

Fest Highlights Herbs Many Uses

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YORK (York Co.) — Lavender took center stage at the first-ever Pennsylvania Herb Festival on June 26 at the York Expo Center — after all it is the 1999 Herb of the Year — but the many other herbs on display were also getting lots of attention.

Sixty vendors displayed and sold products made from herbs, in addition to the herb plants, and eight speakers presented information on various topics pertaining to herbs.

Barbara Steele of Alloway Creek Gardens & Herb Farm, 456 Mud College Road, Littlestown, spoke first.

She asked the capacity crowd how many raised lavender and nearly all hands went up indicating the popularity of the plant. While she noted that most people plant English lavender, some hardy and others tender perennials — these are hardy further south of Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Lavender is a sun-loving plant that prefers well-drained soils. Blooms ranging from white to blue to pink, its foliage can be gray or green.

Steele noted that lavender likes "just a dusting of lime" every now and again and urges that if you are going to trim your lavender do it in late winter or early spring and then just cut out the woody stems.

Among the other speakers were Susanna Reppert Brill, who discussed rosemary; Maryanne Schwartz, who spoke about making herbal soap; Nancy Ketner presented the backyard herbal pharmacy; Chef George Keeney offered herbs on the grill; Geraldine DePaula presented aromatherapy; Don Haynie designed dried herbal arrangements; and Delores



Lance Whitmire, 10, of Ebers, York County, shows off a strand of lavender beads he made at the York County 4-H stand. The 4-H club provided activities for youngsters who attended the 1st Pennsylvania Herb Festival at York Expo Center on June 26.

Kirshner offered tea herbs and blends.

Jackie LeRoy and Beth Thomason of Thomason's Old Thyme Herb Farm located at 170 Stoney Point Road, East Berlin, were on hand offering herbs as well as unique gardening items and plant markers. Barbara lives where the shop is located on what she calls "a farmette." She grows the herbs she sells.

At the festival Barbara and business associate presented samples of their dip mixes and

visitors did the tasting.

Barbara said the two women present lectures and classes on herbs and their uses, and recently prepared an herbal wedding.

At another stand, Weeds Studio and Shop of Carlisle, Kirk Baney took time to explain that he makes paper the way it was made for centuries, noting that the process is very relaxing.

He and his partner, Terry Kozak, have been making paper for two years and just recently opened their shop. Among the many items they create are customized lamp shades and invitations.

With lavender in the spotlight the following recipes were available from "Lavender" by Tessa Eveleigh.

LAVENDER HEART COOKIES

1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons superfine sugar for sprinkling
1/4 cup superfine sugar
2 tablespoons fresh lavender florets or 1 tablespoon dried culinary lavender, roughly chopped.

Cream the butter and sugar together until fluffy. Stir in the flour and lavender and bring the mixture together in a soft ball. Cover and chill for 15 minutes.

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Roll out the dough on a lightly floured surface and stamp out about 18 cookies, using a 2-inch heart-shaped cutter. Place on a heavy baking sheet and bake for about 10 minutes or until golden.

Leave the cookies standing for about 5 minutes to set up. Using a metal spatula, transfer them carefully from the baking sheet onto a wire rack to cool completely. You can store them in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

COLD CARROT AND TOMATO SOUP WITH FRESH DILL

3 pounds fresh, ripe tomatoes
2 onions, coarsely chopped
6 carrots, coarsely shredded
4 cups rich chicken stock
3 tablespoons minced fresh dill
Sour cream
3 tablespoons unsalted, butter
2 shallots, coarsely chopped
2 russet potatoes, peeled and coarsely chopped
Salt/pepper to taste
Fresh dill sprigs for garnish

Blanch tomatoes in boiling water for 1 minute to loosen skins. Peel and coarsely chop. In a large saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Add onions, shallots and carrots. Saute for 5 minutes.

Add potatoes and chicken stock; simmer, covered for 10 minutes. Add tomatoes and continue to cook, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking for 15 minutes.

Puree in batches in a food processor or blender. Return to saucepan and add dill, salt and pepper. Simmer for 5 minutes. Chill for several hours. Serve cold with a dollop of sour cream and a sprig of fresh dill. Serves 6.

HONEYDEW-CHERVIL SORBET

Dissolve 1/3 cup sugar into 1 cup boiling water. Allow to cool. Combine sugar mixture with 1 large honeydew melon, 1/4 cup packed chervil, and 1 egg white.

Puree in food processor. Partially freeze, add 1 cup white wine and continue freezing.



Kirk Baney stands behind some of the paper products that are available in Weeds Studio and Shop located in Carlisle. Baney owns the shop with Terry Kozak. The two have been making handmade paper for several years.

LAVENDER CAKE

3/4 cup unsalted butter, softened
3 eggs, lightly beaten
1 tablespoon fresh lavender florets or 1 tablespoon dried culinary lavender, roughly chopped
1/2 teaspoon water
3/4 cup superfine sugar
1-1/2 cups self-rising flour, sifted
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 tablespoons milk
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar, sifted
a few fresh lavender florets for decoration

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease and flour a ring-

bundt pan or a deep 8-inch round, loose bottomed cake pan. Cream the butter and sugar together thoroughly until light and fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time, beating thoroughly between each addition, until the mixture becomes thick and glossy. Fold in the flour, lavender florets, vanilla extract and milk.

Spoon the mixture into the pan and bake for 1 hour. Let sit 5 minutes, then turn onto a wire rack to cool. Pour over the cake and decorate with fresh lavender florets.


Beth Thomason provided the following recipe using a variety of herbs.



Suzanne Mease of York samples an herb dip at the Thomason's Old Thyme Herb Farm, which is located near East Berlin. Beth Thomason and Jackie LeRoy manned the stand at the Pennsylvania Herb Festival at York Expo Center selling a variety of herbs, seasonings, dip mixes, and many other items.

*Ida's
Notebook*

by
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Recently I had a different experience in the grocery store, and that got me to thinking of many things connected with the buying of food.

My mother told me that over the more than 50 years of married life she and my father never spent more than two or three dollars a week on groceries. They grew their food or simply did not eat a great variety. In later years, when I was my mother's main method of transportation, she bought bread, bananas, sweet potatoes, and scrapple each week when I took her to the store.

My mother-in-law liked apricots and pineapples but told me she only ate them once or twice a year so they would remain "special." I guess we all have our likes and dislikes, which become more pronounced as we grow older.

When our children were all at home, I sometimes bought a big

cart of leftover baked goods. It was possible to get a loaded cart of bread and pastries for a dollar if you were at the store early on Monday morning. Occasionally, a lady who lived nearby was able to go to the store for me, and then I would fill a freezer shelf with baked goods.

One day at the store, I could not find the raisins and before I realized it, our three-year-old ran away down the aisle to find a clerk and ask where the raisins were located. She was a precocious child. Another child continually begged for grapes, which I am sorry to say that I never bought for her as I thought they were too expensive.

But back to what I saw in the store last week—a man with a cell telephone was conversing with his wife as he walked up and down the produce aisles. He described the pears he saw and she told him which ones to buy. That was a first.