

Control Your Finances

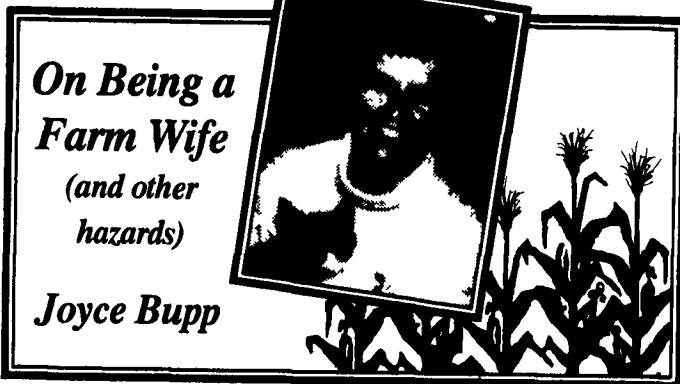
Flemington, N.J. — To obtain financial security, you must be able to take control of your money instead of allowing it to control you. The only way your money situation will improve is to improve your self-awareness. Hard work alone does not obtain financial security. It comes from being an effective planner.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension is offering a two-part money management series to help you become an efficient money manager. On April 27, 7-9 p.m., Barbara O'Neill, Extension Home Eco-

nomist of Sussex County will conduct a program called Cash Flow 101: Developing a Spending Plan That Works.

On May 4, 7-9 p.m. Kathleen Klotzbach of Hunterdon County will present, Controlling Your Finances: The Emotional Aspects of Managing Money.

Both programs will be held at the Extension Center, Route 31, Flemington. Pre-registration is required, the fee to attend both courses is \$5, to attend one course, the fee is \$3. For further information and registration, please call 788-1342.



On Being a Farm Wife
(and other hazards)
Joyce Bupp

Remember? Remember what you were doing last year this time?

Drying out endless pairs of soggy gloves and damp boots. Scrounging around the stores for

what little ice-melting salt might still be in stock somewhere. Removing snow for the twenty-umpteenth time from your porch, walks and driveways. Dreaming

of the first crocus. Dream no more.

Our first crocus made its cheerful, yellow-gold appearance nearly a month ago, poking up through a mat of dead, brown, soggy maple leaves. Since then, it has been joined by sprightly little neighbors garbed in bright-purple and pale-lavendar.

These tiny, chill-defying blooms are planted just outside the southwest corner of the greenhouse. That site was chosen specifically because it's the warmest spot in the yard and one we pass by numerous time each day traveling back and forth to the dairy barn. So, we can't miss those spirit-lifting, colorful blooms almost the moment they spread their petals to bask in the sunshine.

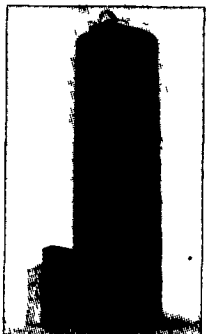
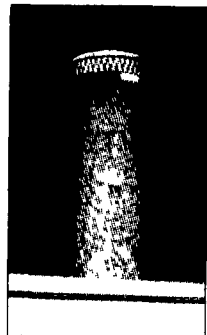
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The Silo Unloader Experts

Not quite so far along, but thinking about it, are the buds of the forsythia bushes. With each day of lengthening light and warming temperatures, the tight, brown buds swell fatter with the promise of cascades of sunshiny-yellow stems and the tips turn green with the push of new life.

One thick hedge of forsythia bushes had outgrown its location, stretching high above my head and shading out the strawberry bed laid out nearby on a south-facing bank. Then, The Farmer decided some trimming was in order and judiciously pruned the forsythia jungle with the chainsaw. Not recommended by horticultural specialists, but effective. And fast.

Pussywillow buds likewise have grown fat and full, covering the branches of our 30-plus-foot-tall "shrub or small tree" as one plant identification book describes it. Naturally, the nicest branches for cutting to display in a vase are all the way up in the top third of the "small tree."

Picking a bouquet with any size to it becomes a ladder adventure. The adventure part comes in because pussywillow branches tend to be slender, very flexible, and grow mostly straight up in the air - not the best prop for a ladder. A brisk, March breeze sways in the pussywillow branches as I study the tree's

upper level, eyeballing the best spot to park the top of the extension ladder.

After careful consideration, I bag the ladder idea and settle for a few short twigs of catkins from just above my head. God put the nicest branches at the top of the tree; common sense says to just leave 'em there for His enjoyment.

Daffodils and early tulips already have plentiful foliage pushed up out of the dark, moist ground, awaiting the warmth of still brighter sunshine. Daylilies, iris and last year's exuberant stand of horseradish likewise poke tentative shoots up to test the season.

And if all those aren't convincing enough, one good glance at Tiger, the affectionate kitten who moved into the bank barn last fall to help with mouse patrol, should present the final clinching evidence as to where the season is heading.

Like the shrubby buds, Tiger's tummy is swelling more every day. And when kittens are on the way, Spring is generally waiting close by to the delivery.

Welcome crocus. Welcome baby kittens. Welcome, Spring!

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