

FRESH HERBS

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a large amount of herbs from a home garden, consider washing them down with a hose the day before to help remove any large particles of dirt or grit that might be on the leaves.

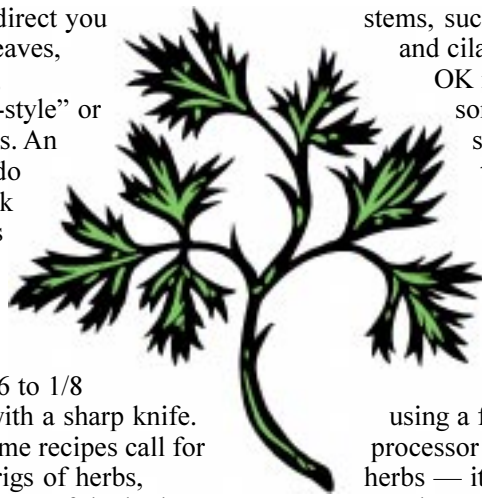
Annual herbs can be harvested down to about four inches tall and they still will regrow for use later in the season. For perennial herbs, don't take off more than a third of the plant at any given time.

How to Prepare Herbs for Cooking

For most recipes, unless otherwise directed, mince herbs into tiny pieces. Chop with a chef's knife on a cutting board or snip with a kitchen scissors. To speed cutting with a scissors, cut herbs coarsely into a small bowl or cup and snip back and forth with your scissors. Some

recipes may direct you to cut large leaves, such as basil, "chiffonnade-style" or into thin strips. An easy way to do this is to stack several leaves (about three to five), roll into a tight roll, then cut into thin (1/16 to 1/8 inch) strips with a sharp knife.

While some recipes call for a sprig or sprigs of herbs, normally the part of the herb you harvest will be the leaves. For herbs with sturdier stems, such as marjoram, oregano, rosemary, sage and thyme, you can strip off the leaves by running your fingers down the stem from top to bottom. With small-leaved plants such as thyme, you can use both leaves and stems for cooking early in the season. Later in the season, as the stems become tougher, use just the leaves. For herbs with tender



stems, such as parsley and cilantro, it's OK if you snip some of the stem in with the leaves when you're cutting these herbs.

Be careful if using a food processor to cut herbs — it's easy to turn them to a paste rather than tiny pieces.

When to Add Herbs During Food Preparation

Unlike dried herbs, fresh herbs are usually added toward the end in cooked dishes to preserve their flavor. Add the more delicate herbs — basil, chives, cilantro, dill leaves, parsley, marjoram and mint —

a minute or two before the end of cooking or sprinkle them on the food before it's served. The less delicate herbs, such as dill seeds, oregano, rosemary, thyme and tarragon, can be added about the last 20 minutes of cooking. Obviously, for some foods, such as breads, batters, etc., you'll need to add herbs at the beginning of the cooking process.

Fresh herbs can be added to refrigerated cold foods several hours before serving. Allowing time (at least a couple of hours, if possible) for cold foods with herbs to chill helps the flavors to blend.

Herb/Food Combinations

Here are some ideas to help you start combining fresh herbs with your foods.

Basil — a natural snipped in with tomatoes; terrific in fresh pesto; other possibilities include pasta sauce, peas, zucchini

Chives — dips, potatoes,

tomatoes

Cilantro — Mexican, Asian and Caribbean cooking; salsas, tomatoes

Dill — carrots, cottage cheese, fish, green beans, potatoes, tomatoes

Mint — carrots, fruit salads, parsley, peas, tabouli, tea

Oregano — peppers, tomatoes

Parsley — The curly leaf is the most common, but the flat-leaf or Italian parsley is more strongly flavored and often preferred for cooking. Natural for parsley include potato salad, tabouli

