Inside this issue:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rutgers on the Radio</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Make &amp; Take” Wreath-Making</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Woes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019 National Garden Bureau Selections</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday Cheer</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the Garden Shed</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kids Corner</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Wonderland Gardening</td>
<td>6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Season’s GREENings</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armchair Gardening</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spice is Nice</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pam’s Garden Gab</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cranberry, Apple, and Sausage Stuffing Recipe</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardening Tips for December</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardening Tips for January</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardening Tips for February</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available Fact Sheets</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION ON THE RADIO
For agriculture news and horticultural tips, listen to me, Pam Burton, on the RCE Agricultural Program on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday on SNJ Today 99.9 FM announcing local workshops, seminars, and horticultural tips.

“Make & Take” Wreath-Making
Sponsored by the Rutgers Master Gardeners of Cumberland Co.
Date: Wed., Dec. 5, 2018
Time(s): 10:00 am & 6:00 pm
Cost: $20.00 non-refundable pre-paid registration required
Make check payable to: CC Bd. of Ag. Research Acct.

Rutgers Master Gardeners of Cumberland County will conduct a fresh wreath making workshop. Learn how to make and decorate a wreath with natural plant materials, and take it home just in time for the holidays. Light refreshments and a festive holiday spirit will be served!

Where: Extension Education Center, 291 Morton Avenue, Millville 08332
When: Wed., 12/5/18 at 10:00 am and 6:00 pm
Bring: Wire cutters, gloves and clippers to use in the preparation of the wreath (greens are provided)
Cost: $20.00 pre-paid, non-refundable
Information: Pre-registration pre-payment is necessary for this event and class size is limited. Please call Rutgers Cooperative Extension at 856-451-2800 Pam @ Ext. 4 or Tammy or Brandi @ Ext. 1
Winter Woes

Evergreens are subject to desiccation injury, also known as winter burn, during sunny and windy weather when the plants lose water from their leaves through transpiration faster than it can be replaced by the roots, which are in frozen soil. An example is the rhododendron, as outlined in Rutgers Fact Sheet 1146, Injuries, Diseases and Insect Damage of Rhododendrons and Azaleas. It explains that the leaf tips or margins may turn brown, branches may exhibit dieback on their tips, or on the entire branch, and this irreversible damage may not be evident until spring.

http://plantclinic.cornell.edu/factsheets/winterinjury.pdf
https://extension.umd.edu/hgie/winter-damage-landscape-plants

Oh no, it snowed! While heavy snow can have a detrimental effect on shrubs and trees by weighing down the branches, it can also have a positive effect on our spring flowering bulbs by acting as an excellent insulator preventing the soil from freezing deeper and deeper and by helping to alleviate the destructive freezing and thawing cycles. The snow helps conserve soil moisture over the winter and adds moisture when it thaws. Certainly, an added benefit of the snow can be aesthetics making the red twigged dogwood and river birches look even more brilliant.

http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/snow-or-lack-thereof-effects-landscape-plants
https://lancaster.unl.edu/hort/articles/2006/snow.shtml

This cycle of freezing and thawing can result in soil heaving where the roots of plants literally heave out of the soil and are exposed to cold temperatures and drying conditions resulting in damage to the plant. This can especially occur in shallow rooted plants and newly planted perennials. Some susceptible plants include strawberries, mums, Shasta daisy, painted daisy & coral bells. If you see that heaving has occurred, you can gently place soil around the exposed roots and cover the plants with a mulch of straw or pine needles.

http://web.extension.illinois.edu/cfv/homeowners/980110.html
https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/faq/which-perennials-are-most-likely-be-heaved-out-ground-winter

It’s cold outside and some of the area lakes seem to be getting a coating of ice on them, but be aware The Department of Natural Resources indicates 4 inches of new clear ice is the guideline for ice fishing or other activities on foot. Other ice facts include:
- New ice is usually stronger than old ice.
- You can’t judge ice conditions by appearance or thickness.
- Ice seldom freezes uniformly.
- Ice formed over flowing water and currents is often dangerous.
- The insulating effect of snow slows down the freezing process.
- Flocks of waterfowl can also adversely affect the relative safety of ice.

