

SPICES (& HERBS)*continued from page 6***How Much Herbs and Spices To Add**

The amount to add varies with the type of spice or herb, type of recipe and personal preference. If possible, start with a tested recipe from a reliable source. If you're creating your own recipe, begin with trying one or two spices or herbs.

SUBSTITUTING EQUIVALENT AMOUNTS OF DIFFERENT FORMS. What if your recipe calls for fresh herbs and all you have are dried herbs? Here are some approximate amounts of different forms of herbs EQUIVALENT to each other:

- 1 tablespoon, finely cut fresh herbs
- 1 teaspoon dried leafy herbs

- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon ground dried herbs

GENERAL RULES FOR AMOUNTS. If you don't know how much of a spice or herb to use, follow these recommendations from SpiceAdvice® at www.spiceadvice.com—remember to use more herbs if using a leafy or fresh form.

- Begin with 1/4 teaspoon of spice or herb for these amounts and adjust as needed:
 - 4 servings;
 - 1 pound of meat;
 - 1 pint (2 cups of soup or sauce).
- Start with 1/8 teaspoon for cayenne pepper and garlic powder; adjust as needed.
- Red pepper intensifies in flavor during cooking; add in small increments.

When to Add Herbs and Spices

The type of spice or herb



Pruning Overgrown Apple Trees

Pruning helps to rejuvenate overgrown, neglected apple trees. Most overgrown apple trees are too tall and difficult to maintain. You can prune to reduce tree size. This makes pest control and fruit harvest much easier, especially on standard size apple trees which can grow 30 feet tall or more if left unpruned. Even semi-dwarf apple trees grow 15 to 20 feet high and benefit from proper pruning.

Overgrown apple trees are usually too dense. Prune to thin out the branches. Establishing and maintaining an open branching pattern through pruning improves the tree's productivity by letting in more sunlight. Open trees usually have fewer disease and insect problems as well.

To reduce an overgrown tree's height, remove one or two of the tallest growing limbs. Study the tree's branching pattern carefully to make sure you remove the branches that will reduce the tree's height. Make the cuts where the limbs

join the trunk. If you remove even one major limb, limit any other pruning to removing dead and weak branches.

Over pruning can stimulate too much growth and lowers fruit production in the present season and possibly next season as well. Spread out extensive pruning over two-or three-years. If the tree is fairly short but neglected, the first year you should prune out dead wood, water sprouts, suckers and broken or conflicting branches. Conflicting branches cross or rub against each other, and create a wound over time. Diseases easily enter through the wound. Look at conflicting branches closely and prune out the weaker of the two branches.

Suckers are long, straight shoots that come out of the ground at the base of the trunk. Suckers grow from the tree's rootstock, the part of the tree that provides the tree's root system. If allowed to grow, suckers eventually conflict with lower branches. Water sprouts

and the type of food for which it is used influence the time to add it during food preparation:

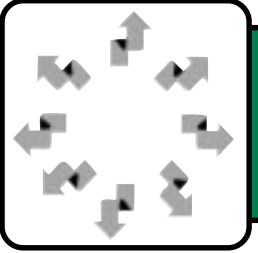
- As a general rule, add FRESH herbs near the end of the cooking time as prolonged heating can cause flavor and aroma losses.
- NOTE: Remove whole spices and bay leaves at the end of cooking; secure them in a tea ball for easy removal.
- For uncooked foods, add spices and herbs several hours before serving to allow flavors to blend.

For More Information

- American Spice Trade Association, www.astaspice.org
- SpiceAdvice, www.spiceadvice.com
- Penzeys Spices, www.penzeys.com
- McCormick, www.mccormick.com

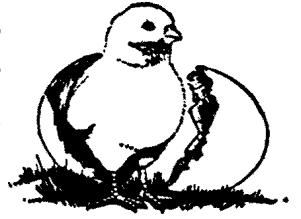
Next issue: Use herbs and spices to help you lower your amount of dietary fat, sugar and sodium.

Miscellaneous



Free Chicks!

