



Brief answers
to short questions

Sheila's Shorts

By Sheila Miller

Gardening — is it really worth all of the effort?

For anyone who's planted, weeded, and harvested a garden, I'm sure that question has run through their minds every time they spend a hot, sweaty afternoon pulling weeds or picking beans.

And, by the time all the canning and freezing is finished and the surplus vegetables have been peddled off to those 'unlucky' folks who didn't undertake the challenge of gardening, many of us aren't sure we can enthusiastically say 'yes'.

But, nothing beats the taste of fresh vegetables on the dinner plate, and those canned and frozen goodies sure add a feeling of summer to a cold winter meal.

Besides, a garden lets people plant things they would probably never buy to eat in a store. Luxury foods, like watermelon and cantaloupe, and other more unusual foods like kale and eggplant, are a challenge for the gardener to grow and the cook to prepare.

This week my column's questions deal with garden vegetables.

Do me a Fava

Once again, Roland G Kamoda of R1 Monongahela has given me a question that took some digging to answer. He writes:

Fava beans — how are these beans used or cooked? They are not listed in garden books. Where did they originate? The first time I planted them as a bush bean.

After digging through several recipe books, the encyclopedia, a number of gardening and agricultural references, I came up with one fat zero.

With one last recipe book, the Lilly Wallace New American Cook Book, to look through, I flipped to the index and was amazed to

find a listing of Fava or Fava beans.

Almost gleefully I turned to page 405 and read:

"The same factors that constitute quality in the lima, and the same factors of condition, should be looked for when buying these beans."

That's it? I couldn't believe they didn't even tell me how to cook 'em. And none of the bean recipes in the book called for Fava/Fava beans.

All I learned was that if I wanted to buy the bean, I should look for unshelled pods that are well-filled, clean, bright, fresh and dark green. The shelled bean should also be plump, tender-skinned, with good green or greenish white color.

Wondering why I would ever want to buy the bean if I couldn't figure out how to cook them, I turned to my mom's seed catalogues.

In Burpee's 1980 catalogue, bush Fava beans are sold after the lima beans, chickpeas and soybeans. They refer to the bean as English broadbean.

In describing the bean, Burpee says they have a long

pod. They mature in 85 days and are much harder than other beans. They say they are a 'successful substitute for lima beans in the North where the growing season is short'.

The beans are recommended to be planted as early in Spring as the soil can be worked. They don't thrive in Summer heat.

As far as the edibility of the bean is concerned, Burpee says the glossy, green pods are inedible.

The 7 inch long pod contains "5 to 7 large, oblong, flat, light green beans for use as green shell beans like limas." Burpee warns that some people of Mediterranean descent have a genetic trait which causes a severe allergic reaction to Fava beans.

From this information, Mr. Kamoda, I have to assume the Fava bean can be used as a lima bean would be cooked and used. Maybe some Lancaster Farming readers will share some recipes with you.

Where to pick-my-own?
Ann Fowler of Claymont, Delaware asks:

Please send me information brochures regarding pick-yourself-farms; or where and when to get best farm produce, particularly string beans.

After receiving your request for information brochures, I contacted the Department of Agriculture for Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland. I very promptly received the brochures from the two states south of the Mason-Dixon line. However, I am still

awaiting the promised brochure from PDA (Hopefully it will be out before the summer is over).

The brochures I received from Delaware and Maryland provided both the pick-your-own type of fruit and vegetable market, along

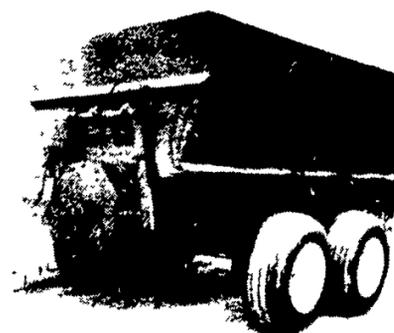
with the roadside market listing.

To get your own personal copies of the brochures, write to the following address:

—Delaware Department of Agriculture, Drawer D, Dover, DE 19901;

—Division of Marketing, Maryland Department of Agriculture, Parole Plaza Office Bldg., Annapolis, MD 21401.

—Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, 2310 North Cameron Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110.



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SALESMAN

Lebanon youths meet Schweiker

LEBANON — Sue Bomberger, Annville, and Bruce Hellerick, Lebanon, are scheduled to meet with Senator Schweiker this Wednesday as part of their 4-H Citizenship-Washington Focus Activities.

Sue and Bruce's meeting with Schweiker is part of their day on Capitol Hill. Other activities for the day include Senate observation and a tour of the FBI arranged by Senator Heinz.

The two 4-H members are in the midst of a busy week of touring Washington sites, as well as exploring

citizenship responsibilities and current issues.

Workshops and housing are provided at the National 4-H Center with the city of Washington used as a living laboratory.

Other features of the week include an Ideas Fair where the 12 states represented will share 4-H/citizenship programs.

The Pennsylvania delegates will also attend a performance at the Kennedy Center.

The Lebanon County 4-H Development Fund partially underwrites the cost of participation.

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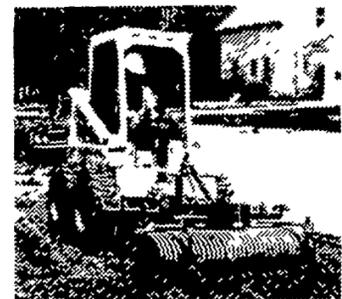
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