

**All Gardens
Great & Small**
by
York Co.
Horticultural Agent
Tom Becker



10 ELEGANT HERBS

This is the fifth in a series of articles on growing and preserving herbs in the home garden.

Parsley, Rosemary, Sweet Marjoram, Tarragon and common Thyme are several popular herbs used today. These culinary herbs are also easy to grow in the backyard.

PARSLEY

Once established in the garden, spring parsley responds well to a weak fertilizer every two weeks or so. This is especially important if it is cut frequently.

Parsley is of course frequently

used as a decorative addition to a plate of food, and it is a tangy addition to salads. When destemmed leaves are chopped in a blender with a little water (pack a 2 cup measuring cup with leaves, then fill with water). They can then be frozen into ice cubes for later use.

Parsley also makes a decorative hanging basket or pot. The green leaves can be dried quickly when spread on a cookie sheet and "cooked" at 400 degrees F for about 15 minutes. Stir every 5 minutes and do not let it burn, just crisp. Crumble the crisp leaves. Remove any limp leaves, allow to

cool and then store in a tight jar. Parsley does not dry well by hanging.

ROSEMARY

Rosemary comes in many different cultivars. The same cultivar grown in different parts of the country, may look very different. It is a perennial hardy to Zone 8. Since seedlings can take months, it is best purchased as a potted plant for most home gardens. Outdoors rosemary likes full sun. Soil can be kept on the dry side.

The pungent, curved needle-like leaves have many uses. It is easily dried by hanging woody stemmed bunches in a warm place. The leaves can then be stripped off and bottled. Rosemary is a very pungent herb, and it is best used sparingly on bland foods. In cooking, it is frequently used with chicken, and in baking, such as in breads.

SWEET MARJORAM

This is a tender perennial best grown as an annual. A member of the oregano family, sweet marjoram and oregano are often confused, but their flavors are different.

Sweet marjoram can be very susceptible to damping off and can

be difficult to grow from seed. Purchase started plants. Place plants in full sun in a well-drained location.

Once established, leaves should be taken randomly rather than shearing the growing tips. When frost time nears, plants can be potted up and taken indoors for a few months.

Sweet marjoram dries easily on screens in the shade. Once dried, finish the drying in a 100 degree F. or lower temperature oven to crisp the leaves. Remove leaves from the stems and store in jars.

Sweet marjoram can be used fresh in omelets, mixed with fresh vegetables, and added to casseroles.

TARRAGON

Another on the top nine culinary herbs, tarragon comes in several forms. French tarragon is vegetatively propagated and not available from seed. Russian tarragon is grown from seed and is attractive as an ornamental plant. But, Russian tarragon is flavorless.

COMMON THYME

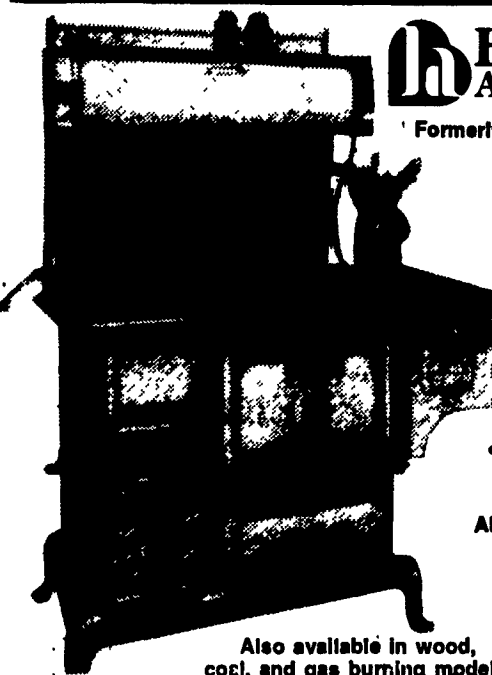
Thyme, a hardy perennial can be

grown from seed in a flat kept at about 55 degrees F. Germination takes three to four weeks. Plants will be small and not flower the first year. Plants will grow more robust and flower the second year. Thyme needs good drainage for its deep roots. Plants should not be set too close (12 inches), and should be hardened off before planting in the garden (a week or more of several hours of sunlight and then returned to shade before evening). Divide established plants in the spring. Fall transplanting can invite winter kill.

Dry thyme by hanging bunches in a warm place out of direct sunlight. In cooking, thyme is frequently used fresh or dried in soups, stews and sauces. Fresh thyme added to rice is a flavorful treat. Lemon-scented thymes are good for tea and potpourri.

The National Garden Bureau contributed to this article. Questions relating to his article can be sent to Tom Becker, Extension Agent, Horticulture 112 Pleasant Acres Road York, PA 17402-9041.

ELECTRIC RANGE

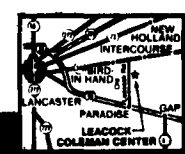


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**Agricultural Lifestyle Program
Set For Sept. 19**


LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — A special program on the changing lifestyle of agricultural families in Lancaster County will be presented during the general meeting of the Landis Valley Associates on Tuesday, September 19, at the Landis Valley Museum Visitor Center at 7 p.m.

The speaker for the program will be Steve Miller, who serves as museum curator for the Landis Valley Museum. According to Miller, the lifestyle of farming families in Lancaster County changed significantly during

the time period that began in 1880 until 1920. Miller will examine the important changes of that time period as he contrasts and compares family structures, types of crops grown, livestock populations, the influence of tobacco on farming in the area, and the changes within families, such as how many children they had and how old first-time parents were. To demonstrate some of the changes over the years, Miller will highlight his program with fascinating slides

and other visual aids. "It was a very significant time period in the history of Lancaster County's farming families. In some ways, things didn't change a lot. In other ways, changes were very dramatic and still affect our lives today in the county," said Miller.

The public is invited to the free program. For further information, interested persons should contact the Landis Valley Associates at (717) 569-0402.



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