As part of Embryology, a 4-H School Enrichment program, Lancaster County third-grade classrooms will be hatching baby chickens the weeks of Feb. 12, March 19 and May 14. If you would like to receive some of these chicks (for free), please call our office at 441-7180 and ask for Ellen.

**PRUNING TOOLS***continued from page 5*

give the gardener greater leverage so cuts can be made through larger branches. Lopping shears are also excellent for pruning difficult-to-reach places.

Use a pruning saw on branches larger than 1 3/4 inches in diameter. Various types of pruning saws are available. Small tree branches that are hard to reach from the ground can be pruned with a pole saw or shears.

Chain saws are often used by professional arborists when cutting large tree branches. Chain saws, however, can be extremely dangerous to homeowners with little experience or skill operating these machines. To reduce the risk of injury, home gardeners should

use pruning saws rather than chain saws when pruning trees.

In potentially hazardous situations, such as the pruning of large branches high in tree canopies or limbs near power lines, individuals should always contact a trained arborist.

Another tool sometimes used by the home gardener is the hedge shears. Hedge shears (manual or electric) are used to shear formal hedges to a definite size and shape. They should not be used to prune other trees and shrubs.

When buying pruning equipment, select high-quality tools. Good, high-quality tools are not cheap. However, if they are used and cared for properly, high-quality tools will far outlast the poor quality, less expensive alternatives. (DJ)

**GIFTS...HEART***continued from page 7*

Does your child have a special talent? Maybe your child would like to sing or write a song for a relative. Is there a chore your child could do? Maybe wash the dishes for a week. Is there a special toy that could be loaned to a sister or brother for a week?

3. Use materials from around the house so little, if any, money is spent.

4. If the gift is an activity or chore, have your child make a

card with a note on it, telling what the gift will be.

5. Have your child use imagination in making an inviting package. Perhaps your child could paint a small rock and wrap it in a big box. Or make an envelope out of comics from the Sunday newspaper.

Most young children don't have money to buy a gift for a friend or relative. You can teach your child that a gift showing effort and attention can mean more than a gift from the store. (LJ)

ALL AMERICAN SELECTIONS*continued from page 2*

compact vine reaching only ten feet. The dark orange pumpkins are a deep round shape sporting strong, long handles. 'Sorcerer' pumpkins will mature in about 100 days from sowing seed. Good crown set can be expected with overall high yielding plants. 'Sorcerer' can be grown using normal pumpkin culture. Pumpkins can be carved, painted or used for pie filling.

Winter Squash 'Cornell's Bush Delicata'

If you have never eaten a



Winter Squash 'Cornell's Bush Delicata'

'Delicata' squash, this is the one to grow to eat. The orange flesh color indicates it is rich in Vitamin A. The sweet flesh is fine textured without coarse strings. Butter and brown sugar are optional when eating 'Cornell's Bush Delicata' squash because it is so sweet. The squash have a long shelf life, meaning you can enjoy eating the squash into the winter months. About 100 days from sowing to harvest, the tolerance to powdery mildew will increase overall yield. The compact habit requires less garden space. The mature bush will send out four to six foot runners later in the season. (MJF)

earth wellness festival needs volunteers

Volunteers are needed for **earth wellness festival** on Thursday, March 21 at Southeast Community College in Lincoln. Approximately 3,000 fifth-graders participate in this annual event that involves students in creative and innovative environmental education activities.



Each year, over 250 volunteers take part in **earth wellness festival** activities—people just like you: high school students, college students/student teachers, 4-H/FFA members, business/industry employees, parents/grandparents service club members and involved citizens. No experience is needed. Just a desire to help make a difference in our community.

As classroom escorts, bus greeters, presenter and registration assistants; volunteers are essential to the success of this event. You may choose to volunteer all day (8:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.) or morning only (8:30 a.m.–noon). In return, you receive a festival t-shirt, a free lunch, an invite to our celebration party following the event and an opportunity to participate in a rewarding volunteer experience.

Please contact David Smith at 441-7180 for more information. For your convenience, you can register with David over the phone or email him at dsmith9@unl.edu.