

On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp



Fall? Not already?

Unlike some years, there haven't been many clues out there yet that the Fall season is about to become "official" in a few days.

Late summer cool temperatures, cloudy skies and abundant moisture have so "greened" the countryside that it looks more like May than September. Corn hasn't begun to dry down very much and soybeans seem a ways off from turning the yellow shade of maturity.

Grass continues to grow like gangbusters, keeping us running our mowers at top speed. Meanwhile, we're being bombarded with advertisements about buying snowblowers. (No! I flat out refuse to deal with that thought yet!)

But maybe the flowers know that these glorious days are surely

numbered.

The zinnias in the border have covered themselves with wide blooms in clear, bright colors straight from the crayon box. No pastels are in this boldly-hued collection, a mass of intense scarlet-red, glowing orange, and deep-fuschia pink.

One zinnia stalk mixed in with this riotous bunch does have slightly smaller blooms of a demure, yellowish-ivory shade. While more ho-hum than the rest, it serves the valuable purpose of contributing the contrast that makes the others shine more brightly. A bouquet of these on the kitchen table is like an extra ray of sunshine lighting up the whole room.

Another old flowered standby, marigolds, adds mounds of clear yellow and sunny gold to the cheery zinnias. A new type I tried

this year, the Ladies marigolds are the larger variety, coming into bloom later than the small French-types, and on bushy, two-foot-tall stalks. Not only do the flowers hold for long periods of time outside on the plants, they also remain beautiful for days when cut in bouquets.

Meanwhile, rows of gladiola continue to poke up long spikes of flowers along the edges of a patch of has-been cantaloupe plants and fading watermelon vines. And, an accidental dribbling of weed-spray intended for the adjoining field corn that "took out" several square yards of early garden has proved to be a floral boon in the long run.

Barely halfway through the growing season, the barren patch was already regrowing small weeds, a sign that purposely-planted stuff would probably thrive equally well. It provided a spot for excess gladiola bulbs intended to be shared with friends—who already had enough of their own, thank you anyway.

So now they share the "sprayed" section with budded stalks of chrysanthemums about to bloom, plus some late tomatoes and a couple of stalks of beets from an old pack of seed tossed into the vacancy—just in case.

With unusual ruthlessness, I "did away" recently with several

flowering plants that were thriving in the vegetable garden. These branched-sunflowers bore plentiful four-inch blooms with dainty, pale-yellow petals contrasting to a rich, black center. Bees loved 'em and they promised to provide seeds for the finches.

But they became top heavy with growth and took to leaning down on their neighbors. After the sunflowers toppled onto the ripening Winter Keeper tomatoes, plopped down over the lima bean row and tripped me several times with their take-over ways, they

became the newest layer on the compost pile.

Even while the geraniums and impatiens continue to thrive in porch-box and patio containers, their cuttings are taking root in the greenhouse in anticipation of next year's floral color. And, tulip and daffodil bulbs await a few spare minutes for tucking into the ground, with the latest saved to grow a few pots for early forcing.

Fall does begin this week, and there are only 182 days left 'til Spring.

Discipline Is Not a Dirty Word

and the disciplinary action—a positive approach to help parents turn don'ts into do's.

Open to the public, the program is sponsored by Penn State Cooperative Extension of Berks County. Career moms, working parents, grandparents, child care providers and anyone who cares for children are encouraged to attend.

Registration is \$2 per person or \$3 per couple. Make checks payable to Berks County Extension Special Account, and mail to: Discipline Seminar, Berks County Cooperative Extension, Berks County Ag Center, P.O. Box 520, Leesport, PA 19533-0520.

LEESPORT (Berks Co.) "Discipline" will be the topic for a seminar planned for Tuesday, September 20, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Berks County Ag Center, Bern Township. Mimi Gavigan, MS child development/family relations, will share information on how to provide structure for children through discipline strategies. She will talk about understanding the child's point of view and using that to decide your response to misbehavior.

Specific parenting problems and questions from the audience will be used to help participants cope with their child's behavior

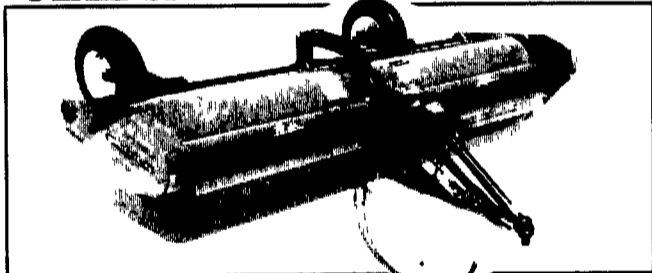
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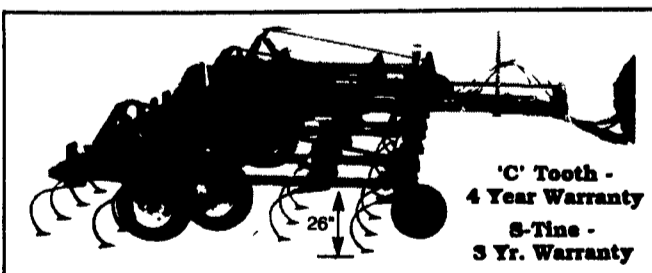
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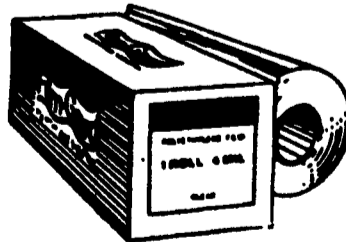


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