https://www.extension.iastate.edu/article/stay-safe-when-out-ice
2019 “Year of the” National Garden Bureau Selections

The Mission and Purpose of the National Garden Bureau (NGB) reads “…‘Inspirer. Connect. Grow.’” National Garden Bureau is a non-profit organization that exists to educate, inspire, and motivate people to increase the use of plants in homes, gardens, and workplaces by being the marketing arm of the gardening industry. Our members are experts in the field of horticulture and our information comes directly from these sources…

Every year the National Garden Bureau selects one annual, one perennial, one bulb crop and one edible crop as the “Year of the” crops. The criteria they use for making their choices include popularity, ease of growing, adaptability, genetically diversity, and versatility.

NGB has chosen the Year of the Snapdragon for its’ 2019 annual pick. Snapdragons, *Antirrhinum majus*, which are spiked flowers that are easy to grow from seed, and prefer full sun in well-drained soil. As a kid, I can remember making the flower “talk” when I gently squeezed the flower between my thumb and forefinger. These beautiful flowers come in a variety of colors, bloom for a long time and work well in arrangements.

The perennial pick is the Year of the *Salvia nemorosa*, which is another good choice for cut flowers arrangements. Perennial salvias are drought tolerant and prefer well-drained soils and are known to attract butterflies, hummingbirds, bees and other pollinators. The flower stalks will respond well to being pruned back to encourage repeat blooms and they look especially great in butterfly gardens, cottage gardens, as an edging plant and in containers.

It’s the NGB Year of the Dahlia for the 2019 bulb crop. Rutgers Fact Sheet 1153, *Growing Dahlias*, identifies dahlias as again, a wonderful cut flower choice, particularly given the number of colors and flower forms that are available. The fact sheet gives a plethora of information including topics of Culture, Planting Outdoors, Starting in Containers, Storing Tubers, Propagation and Problems. Appropriate for this time of the year, the fact sheet recommends taking a look at the tubers in January and adding some moisture if they are too dry. In February, they can be moved to a warmer location to start shoot formation.

2019 will be the NGB Year of the Pumpkin for edibles and Bulletin E 310, *Diagnosing and Managing Important Cucurbit Diseases in the Home Garden*, gives management recommendations for the common diseases of pumpkins. By using proper crop rotations, disease resistant/tolerant varieties, and cultural practices, you can help reduce the chances for disease development. Cultural practices include planting them in a well-drained soil, and using mulch to help manage soil-borne diseases. Allow for air circulation to help with foliar disease and avoid overhead watering. In keeping with the unofficial theme, there are some great gnarly pumpkins that look great as decorations!

https://ngb.org/
http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/homegardening/scene95d7.html
Holiday Cheer

Decking the halls with boughs of holly is hardly a new tradition. There is evidence that this custom is several thousand years old dating back to ancient Romans, Greeks & Druids. The ancient Romans, Greeks, and Druids all decorated their homes with holly. Druids considered holly sacred because it remained green during winter months in a deciduous forest and therefore was never deserted by the sun. Holly was considered to be a sign of good will to the Romans who sent wreaths to newlyweds as a token of good wishes. To this day, holly remains a holiday favorite and Rutgers Fact Sheet 1151, Hollies For New Jersey, can provide recommendations on what varieties to grow.

http://pss.uvm.edu/ppp/articles/holly.htm

Rutgers Information Sheet Indoor Care of Christmas Trees by Mark C. Vodak and James R. Johnson makes several recommendations for safe electrical wiring of Christmas lighting. The sense of lighting goes back long before the days of Thomas Edison and electric. Our ancestors were actually lighting real candles on tree branches. The improvements in Christmas lighting parallels closely with the Industrial Revolution and American History. During World War II the lights went dark but more recently with the emphasis on energy efficiency, the trend has been to use LED lights.

https://historymatters.appstate.edu/sites/historymatters.appstate.edu/files/christmaslights.pdf
https://www.cgu.edu/news/2015/12/history-of-christmas-lights/

