots, it seemed weird to me too the first time I saw them at a farm stand, but they are delicious. One of my favorite parts of working under the local food promotion program is getting to see the variety of local food produced. Some are variations on familiar foods,

like costa Romanesco zucchini, huge, but tender and nutty, or altogether new foods like pea shoots or kohlrabi, both of which my whole family enjoys.

Are you getting ready for more local food too? Check out CCE's classes this spring. We will be offering a variety of cooking class in March and April to engage your taste buds and prepare you for loading up at farm stands, farmer's markets or using your CSA share to its fullest potential. The classes will range from the basic, with little and no cost classes on basic vegetable and fruit preparation, like smoothie making or what do to with greens, as well as hands on youth workshops to more lavish fare, like a series of cooking demonstrations with Chef David Allen of Latitude 44.

As registration for classes become available they will be posted at blogs.cornell.edu/clintoncountyeats and promoted on our Facebook page. If you subscribe to the blog an email will be sent to you each time we post something, so you will be among the first to see class listings, new recipes and tip sheets!

Go to page 9 to see a list of scheduled cooking events



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Food from the Farm:

Eating Local in the North Country

Saturday March 5, 2016

2:00 to 5:00 pm

Plattsburgh City Gym

52 U.S. Oval



Meet the farmers and sample tasty dishes New this year: 4 local restaurant chefs will be preparing samples Latitude 44 Bistro, Blue Collar Bistro, The Hungry Trout, The Pepper



Admission price is all inclusive:

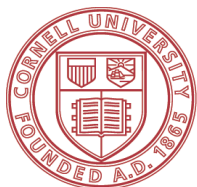
- .Lots to sample, even more food this year
- .Door prizes
- .Meet your farmers
- .Farm products for sale, CSA sign-ups
- .Information on gardening and nutrition

Admission: \$5/adult, ages 5 & under free, \$20 maximum per family

Tickets available in advance on-line, at our office, or at the door

https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/FoodFarm16_209

For more information contact Cornell Cooperative Extension
561-7450 or email Amy Ivy at adi2@cornell.edu



Cornell University
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Clinton County



Gardeners March Madness



Cornell Cooperative Extension
Master Gardener Volunteers present
Gardeners March Madness

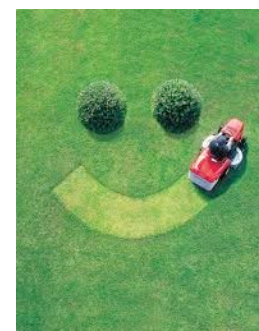


When: Saturday, March 19th— 9:00am to 2:00pm

Where: Plattsburgh Town Hall, 151 Banker Road

What: Four hour-long classes:

- Edible Flowers—for salads, syrups, and decor
- Attracting and Protecting our Pollinators
- Love your Lawn—eco-friendly care to
- control weeds, grubs, and have a healthy lawn
- Fact or Fiction—dispelling garden myths



All classes taught by Master Gardener volunteers and include break-out sessions. Pre-registration is required and space is limited. Your \$15 fee includes all materials, handouts, and light refreshments. Bring a bagged lunch. For more information or to register call 561-7450 or contact Jolene at jmw442@cornell.edu



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Got a Pulse?

By Paul Hetzler, St. Lawrence County Extension Educator

Move over, zombies and vampires. The United Nations General Assembly has designated 2016 as the Year of the Pulse. All those without natural blood flow are officially on the outs. Truth be told, 2016 is “The Year of Pulses,” but I dusted off my handy Artistic License there.



Since one of the tenets of English is that clarity should be avoided when possible, pulses are essentially just another word for legumes. Strictly speaking, pulses are legumes grown for edible dry seeds, for example chickpeas, dry beans, and lentils, and don’t include oilseed crops like soy. The UN recognizes eleven types of pulses, from the familiar split pea to the dubiously named moth bean. But many pulse crops are harvested when the pods are young, and cooked as a green vegetable, e.g. Lima beans and black-eyed peas. So the lines are blurry enough that we can apply either term (along with our favorite seasonings) to our lentils and split peas. In New York, about 35,000 acres of dry beans—our only real pulse crop—are grown annually, valued between \$11 and \$12 million. However, that only gets us to 10th place in the nation. By contrast, in some years a half-million acres of dry beans have been grown in North Dakota, and a quarter-million in Montana. Washington, Idaho and Oregon are other pulse-producing heavyweights.



Many people are surprised to learn that all commercial dry beans (except soy) are descended from bean varieties first developed by Native American farmers. Today the Haudenosaune (Iroquois or Six Nations) still raise heirloom varieties whose genetics go back centuries.

Turns out that pulses, dry beans in particular, need light, well-drained soils, and many soils in the Empire State just don’t fit the bill. The central Finger Lakes region as well as several counties in western New York produce nearly all the pulses grown in the state.