Rosemary — chicken, fish, lamb, pork, roasted potatoes, soups, stews, tomatoes

Sage — poultry seasoning, stuffings

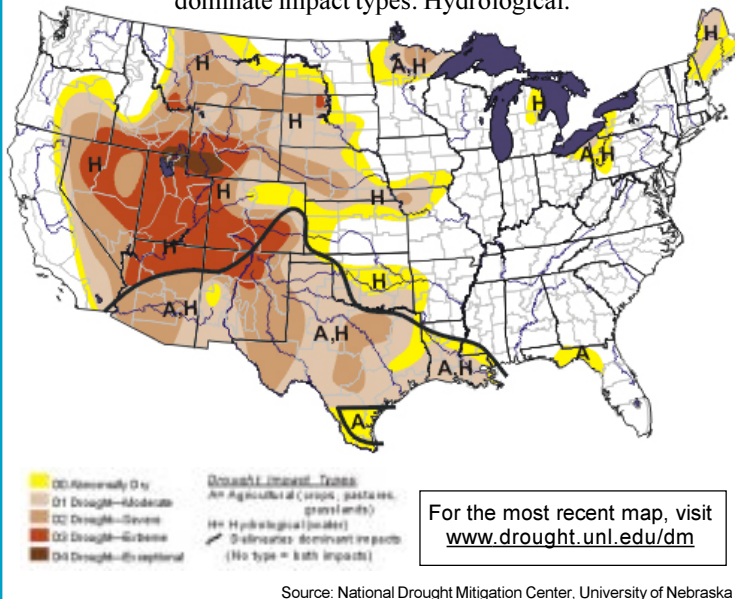
Tarragon — chicken, eggs, fish

Thyme — eggs, lima beans, potatoes, poultry, summer squash, tomatoes

Winter savory — dried bean dishes, stews

Latest U.S. Drought Monitor Map

As of May 20, Lancaster County bordered **abnormally dry** and **moderate drought** conditions with the following dominate impact types: Hydrological.



Discover 4-H, Discover You T-Shirts for Sale

Nebraska 4-H has again teamed up with Rixstine Trophy to create T-Shirts with this year's theme: "Discover 4-H, Discover You."

Prices are \$8 apiece (XXL add \$2, XXXL add \$3).

Gold T-Shirts with 3-colors on front and back!

To order, contact Rixstine at 2350 O St., Lincoln. Call 476-3810 or go to www.rixstinetrophy.com.



Sizes available: Youth 10-12 & 14-16; Adult S, M, L, XL, XXL & XXXL.

Get Rid of Those Hazardous Wastes!

Don't know what to do with those unwanted pesticides and solvents? If you live in Lancaster County, you are in luck. Bring them to one of the following Household Hazardous Waste collections in June.

Friday, June 20 Union College, Parking lot 52 and Cooper Streets 3-7 p.m.

Saturday, June 21 Nebraska Wesleyan University 56 and Huntington Streets 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Items you can bring for disposal:

- **HEAVY METALS** — items containing liquid mercury such as thermometers, thermostats and fluorescent bulbs.
- **SOLVENTS** — mineral spirits, turpentine, paint strippers and thinners, oil-based paints, varnishes, stains, polishes and waxes.
- **PESTICIDES** — weed killers, garden sprays, wood preservatives, roach powder, rat poisons. You may also bring EPA banned products, like DDT, chlordane, 2,4,5-T, pentachlorophenol, silvex, PCP and Dursban.
- **PCB's** — Ballasts from old fluorescent fixtures and capacitors from old appliances including radios, motors and televisions.

Leave products in their original container and keep the label intact. Open, leaking or rusted containers should be placed in a clear plastic bag during transport. Do not mix chemicals. Do not bring medicines, latex paint, explosives or ammunition, fertilizers, used oil, antifreeze, batteries or general household trash.

For more specific information, call the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department at **441-8021**

Last Chance to Sign Up for 4-H Camps

Open to all youth ages 5-19

There's still time to register for the following 4-H summer camps at the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center in Schramm Park near Gretna:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| June 14 | Kids-N-Critters Ages 5-7 w/chaperone |
| June 15-18 | Niobrara Canoe Trip Ages 15-18 |
| June 20-22 | Junior Leader Weekend Ages 15-18 |
| June 29-July 2 | Discovery Camp Ages 11-14 |
| July 7-9 | Splash Bash Ages 8-10 |
| July 10-13 | Discovery Camp Ages 11-14 |
| July 14-17 | Outdoor Skills Ages 11-14 |
| July 18 | Kids-N-Water Ages 5-7 |
| July 29-31 | Dismal River Trip Ages 15-19 |

Camp fees range from \$18 (Kids-N-Critters/Kids-N-Water) to \$250 (Niobrara Canoe Trip).

For camp descriptions, registration forms or more information, visit online at 4h.unl.edu or call the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center at (402) 332-4496. Registrations accepted up until day camp begins.