No doubt pickles will play an important part on the table of many holiday dinners, but have you heard of the German tradition of the Christmas Pickle hung on the tree. The German based custom is told several ways, but the most well known version is that the Christmas Pickle is the last ornament hung on the tree by an adult on Christmas Eve and blends into the green foliage making it hard to find. The legend goes that the first child to spot the pickle on Christmas morning will have good luck for the rest of the year.

http://folklore.usc.edu/?p=12017

Ask any number of people what a yule log is and you’re likely to find at least a few who think it’s a cake made to look like a log. Its’ history is more significant than food. It was celebrated at yule festivals in pagan times to celebrate the return of the sun where an ashwood log was burned for 12 hours to bring good fortune for the coming year. Because of the timing, which is near winter solstice, many colleges continue with yule festivals to mark the end of winter and the beginning of winter break.

http://research.uvu.edu/mcdonald/anglo-saxon/paganfestivals/yule.html
In the Garden Shed

If you are considering a new perennial garden for your homescape, now is the time to start sketching some basic plans. First, start with the already existing buildings and hardscapes and add in existing trees and plantings. Make sure you note north, south, east and west and indicate any slopes on your sketch. You’ll probably want to see your new garden from windows of your home. When considering the location of your new garden realize that backgrounds, like fences or hedges can provide some definition to the perennial garden. You will be glad you took the time to be well prepared in planning your new garden space.

http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/homegardening/scene74a6.html

If you are amongst those lucky folks who are off work between Christmas and New Years, one of the most useful tasks you can do for yourself is to paint the handles of your garden tools a bright red or orange. Not only will this help to preserve the wood but it will make it so much easier to find those tools when you go looking for them in the garden! How many times have you laid a tool down as another task grabs your attention only to wonder where did I put that spade?

If you didn’t clean and sharpen your tools when you put them away for winter, then February is a good month for making certain your tools are clean and sharpened and ready for spring use. Using sharpened tools requires less effort, reduces the amount of time a job can take, and you will get better results with your plants, reducing the chances of rot or infection. Take your time when sharpening, being careful to stay at the proper angle and remove only as much metal as you need to for a sharp edge.

http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/care/tools-and-equipment/sharpening-your-tools.html
https://pss.uvm.edu/ppp/articles/cleaning.html

Kid’s Corner

While you are planning your New Year’s celebration which of course will include some guacamole, think twice before tossing that avocado seed into the garbage! Instead use this opportunity to educate your kids on garbage gardening! Remove the seed from an avocado and have them stick three toothpicks into the seed about 1/3 of the way down from the pointed top and equal distance around the seed. Then use the toothpicks to suspend the seed in a clear glass of water. Make sure the pointy side is up so the wide bottom can produce the roots. Put it in a sunny window and watch the roots grow. Once they reach about an inch the kids can then plant them into a six-inch pot of soil with the seed about an inch deep. Avocados can be grown as a houseplant indoors in winter with summer vacations outdoors.

http://web.extension.illinois.edu/cfiv/homeowners/060301.html
Winter Wonderland Gardening

Wood Ash
If you are snuggling up next to your fireplace and wonder what to do with the ashes from untreated wood, Rutgers Fact Sheet 811, *Home Composting*, does indicate that wood ash can be added to the compost pile. However, use caution in adding wood ash directly onto your lawn or garden. First, have the pH tested and only consider adding wood ash directly to your lawn or garden if the pH is less than 7. If you do add wood ash, apply it at a rate of 15 to 20 pounds per 1000 square feet per year. This is a case where more is not always better.

https://pss.uvm.edu/PPP/articles/woodash.html

Squill
Siberian squill, *Scilla siberica*, is one of the first bulbs to bloom in the spring providing flowers in a deep blue that come up from the rosette of dark green foliage. They have a pleasant smell, do well in floral arrangements and the early pollinators are happy to see them. Rutgers Bulletin E271, *Landscape Plants Rated by Deer Resistance*, indicates that Siberian squill is a bulb which is rarely damaged by deer. The bulbs look best when planted in mass for a naturalizing effect and can actually be planted on top of other deeper planted bulbs such as daffodils or tulips or inter planted between later emerging perennials such as hostas or Lamium.

