

Cultivating Ancient Roots

*By Hugh Cantey,
Haywood Road Market Produce Supervisor*

As the tight buds on the trees begin to swell with new life, spring draws near. The weather begins to warm up during the day and cool down at night. We are blessed with rain showers (and maybe a blanket or two of snow) and before we know it, the time has come to sow the seeds for a Spring organic garden. No doubt, everyone has been utilizing these winter months to prepare for that glorious Spring garden, but don't fret if you have not begun to plan for your majestic veggie bread basket- there's still time!

Right here at the Co-op, we are stocked with your Spring needs. We are carrying several new products to add some extra excitement and joy in your lives. This month we're featuring "Seeds of Change" organic, heirloom, open-pollinated seeds. We have varieties of seeds that are specific for our region- everything from Brandywine Tomatoes to Sweet Corn to slow-bolt Cilantro to Carnation Poppies. Within the coming months, expect to see locally grown, pesticide free vegetable and herb starts. Don't forget to check the produce department, for the freshest organic and locally grown produce. But most importantly we possess the crucial ingredient for "**Black Gold**" - something that, in this author's opinion, the world needs a lot more of. For those of you not down with the lingo, that's mature compost, the vital building block for healthy soil. Every great garden is rooted in healthy soil.

For thousands of years, cultures have been planting the seeds to grow their own food. The simple ability to grow your own food is an empowering tool, which can be enjoyed by everyone. Your soil is the foundation for which you grow. Viable seeds require healthy soil. The best way to get healthy soil is to encourage beneficial and naturally occurring organisms such as red worms, micronutrients, and adding mature compost. Adding compost to your soil is one of the best ways to increase nutrient content, providing the vital nourishment for your spring crop. Healthy soil not only increases plants resistance to soil borne pathogens, but also promotes stronger and faster growth. Healthy soil also relieves many future gardening headaches.

One particular method I have found to be most effective for creating a new garden space (especially over existing grass) is the layering technique. This way has many different names but one common principle: the original layer of soil is not disturbed but enhanced! This is very crucial because what, is not destroyed by tilling, actually benefits and assists plant growth and nutrient absorption. Begin by layering cardboard over the entire surface of the designated planting area. The cardboard also acts as an excellent weed barrier. Next, add a layer of mature compost, ideally about 2". Then add a layer of mulch such as hay, straw, grass clippings, or a combination. Finally, add another layer of mature

compost, spray the entire area well with a watering hose and wait. The hardest part is waiting, but you know this gives you plenty of time to finalize your planting layout. As the cardboard breaks down, it completely shades out the grass, causing the grass to deteriorate. The decomposition of the cardboard and grass enriches the base layer. Underneath the base layer, earthworms and micronutrients are anxiously awaiting for the matter to decompose, so they can carry on the cycle. Above the base layer is mature compost, mulch, and more compost creating what is now the ultimate nutrient rich sandwich of planting medium. After several weeks (2-3), the soil will be ready for planting.

Now, the creative part is up to you. As you prepare to get out in your garden and break ground, know this- you join in an ancient web of connectedness to the earth in the most natural, elemental way, cultivating seeds, vegetables, roots and fruits to nourish your body from head to toe. Give thanks for the ability to grow your own food and enjoy it to the fullest!

How To Make Good Compost

Designate a good location for your holding tank. Choose a place not too sunny and not too shady.

Collect and add kitchen scraps, plant matter, animal hair, etc. This is good source nitrogen, considered green matter.

Add leaves, stalks, shredded paper, coffee filters. This is great source carbon, considered brown matter.

When combined together, the green and brown matter is the essential base to a good compost bin. The trick is finding the golden ratio between green and brown (somewhere around 35: 65)

Stir the pile, making sure everything is mixed well. The better a pile is mixed, the faster you will achieve mature or finished compost commonly known as Black Gold. When you have it, you'll know it.

