

**Seeding,
Weeding
and mulch
more**

For the avid gardener

New Seed Catalogs Arrive

The new year has arrived and with it comes the new seed catalogs with their colorful offerings of flowers, trees, shrubs and vegetables. They provide a welcome relief from dreary winter and dull routines. As you thumb through your favorite seed catalog, plot your next year's garden on paper now while you have the time. This is the arm-chair gardening season, a time to plan your garden.

Review what you grew over the summer. Hopefully you kept a diary with at least weekly entries. All things considered, did you get

what you wanted from your garden? The drought did not help anyone, but if you used trickle irrigation (or any irrigation) you may have been a little bit ahead of everyone else. Be sure to add organic matter to the soil for better moisture retention. Think mulch, about two inches, to help soil moisture. Also, disease-free varieties can reduce the use of certain chemical fungicides.

In most cases, weeds must be controlled by hand because no herbicides are labeled for homeowners after planting. Some

gardening experts recommend that the vegetable garden should never be out of view of the house. The closer, the better, for this will at least provide a sense of guilt in July when it needs to be weeded. Mulch helps here too. Insect control can be done chemically, biologically, by hand or not at all. Identification is the key to control.

A garden should reflect your interests and preferences. You may want to do your landscaping and vegetable garden plans on graph paper. Keep landscape plantings as natural as possible, today's gardens are informal. They are laid out with soft curved lines. Be sure plants are hardy for this area; check the catalog's map.

In addition to detailed descriptions and colorful illustrations, vegetable seed catalogs frequently have helpful information on varieties, such as number of days to maturity. This will help in planning for an even supply of produce.

This winter there may be a number of successes to look forward to.

Master Gardener Participants Sought

EBENSBURG — This is the second year for the Master Gardener Program in Cambria County. If you are a self-made gardener who enjoys working with plants and people, this may be an opportunity to become part of the Master Gardener Program.

The main objective of the program is training and horticulture enthusiast who has interest in gardening of all types. The program will include basic areas of soils, fertilizers, plant growth and development, pest control and the various cultural aspects of many garden plants and crops.

The program is sponsored by the Cooperative Extension Service, including the five 1983 Master Gardeners.

There is no enrollment fee, however requirements are:

1 Call Ron Hostetler - 472-5440 extension 392 for application forms and a Master Gardener Examination by January 27

2 Complete the application form and test and return it to the Extension Service, Box 390, Ebersburg, PA 15931, before February 10, 1984

3 Have an acceptable score on the test you receive along with your application

4 The only thing expected in return for the training received, will be for the volunteer to return service back to the Extension Service

If you are interested in the program call the Cooperative Extension Service, 472-5440, 344-8500, 535-7511, or 886-8156 extension 392, with your name, address and phone number and an application and test will be sent to you.



USDA puts data on computer

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On Jan. 23, the U.S. Department of Agriculture will begin a pilot project to make foreign crop and market information available electronically.

"This new system will increase public access to timely information on foreign agricultural developments and markets," said Richard Smith, administrator of USDA's Foreign Agriculture Service. The agency collects and analyzes information on more than 125 commodities in more than 100 countries.

Smith said the agency began to improve the timeliness of foreign information collection and reporting during 1981 when the first detailed commodity information was transmitted electronically from London to Washington. Since then, the agency was installed similar high-speed information systems in an additional 21 countries. Foreign commodity reporting using this new system covers 36 countries and 44 percent of the agency's scheduled foreign reporting.

"The new project is a continuation of our mission and commitment to acquire timely foreign crop and market information to help U.S. farmers, processors, distributors and exporters to adjust their operations and practices to meet world conditions," Smith said.

The new system will be available to all people who have equipment compatible with ours. However, the volume and format of information placed on the system is targeted toward individuals and organizations that provide further dissemination of such

information to agricultural audiences. Smith said the project will provide the agency with a better understanding of public use of foreign agricultural information.

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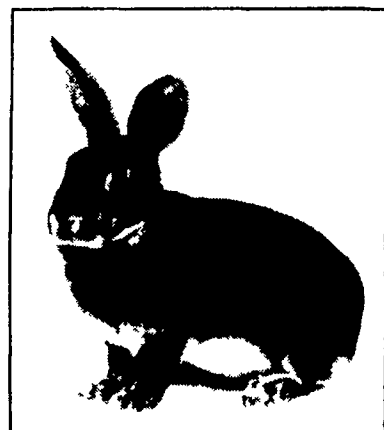
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