One of the benefits of raising legumes is that their roots harbor special bacteria that fix nitrogen (N) in the atmosphere, which is otherwise not available to plants. Who knew that 78% of our air was broken? It’s a good thing, too, because if all that N was in a soluble form, we would have massive water pollution issues (yes, more than there is now), and would probably need to hack our way through rampant vegetation to get out of the house every day.

Generally, pulse seeds are dusted with dry bacteria culture to give them a head start fixing nitrogen. As plants grow they develop root nodules, basically cozy condos for these microbes, which in turn provide nitrogen to the plant. Pulse crops still need fertilizer, but far less than they would if not for their N-fixing superpowers.



Got A Pulse? Continued...



Another super thing about pulses is their nutritional value. They are renowned for their high protein content, but also contain a wealth of other nutrients. The 2010 U.S. Dietary Guidelines state that: “Bean and peas are excellent sources of protein, iron, zinc, potassium and folate, similar to seafood, meat, and poultry, and are excellent sources of dietary fiber. Because of their high nutrient content, beans and peas may be considered both a vegetable and a protein food.”

Pulses are gluten-free, and have a low glycemic index, meaning they’re a good food for diabetics. Chickpeas have a glycemic index of 39, far less than white bread, which has a value of 100. Research done at Toronto’s St. Michael’s Hospital in 2014 showed that just a half-cup of pulses per day lowered LDL (bad) cholesterol 5%. This equates to a 5-6% drop in the risk of stroke or heart attack. In other words, pulses are good for your pulse.

Some people don’t like a certain kind of “pulse” that eating pulses can cause. It’s easy to reduce the musicality of pulses through modified cooking methods. For best results, drain the water that your dry beans have soaked in, and

then after the beans have cooked, discard the liquid and rinse the beans well. Also, make sure to cook beans thoroughly—“al dente” beans cause a lot more gas. If you use canned beans, rinse thoroughly. And if you’re extra sensitive to pulses, you can take an enzyme-based product called Beano, available at many drugstores and whole-foods stores, before eating. That way we can all have a 2016 that is replete with healthy pulses.



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Easy Indoor Salad Gardening

By Bunny Goodwin, Essex County Master Gardener Volunteer

In the month of March, I have a craving for fresh vegetables. It's not so bad this year since I have been growing fresh greens in my house all winter. All you need are seeds, soil-less mix or potting soil, a container, a window, and some water.

"When a seed sprouts, it sends out a root and a stem with a seed leaf. The seed leaf is the two halves of a seed when it opens and becomes a set of leaves. Once the seed leaves spread out the first true leaf appears in the crotch of the two leaves. The true leaf resembles the leaves of the mature plant both in look and flavor. Each of the parts of a plant can be encouraged to grow in different ways using different techniques". If you grow sprouts in a jar, you harvest the root, stem, and leaves. However, you must rinse the jars 3 times a day. If you grow micro-greens, you need special grow lights and must wait until the true leaves are ready to harvest. You can grow more sprouts in soil with less effort than jar sprouts and in less time and with less equipment than it takes to grow micro-greens.*

How to grow soil-sprouted greens. Poke 4-6 holes in the bottom of a container. Blue plastic mushroom containers work great. To measure how many seeds to plant, put one layer of seeds in the bottom of the container, then put half of those seeds in a jar to soak for 8-24 hours. Only use half because the seeds will double in size while soaking. For a 4" X 7" blue plastic mushroom container, soak 2 tablespoons of large seeds or 2 teaspoons of small seeds. For a 10" X 20" flat, soak 10 tablespoons of large seeds or 10 teaspoons of small seeds. A 4 ounce cream cheese container filled with un-soaked seeds will give you enough soaked seeds to plant in two 10" X 20" flats.

After soaking for no more than 24 hours, drain the seeds. Prepare your growing medium by mixing 4 parts soil-less mix or potting soil with 1 part water in a large bucket. The soil should be damp, but not dripping. Put 1 ½ inches of the growing medium in your container. Keep it in the dark for 4 days until the seeds sprout. Put the container in another container that is just a bit larger so you can water from the bottom of the larger container as needed, not more than once a day. All soil-sprouts are easily grown in a sunny window and are ready to harvest in about 10 days.

The shoots are great in salads and sandwiches. The dark hulls of sunflower and buckwheat seeds drop off as they grow. Buckwheat and some Radish seeds have beautiful red stems. If you keep popcorn in the dark the whole time, the shoots turn a pretty yellow color. Radish, Arugula, and Red Russian Kale have the strongest tastes.

Larger seeds, like peas, sunflowers, and adzuki beans are easier to grow than smaller seeds, like buckwheat, radish, arugula, broccoli, and kale.

Pea shoots are my favorite. Almost any garden pea will work, but I find that forage peas are the best. Even children who don't like vegetables like to snack on raw pea shoots. They are delicious in salads. One of my favorite recipes is to stir fry them with garlic and a little toasted sesame oil.