Patience and commitment over your compost bin will result in beautiful compost in several short weeks.

When you have reached mature compost, add it to the garden evenly.

Keep on composting and perfect your system!

mark your calendars!

Spring Potluck Community Picnic—tentatively scheduled for May 2nd, 2004, check your email & postings in the Market.

Please join us at the West Asheville park for softball, and a potluck of spring yummys. Bring your family, favorite dish, and a frisbee (or your family's recreational toy of choice!). Rain or shine!

Saturday, May 22nd West Fest.

Once again, the Haywood Road Market is a sponsor of the 2nd annual West Fest. A celebration of everything that makes West Asheville a great place to live. Please join us for a 5K Race, Music, Crafts, and free samples at the Market.

Saturday, May 29th 8am Haywood Road Market Annual Rummage Sale.

Set aside that bag of give-aways from spring cleaning and donate it to the Haywood Road Market! Then join us on the May 29th for our annual rummage sale. Proceeds benefit the Haywood Road Market - as we strive to offer you more variety on our shelves. Donations gratefully accepted any day at the store.

TAX RETURNS WITH CARE!

You may know me as nutritionist & dancer (I'll give a nutrition talk in Asheville, Tuesday, May 11th), but I'm also an accountant, phasing in from NYS to Haywood Rd. after long serving freelancers, small biz, landlords, S-corporations & nonprofits!

ENROLLED AGENT (Enrolled to Practice before IRS)

ACCREDITED IN ACCOUNTANCY (by ACAT, Natl. Society of Accountants)

Gladly taking new customers April 29th onward!

Bob LeRoy's 1040X Tax Relief, Inc.
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Paid Advertisements are available in this quarterly newsletter!

Available to current members only, ads run \$25 for business card-sized ad; \$50 for double-sized ad. Larger ad spaces are available. All costs will assist in the printing and mailing of the newsletter.

Contact: membership@haywoodroadmarket.org

Dandelion: A Traditional Cleansing Herb

By Jill Frink-Thompson, Clinical Herbalist

I can see her now if I close my eyes. Wearing a dress made from a burlap sack, she is carrying another sack in her arms as she wades through the bright yellow flowers in the field. She leans down to pick the leaves that she will use in her family's dinner tonight. The plant she chooses is Dandelion; the girl who chooses this plant is my grandmother. She, like so many others, grew up in the rural tradition of her grandmother, using food as medicine.

Dandelion (*Taraxacm officinale*) has been used for centuries to help our bodies rid themselves of accumulated fats and toxins. This process known as cleansing is traditionally done in the spring. After a long winter of fatty, warming foods, our liver and digestive system needs a recharge. This is exactly how Dandelion acts in the body. Can you imagine how magnificent the sight of a field of fresh wild greens in the spring looked to our ancestors who lived without a corner store or a produce section?

Though now considered an invasive weed, Dandelion was actually brought here purposefully by European settlers. In the new world, dandelion played an important role in beekeeping. The flower blooms early, and continues to bloom into the fall. This provides food for bees for the entire season.

Dandelion is a distorted pronunciation of the French "dent de lion", which means lion's tooth. Other names this plant has earned include priest crown, piss-a-bed, and blow bell. The bright yellow flowers are actually many tiny yellow flowers bunched together. Their individual seeds are attached to a white fluff called papus, which creates the white puffball when the flowers go to seed.

I 'm sure we all remember blowing the fluff ball off of a seeding Dandelion plant and making a wish. According to legend if all Four Corners are acknowledged under a full moon, and then a wish is made while blowing into the East, the wish will surely be granted. It is also said that blowing the puff ball in the direction of a far away love, while thinking of what you would like to tell them, gives you the telepathic strength to send the message. Count the seeds remaining after one blow to find out how many years are left in your life! If the seeds from the dandelion blow off, but there is no wind, then it will rain. To tell time, blow the puffball, counting each time until all seeds are removed. That number is the time.

