

ALL ABOUT HERBS!!

Growing Backyard Herbs

Julia Laughlin
OSU Oklahoma County
Horticulture Educator



DIVISION OF
**AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES
AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

WHY Herbs??

- They are FUN an EASY
- You can easily grow them in containers
- Some can grow inside all winter with enough light
- They have virtually no pests!
- They are great to pick and cook with
- Many can be harvested year round
- Medicinal uses and teas
- Garden "Lore" is fun too!
- Add them to your landscape or flower bed!

General Cultural Guidelines

- Full sun to part shade for almost all. Few are truly shade loving
- Need little or no fertilizer - compost is best way to feed!
- Watering varies - most prefer to run on dry side. Even moisture is OK, but **do not drown** Rosemary, Sages and Lavenders
- Some perennials are aggressive, especially in rich soils (think mint and oregano!)

Transplant or Seed?

- I would recommend transplants with the exception of dill and cilantro. Basil is easy from seed if you are patient!
- Spring planting ideal...could do perennial in summer or fall
- Allow re-seeding annuals to re-seed!
- Dividing the perennials - usually done in spring and VERY easy to do! Does not work on all perennials, but many!

Arid type herbs
DO NOT Like Wet Feet!



What About the Mints?



Harvesting

- Simply cut what you want. Avoid taking more than $\frac{1}{2}$ of plant with herbaceous and woody plants, but you can cut down chives to ground
- Just before flowering - oil content is highest
- On basil, keep cutting...do not let it go to seed!
- Cilantro is going to flower on you. It will re-seed for next year.

Saving and Storing Herbs

- Drying - DO NOT dry in a sunny spot! Choose a warm, dry and dark spot. After drying store airtight. Length varies but usually 6-8 weeks for highest oil content.
- Microwave and Dehydrators work too!
- Freezing - works well...consider ice cube trays!



Annual Herbs

Live only one year will usually die with first hard freeze.
Many will re-seed themselves

- Basil - many kinds
- Dill (will re-seed itself)
- Cilantro (will re-seed itself)
- Arugulas (will re-seed itself)

Basil

- *Genovese*
- Thai
- Purple Ruffles



Dill

- Will re-seed itself



Cilantro

- Goes to seed fast in spring
- Can re-sow in fall
- Will re-seed itself
- Consider Culantro or Vietnamese Cilantro



Arugula

Also called Rocket



Perennial Herbs

Should come back every spring
or be evergreen

- Oregano
- Thyme
- Parsley
- Rosemary
- Chives
- Sage
- Mints

Oregano

- Aggressive but not as bad as mints
- Golden is beautiful!!



Thyme

- Many kinds including variegated



Parsley

- Actually a biennial
- Curley and flat leaf



Rosemary

- Can cut all year!!



Chives

- Regular and garlic!
- Blossoms edible too!



Sages

- Many! Culinary best for seasoning!



Mints

- Not just for tea!!
- Many flavors!



What about *Garlic*? – Not really an herb, but plant in mid-September and harvest in June!



Designing an Herb Garden

- Need to be able to walk in to cut...create a pathway
- Allow re-seeding annuals room to re-seed!
- Give perennials room!
- Interplant with flower beds...herbs are pretty!
- PERFECT companion plant for Veggies!





TRY AN HERB SPIRAL
IF YOU LOVE HERBS BUT
HAVE LIMITED SPACE.
PLANT ARID PLANTS @ TOP,
MOISTURE LOVING PLANTS
AT THE BOTTOM.
Western Reserve Herb Society







Herbs in Containers

- You can do all of them in containers
- Remember light is an issue
- Watering will be frequent, especially in late summer
- May not overwinter...mints will!
- Re-seeding annual may need some help!



Making a Container Herb Garden

- Use tall in the back
- Medium in the middle
- Trailing on the edges(s)



Herbs Inside

- LIGHT is the only real issue!
- If you bring them in from outside for winter...move them to shade first and also look for bugs!





SOME RECIPES USING
HERBS FOR YOU!!

Cooking with Herbs

- Almost all taste best fresh (the exception, according to chefs, is oregano, but I LOVE it in fresh salsas and tomato sauces!)



Basic Basil Pesto

- 3 cups fresh basil, rinsed and dried, lightly packed
- 4-6 cloves of garlic
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup pine nuts, walnuts or pecans (toasted)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup fresh grated Parmesan
- 2-3 TBS fresh Romano
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup olive oil or more if desired

Add all ingredients into food processor except oil. Process briefly and then slowly add the oil.

IMPORTANT then add salt and pepper to taste!!

Pestos using other herbs!

- Try any of the basil with this recipe
- Try 2 parts oregano to 1 part parsley
- MANY other combos of herbs and nuts!



Classic Caprice Salad

- 3 vine-ripe tomatoes, 1/4-inch thick slices
- 1 pound fresh [mozzarella](#), 1/4-inch thick slices
- 20 to 30 leaves (about 1 bunch) fresh basil
- Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling
- Coarse salt and pepper

Layer alternating slices of tomatoes and mozzarella, adding a basil leaf between each, on a large, shallow platter. Drizzle the salad with [extra-virgin olive oil](#) and season with salt and pepper, to taste

Classic PICO DE GALLO!!

- 3 large tomatoes, cored and chopped finely
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 fresh jalapeno peppers, seeded and minced
- 3 tablespoons cilantro, chopped finely
- 1 tablespoon olive oil, see note above (optional)
- 1 tablespoon lime juice, fresh
- salt
- Squeeze the seeds out of tomatoes if desired and chop finely. Mix all ingredients and let sit for 15 min. Season with salt to taste!

Also fun to make!

Herb butters and vinegars

Herb butter are made by folding you favorite herbs into softened butter

To make **herb vinegars**, add fresh herbs to a sterilized bottle and add your favorite vinegar. Fill to 1/2 inch of the top and push stopper in 1/2 way. Let set 24 hours and then refill again. They can be used right away. The flavor will become stronger as it sits. After using, refill with vinegar, Plant material must remain covered with vinegar.



Mostly...just enjoy!!