Seed Sources: most vegetable garden catalogs
www.growingmicro-greens.com

* Burke, Peter. Year-Round Indoor Salad Gardening. "How to Grow Nutrient-Dense Soil-Sprouted Greens in Less Than 10 Days". White River Junction, VT. Chelsea Green Publishing



This newsletter is also available on our website:
<http://blogs.cornell.edu/cceclintoncounty/> under Gardening: News

Upcoming Cooking Events

Jordy Kivett, Nutrition Educator



Join Us... for demonstrations and samples, prepared by Chef David Allen at Latitude 44. Cost \$25 per session. All attendees will be entered into a drawing for a Latitude gift card.

- March 7th 11-12: **Appetizers**
- March 14th 11-12: **Entrees**
- March 21st 11-12: **Desserts**

Check out basic classes to help you incorporate local foods into your everyday cooking. Cost \$5 per session.

- April 8th 12- 1: **Greens!** How to use the kale, spinach, chard and more that are grown by our local farmers. (At CCE office)
- April 15th 12-1: **Vegetable Sides-** learn a few new ways to fill your plate, healthy for everyone including a diabetic friendly diet. (At CCE office)
- Other classes on using a **slow cooker**, making smoothies and sauces TBA! Stay tuned!

Kids in the Kitchen will return with another vegetable session, this one will focus on dips and raw veggies, to get little ones in the mood to eat local this summer!

- April 29th 11-1: **Kids in the Kitchen**, Veggies 102



<p style="text-align: center;">Have a garden or agriculture related business? This space is available for your business card! Contact us at 561-7450</p>	<p>Are you curious about all that's going in our 4-H program? Check out the Clover Express at the link below! Call our office if you'd like to find out more about how you can get involved.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">http://www.ccecc4hce.blogspot.com/</p>
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Sesame Pea Shoot Salad

This is a really tasty salad, which can either be enjoyed immediately or made ahead and refrigerated. Pea shoots have a nice firmness and fresh flavor. Many local growers are beginning to grow them. Pea shoots taste great raw like in the recipe, but also can be cooked and taste great with eggs, in pasta dishes, even on pizza!

Ingredients

- 1 cup sugar snap peas
- 1/2 cup snow peas
- 1/2 cup fresh or thawed frozen green peas
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Asian (toasted) sesame oil
- 2 teaspoons sesame seeds, toasted lightly
- 1/2 to 1 tablespoon firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce
- 6 cups pea shoots, washed well and spun dry



Preparation

1. In a kettle of boiling salted water cook sugar snap peas 2 minutes. Add snow and green peas and cook 1 minute. Drain peas in a colander and rinse in cold water. Pat dry on paper towels.
2. In a small bowl whisk together vinegar, oil, sesame seeds, sugar, and soy sauce until sugar is dissolved. In a bowl toss pea shoots and peas with dressing.

Serves 4

Recipe from "Gourmet" June 1994, via epicurious.com



Events



Mark Your Calendars

We have scheduled several events for March—a busy month for our Extension Office. Please plan to join us for some or all of these events.

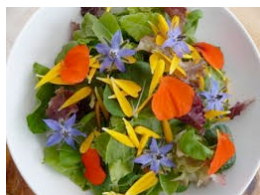
Saturday, March 5

Local Food From the Farm event at the Rec Center on the Oval. We expect this to be our best event yet! See page 4 for details and join us for the fun!



Saturday, March 19 **Gardeners March**

Madness—a daylong series of presentations and workshops put on by the Cornell Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Volunteers. This event, held every other year, will take place at the Plattsburgh Town Hall. **Space is limited.** Registration details on page 5.



Tuesday, March 15

Northern Vegetable School in Keeseville 9:00-3:00

This day long program covers root crops, garlic and greens in the morning, and pest management strategies in the afternoon. Special Guest Speaker is Paul Arnold from Pleasant Valley Farm in Argyle, NY. Full agenda and registration is available at <http://enych.cce.cornell.edu/events.php> For more information contact Amy Ivy at 518-570-5991 or adi2@cornell.edu

Friday, March 17

Northeastern New York and Vermont Winter Grape School in Lake George 8:00-4:00

The ENYCHP and the UVM Grape Program is offering a one day educational program on Cold Climate Grapes for current or prospective growers in Northeastern NY and VT.

The program will offer 2 concurrent tracks. We hope each operation will be able to send 2 people - one for each track!

Full agenda and registration is available at <http://enych.cce.cornell.edu/events.php> For more information contact Anna Wallis at (518) 410-6823 or aew232@cornell.edu

Viticulture Track:

Anna Wallis & Terence Bradshaw
Vineyard Practices, Marketing, & Business Management



Enology Track:

Anna Katharine Mansfield & Chris Gerling
Winemaking Techniques: Managing Acids and Polyphenolics

Thursday, March 24

Small Fruit Regional School in Ballston Spa (CCE Saratoga Co) 9-3:30

To view the full agenda, visit <http://enych.cce.cornell.edu/events.php>

For more information please contact Laura McDermott at (518) 791-5038 or lgm4@cornell.edu



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North Country Gardening

March 2016

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