It is said that to promote your psychic powers, drink a cup of tea made from the dried roasted roots. You may call spirits by leaving the cup of tea by your bed untouched. To receive good fortune, the plant should be "buried in the North

West corner of your home”(Scott Cunningham). If you rub your entire body with this plant, your every wish will come true, and you will be welcome everywhere you go. To be protected from antagonistic magick, people gathered the herb on St. John’s day. The yellow flowers are still used today in celebration of Spring Equinox.

Both leaves and roots of Dandelion are used medicinally. The leaves are associated with kidney and bladder health, as well as edema and high blood pressure. The roots are generally used with concern for the liver, gall bladder, and digestion. Our kidneys and liver are our two main organs of detoxification.

According to Susun Weed, the leaves contain between 21,060 and 58,335 IU of vitamin A. That is more vitamin A than in carrots, not to mention that there is more iron and calcium present in Dandelion leaves than in spinach! The leaves also contain vitamins C as ascorbic acid, up to “4223 mg of calcium, B complex vitamins, and vitamin D.” They are also very high in potassium. The potassium is important because Dandelion leaf is a powerful diuretic. Modern diuretics tax our bodies of potassium, but because of the extraordinary amounts present in this plant, the potassium levels are balanced. As a general kidney tonic, dandelion leaf combines well with nettles as a tea, or in a soup.

Every minute 3 pints of blood is filtered through our liver. Blood that needs to be cleaned of all the chemicals on our food and in our air, old hormones, drugs, and other various containments we live with every day. Dandelion root increases the flow of bile by stimulating the liver and gall bladder. This relieves stagnation and gently cleanses our bodies of these harmful residues. The nutritional make up of the root is outstanding. The healing powers of its mineral content alone can improve health drastically. Dandelion root is mucilaginous, and when dug in the fall contains high amounts of the naturally occurring sugar inulin. As with most mucilaginous herbs, the intestines are “dredged” of impurities. The inulin present in the root feeds the friendly flora living in our intestines, which in turn flourish and devour any bad bacteria that may be hanging on. The inulin also helps maintain blood sugar levels associated with hypoglycemia, because unlike other sugars, it does not bring about the rapid production of insulin by the pancreas.

Our ancestors used their foods as medicine. Once again we can learn from our history. “The leaves are eaten raw or cooked by the Digger and Apache Indians, who value them so highly that they scour the country for many days’ journeys in search of sufficient to appease their appetites. So great is their love for the plant, that the quantity consumed by a single individual exceeds belief.” Dodge (1870)

This spring do not curse the presence of this weed on your lawn, heal yourself and feed your family. Search it out and use it. Your liver, kidneys and entire body will thank you for it!

Jill Frink-Thompson is a worker-owner at the Market and local herbalist.

Stir Fried Dandelion Greens

2 Tbls ghee or olive oil

2 big bunches dandelion greens, washed and chopped into bite size pieces

1 small onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

3 Tbls pumpkin seeds

Juice of _ lemon, or 1 small lime

Braggs liquid aminos, or soy sauce to taste

Heat ghee in wok or non-stick skillet over medium heat. When ghee is hot add onions to pan, stir and fry until onions start to get soft. Put in all the garlic and greens, and cook until greens start to wilt. Add Brags or Soy sauce, and cover. When greens are still brightly colored, (about 2 minutes) but fully steamed, add lemon juice and pumpkin seeds. Stir well, and serve immediately.

3RD ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING: “Three Times a Charm”

The third annual membership meeting of the Haywood Road Market finally took place on February 23rd at the Trinity United Methodist Church. After two sleet and snow filled cancellations, 30 hearty souls gathered together to share news of the past year at the market. The potluck spread was impressive and delicious, and the cheerful company was full of children. We give thanks for all the wonderful support Paula Robbins, Russ Towers, and Sage Turner have given the market over the last two years in their capacity as board members, and voted in our newest representatives, Mado Hesselink, Adrienne Carpenter, and Austin Walker. Welcome indeed! Next years' meeting will be held in the spring months when stepping on crocus blossoms is the greatest outdoor peril. Thank you to all who came and shared in the meeting!

