

Natural Resources Volunteer Honored

WEST CHESTER (Chester Co.) — Francine Joyce-Martin of Chester County was recently selected as a 4-H natural resources Volunteer of Distinction.

According to Extension Agent Laurie Szoke, "Francine is an outstanding initiator in community based 4-H environmental science education. She reaches a diverse youth audience through her garden and nature club, schools, and the local library."

Francine's work as a leader is characterized by a dedication to serve and educate youth about the natural world around them. She gets kids involved in wildlife

habitat improvement projects, recycling, raising worms, wildlife observation, fishing, planting native gardens, and owl watching.

Francine said, "going the extra mile +(for kids+) is what being a good 4-H leader is about. I enjoy being a 4-H leader. It is a responsibility that is very important to me. I feel as if I'm making a difference to the adults of tomorrow."

Francine will be presented with a framed certificate and a copy of the book: "Nature Journaling, Learning to Observe and Connect With the World Around You."

Consuming Thoughts

by

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If you have been to a yard sale or auction recently, you probably discovered the high prices that people pay for a cast iron cookware.

Cast iron is used for utensils that include skillets, roasters, and Dutch ovens, broilers, grid-

dles, and some speciality items, such as muffin and corn bread pans. These utensils are excellent for browning, frying, stewing, and baking foods.

Cast iron utensils have been with us for thousands of years. The Chinese used cast iron bowls nearly 3,000 years ago. An iron foundry, where utensils and other cast iron products were manufactured, was one of the first industries organized in North America.

Today's cast iron utensils

have been improved greatly over those of even the recent past. They are made of iron alloys that give additional strength to the utensil. Some cast iron utensils now have colorful porcelain enamel exterior and interior finishes.

Natural cast iron utensils benefit from slightly different handling in the home than the techniques recommended for other materials. Many of today's cast iron items are "pre-seasoned" when purchased. They should not be washed with strong detergents or scoured and they do not need seasoned before use. They should be washed with hot soapy water, rinsed and wiped dry immediately. The inside of the washed and dried utensil should frequently be coated with unsalted cooking oil or shortening. Just

before using again, they should be wiped with a dry cloth or paper towel.

Natural cast iron utensils can be re-seasoned if necessary according to the Metal Cookware Manufacturers Association. This is done by scouring the utensil thoroughly, washing it in soapy water, rinsing and drying it, and coating the inside surface lightly with unsalted cooking oil or shortening. Then the utensil should be heated in a 250°-300° oven for about two hours. When the utensil is removed from the oven, excess grease should be wiped away.

Cast iron utensils with porcelain enamel interiors do not need seasoning. Hot soapy water and thorough rinsing and drying will keep them clean and shining.

Never wash a cast iron utensil in a dishwasher because the harsh dishwasher detergents remove the oil seasoning and can cause rusting.

Store cast iron utensils in a dry place. Never store a natural cast iron utensil with the cover on. This might cause "sweating" and consequent rust damage.

Depending on what you cook in cast-iron pots, these pots can add significant amounts of this important mineral to your food. Acidic foods like tomato sauce and applesauce that cook for a long time absorb the most iron.

Spaghetti sauce, cooked for about 25 minutes in an iron pot, will have about six milligrams of iron per 3.5 ounce serving, compared with 0.7 milligrams if cooked in another kind of pot. Applesauce cooked in iron will contain up to seven milligrams, compared with .03 if not cooked in iron. (Women over 50 and all adult men need 10 milligrams of iron daily; women under 50 need 15 milligrams). And studies have shown that pots continue to add iron to food even after years of use.

Grange Agrees With EPA

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Pennsylvania State Grange agrees with the Environmental Protection Agency's decision to remove farm, forestry and aquaculture operations from the permitting process for regulations concerning Total Daily Maximum Loads (TMDLs).

TMDLs are the amount of a pollutant a water body can absorb before it becomes impaired. The objective of TMDLs is to bring polluted waterways back to an unimpaired condition.

The Grange, which was part of a broad coalition of organizations, testified against the proposal and was successful in keeping EPA from achieving its original plan thanks to two hearings attended by nearly 800 people. Moreover, EPA received over 34,000 formal complaints opposed to the rule.

Recipe Topics

If you have recipes for 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. Be sure to include your name and address. Recipes should reach our office one week before the publishing date listed below.

Send your recipes to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522.

September

- 9 - National Honey Month
- 16 - Cooking With Rice
- 23 - Zucchini, Squash
- 30 - Make It With Chicken

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