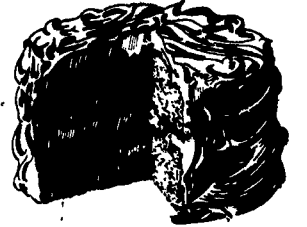


# Home On The Range



## Spring's Bounty Asparagus, Dandelion, Rhubarb

For people who love asparagus, dandelion, and rhubarb, the growing season just isn't long enough. The availability of these plants is somewhat extended if you shop at a large supermarket or farmer's market that has the produce shipped in. But many folks still rely on gathering their own dandelions from their yards and the asparagus and rhubarb from their garden plots.

Did you know that home-grown rhubarb is more tart than that grown in a hot house. When buying rhubarb, select fresh, firm stems. Look for bright pink or red colors. Avoid stems that are too large (it will be hollow and fibrous) or too thin (it will lack flavor).

Rhubarb is also easy to freeze. Trim and wash the stalks and cut into 1- to 2-inch chunks. Place in a covered flat pan in the freezer until frozen. Pack in moisture proof bags and return to freezer.

When shopping for asparagus, look for purple-tinged, tight-budded spears. They should be even-sized, at least one-half inch in diameter, and at least two-thirds green. Avoid any stalk with a large, woody, white base. Asparagus is best cooked the same day it is purchased, but it will keep three to four days in the refrigerator. To store asparagus, remove the very end of the stalks and store upright in one-inch of water and covered with plastic wrap.

Dandelions are an excellent source of vitamin A, a half cup supplying more than enough of the daily requirement. Good quality is characterized by fresh green appearance and comparatively large, tender leaves. Do not pick greens that have been sprayed with weed killer.

### MICROWAVE RHUBARB STRAWBERRY JAM

4 cups cut up rhubarb  
4 cups strawberries  
1 package Mrs. Wages fruit pectin  
1 cup sugar  
Combine rhubarb and strawberries in a glass bowl. Microwave on high 1 minute covered with plastic wrap. Add sugar and pectin. Microwave 2 more minutes. Mix. Microwave 3 more minutes and pour into jars.  
Kitchen Kettle Village

### ASPARAGUS WITH PARMESAN CHEESE AND BACON

3 tablespoons butter  
2 tablespoons minced green onion  
4 slices bacon, cooked, drained, crumbled  
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese  
1/4 teaspoon pepper  
2 pounds asparagus, trimmed  
Melt butter in small skillet. Saute onion until tender, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in bacon, cheese, and pepper. Meanwhile steam asparagus until tender, about 8 minutes. Drain. Place hot asparagus on serving dish. Sprinkle with cheese mixture. Serve immediately.

### DANDELION WITH BACON DRESSING

2 pounds dandelions  
1/4 cup green onions, minced  
4 slices bacon  
2 tablespoons vinegar  
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard  
1 1/2 teaspoons sugar  
Salt and pepper  
2 hard-cooked eggs, sliced  
Wash greens thoroughly. Cook in small amount of salted water until tender and drain well.

Chop if leaves are large. Add green onions. Cook bacon until crisp. Remove and set aside. To bacon drippings, add vinegar, mustard, sugar, and salt and pepper to taste. Add to hot vegetables. Garnish with egg slices and reserved bacon, crumbled. Serves 4.

### GRAMMY'S RHUBARB CUSTARD PIE

2 cups diced rhubarb  
2 eggs  
2 tablespoons melted butter  
9-inch pie crust  
1/2 cup flour  
1 cup sugar  
1 cup milk  
Blend together egg yolks, sugar, milk, flour, and melted butter. Fold in rhubarb. Pour into 9-inch pie crust. Bake at 375 degrees for 40 minutes.  
Meringue Topping:  
Beat 2 egg whites until soft peaks form. Slowly add 2 tablespoons sugar. Beat until stiff peaks form. Cover complete top of pie with meringue. Bake an additional 2 minutes until slightly browned.  
Kitchen Kettle Village



Try topping tender, hot spears of asparagus with freshly grated Parmesan cheese, crisp bacon and green onion for a great way to welcome spring.