WORKER-OWNER OF THE MONTH!

A year ago I became a member of Haywood Road Market and began looking for ways to contribute to the Market's future success. I found an immediate need for someone to help out with the laundry and I've been keeping the aprons and towels clean ever since. While laundry is "loads" of fun, my true passion is produce. Every Friday I get up and head to the Market for my worker member shift, assisting Hugh with the produce order. It's very gratifying work to watch the transformation that takes place in the produce cooler. Maintaining a variety of healthy organic fruits and vegetables requires a lot of prep time and daily attention. It's a perfect opportunity for someone looking to keep that connection with the earth and it's bounty.

I was recently elected to serve as a board member and look forward to those new challenges that lie ahead. If you're a member looking to do more for your community Market, I recommend becoming a worker member. While I find the additional discounts are nice, the real reward is the personal satisfaction I get from donating my time. Worker members help keep costs down which results in savings for everyone!

NEW ARRIVALS!

This season we don't have any reports of new babies, so we thought we'd keep with the spirit and announce the arrival of "Petunia", new puppy of board member, Adrienne Carpenter and partner, Wayne Taylor.

It's hard to believe that we only adopted her a few months ago, and she's already almost 35 pounds! Well, thank goodness human children don't grow that fast! Petunia's pediatrician (veterinarian) has told her parents to stop feeding her such healthy food, because she's growing too fast! We thought that was too funny.

Special Thanks:

To Carol Ross for making all the colorful flags that don the top front windows of the store. They really add to the outside and inside appearance!

To Cat Noxon for providing the fabric for them!

ANNOUNCING E-NEWSLETTER!

Newsletters are quarterly: Winter, Spring, Summer, and Autumn. If you wish to submit articles, ads or have suggestions regarding this newsletter, please drop off at the Market or email membership@haywoodroadmarket.org.

The newsletter is also available on our website at www.haywoodroadmarket.org.

Members who wish to receive an E-Newsletter instead of a hard copy through the mail, please fill in this form and return to the market or send an email to membership@haywoodroadmarket.org:

Member# _____

Membership type: Single or Household

Names on account:

(Primary) _____;

(Secondary) _____

Email address (Primary Member):

Email address (Secondary Member): _____

Asparagus Tart with Ricotta

INGREDIENTS:

For pastry:

6 TBS butter or margarine

3/4 c. all-purpose flour

pinch of salt

For filling:

8 oz. Asparagus

2 eggs, beaten

8 oz. Ricotta cheese

2 TBS plain yogurt

3 TBS grated parmesan cheese

salt and freshly ground black pepper

Serves 4. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.

Rub the butter or margarine into the flour and salt until the mixture resembles fine bread crumbs. Stir in enough cold water to form a smooth dough and knead lightly on a floured surface.

Roll out the pastry and line a 9-inch tart pan. Press firmly into the tin and prick all over with a fork. Bake for about 10 minutes, until the pastry is pale but firm. Remove from the oven and reduce to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.

To make the filling, trim the asparagus, cut 2 inches from the top and chop the remaining stalks into 1-inch pieces. Add the stalks to a saucepan of boiling water, and after 1 minute add the tops. Simmer for 4-5 minutes, until almost

tender, then drain and refresh under cold water.

Beat together the eggs, ricotta, yogurt, parmesan cheese and seasoning. Stir in the asparagus stalks and pour the mixture into the pastry shell. Arrange the asparagus tips on top, pressing them down slightly into the ricotta mixture.

Bake in the oven for 35-40 minutes, until golden. Serve warm or cold.

(Borrowed from The Complete Encyclopedia of Vegetables and Vegetarian Cooking, by Roz Denny and Christine Ingram)