### RHUBARB CREAM DELIGHT DESSERT

Crust:  
1 cup flour  
1/4 cup granulated sugar  
1/2 cup butter  
Rhubarb layer:  
3 cups fresh rhubarb, cut in 1/2-inch pieces  
1/2 cup granulated sugar  
1 tablespoon flour  
Cream layer:  
8 ounces cream cheese, softened  
1/2 cup granulated sugar  
2 eggs  
Topping:  
8 ounces sour cream  
2 tablespoons sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
Combine crust ingredients, pat into 10-inch pie plate. Set aside. Combine rhubarb layer ingredients; toss lightly and pour into crust. Bake at 375 degrees for 15 minutes. Meanwhile, prepare cream layer by beating cream cheese and sugar until fluffy. Beat in eggs one at a time, then pour over hot rhubarb layer. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until almost set. Combine topping ingredients; spread over hot layers. Chill and serve.  
Marie Martin  
East Earl

### RHUBARB SPONGE

2 egg yolks  
1 cup sugar  
2 tablespoons melted butter  
2 tablespoons flour  
2 egg whites, beaten  
1 cup milk  
1 teaspoon lemon juice  
2 cups diced rhubarb  
Mix ingredients well adding egg whites last. Bake in 9-inch unbaked pie shell at 350 degrees about 1 hour or until browned.  
Kitchen Kettle Village

### RHUBARB GLAZED HAM

10-12 pound ham, fully cooked  
10-jar rhubarb jam  
Score ham fat in diamond pattern. Bake ham uncovered in 325 degree oven for 2 1/2 to 3 hours. Spread jam over ham; bake an additional 15 minutes.  
Kitchen Kettle Village

### RHUBARB JAM

5 cups rhubarb, diced  
4 cups sugar  
Cook rhubarb and sugar, without stirring over low heat until boiling. Cook until soft. Add 3 ounces strawberry gelatin and boil 2 minutes. Put in jars and refrigerate or freeze.

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## Featured Recipe

For cooks who like rhubarb and the challenge of a baking contest, the annual Rhubarb Festival is the place to go on May 21. The festival is held at Kitchen Kettle Village in Intercourse.

The purpose of the festival is to pay tribute to rhubarb the forgotten vegetable. This festival certainly does wonderful things with rhubarb, from serving fabulous dishes using rhubarb to unique fun and games made with the long reddish-green stems.

For details on the rhubarb pie contest and the festival activities, look for the Rhubarb Festival article in this section.

Please pre-register for the pie baking contest by calling Kitchen Kettle Village at (717) 768-8261 or 1-800-732-3538.

Here is one of the recipes using rhubarb from the Rhubarb Recipes cookbook that is sold at Kitchen Kettle Village. The 43-page cookbook may be purchased for \$2 at the Village or by mail for \$3, which covers postage and handling.

### RHUBARB-RASPBERRY TURNOVERS

2 sheets puff pastry, thawed, rolled to 1/4-inch thickness  
4 ounces softened cream cheese  
1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest  
2 cups rhubarb, diced  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/2 cup raspberry preserves  
1/2 cup orange juice  
1 tablespoon finely grated orange peel  
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon cloves  
1 egg beaten with 1 tablespoon milk  
Beat cream cheese with lemon. Spread evenly in thin layer on both pastry sheets. Cook rhubarb, sugar, preserves, juice and remaining seasonings until thickened, stirring; cool. Cut each pastry sheet into 8 squares. Brush edges with water. Place 1 tablespoon filling in center of each square. Fold over to make triangle. Press edges together. Brush with egg mixture and sprinkle with sugar. Bake on parchment paper at 375 degrees for 20 to 30 minutes.

## Recipe Topics

If you have recipes for the topics listed below, please share them with us. We welcome your recipes, but ask that you include accurate measurements, a complete list of ingredients and clear instructions with each recipe you submit. Send your recipes to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522. Recipes should reach our office one week before publishing date.

April

16- Pa. Dutch Cooking  
23- Mustards, Sauces & Salad Dressing  
30- Favorite Pies

May

7- Mother's Favorite Recipe