https://communityenvironment.unl.edu/siberian-squill-0

*Helleborus* folklore
The Greek name for *helleborus* means “to injure” and “food.” An apt translation since most species are poisonous, which could explain why Rutgers bulletin E271 lists *helleborus* as a perennial that is rarely damaged by deer. Tales of folklore are told throughout history involving *helleborus* with my favorite story stemming from Mrs. Maude Grieve, a 20th century English herbalist reported her belief that (quote) “Powdered hellebore could reportedly be scattered in the air or spread on the ground and walked upon to render invisibility...” Hmmm wouldn’t that be interesting at times?


Roses and their Care
In honor of Valentine’s Day let’s talk about Rutgers Fact Sheet 944, *Roses and Their Care*. This fact sheet recommends planting bare root and potted roses in early spring. Choose your location carefully making sure there is a minimum of 6 hours of full sun. They prefer good well-drained soil and amendments will need to be added if it is poor soil. Dig the planting holes 12-18 inches deep and 18 inches or wider in diameter. In Southern Jersey set the bud union at soil level or just above and add a 2-3 inch layer of mulch.
Lichens
With winter upon us and the leaves fallen from the deciduous trees, the lichens become more evident. Rutgers Fact Sheet 1205, *Tree-Dwelling Lichens*, indicates that the lichens will grow on both healthy and stressed trees, so the appearance of them does not necessarily indicate a problem with the tree. It’s more likely that the environment on that tree provides the available sunlight that is needed for the lichens to grow. Lichens cause no damage to the trees they are on and are generally beneficial in nature by providing food to animals and nesting materials for birds. People have also favored the lichens in terrariums and model railroads track displays.

Saving energy
Rutgers Fact Sheet 060, *Controlling Household Energy Costs*, makes several recommendations regarding identifying Major Routes of Heat Loss. These include the attic space, infiltration concerns, window considerations, rim joint insulation and what to do with uninsulated walls. This fact sheet also offers up links on how to contact The U.S. Department of Energy and the New Jersey Board of Public for additional valuable information on energy conservation for homes and businesses. A self audit of the major energy users and paths of energy loss could potentially realize significant savings. As you are enjoying your winter break, take notice of your home landscaping and see where improvements could be made for better winter protection from harsh winds and to help maintain a warmer microclimate around your home. In helping to create an energy-efficient landscape, consider creating a windbreak on the north and northwest sides of your home with dense evergreens or earth berms. Combine that with shrubs, bushes and vines planted at least one foot away, but close to your home to help prevent heat loss in the winter.
http://greenmanual.rutgers.edu/newcommercial/strategies/efficientlandscaping.pdf

Wild Violet
The common or wild violet is the flower for the month of February. While many sites provide information on controlling them, there is a shift to recommending that homeowners actually consider embracing these native plants. Rutgers Bulletin E271, *Landscape Plants Rated by Deer Resistance*, indicates that this perennial is a plant that is seldom severely damaged by deer, which is a bonus in everyone’s book. More than that is the trend to go native when the opportunity presents itself and this plant likes moist shady areas, but will tolerate full sun and some clay. Add to it that they are also the larval host plant for the Great Spangled Fritillary, and give consideration to letting them grow in your homescaping.
https://extension.psu.edu/underused-native-plants-common-blue-violets
https://extension.umd.edu/hgic/wild-violet

Vermicomposting
Rutgers Fact Sheet 805, *Vermicomposting*, provides step-by-step instructions on the materials and procedures for what is also known as worm composting, including information on where to purchase the red worms. We have a vermicomposting bin at the Extension Center and we are happy to share some of our red wigglers and this free educational fact sheet if you’d like to stop by with your own container to start your own vermicomposting. This is a perfect activity to get your kids involved in learning about the natural process of decomposition and the life cycle of the organisms involved.
**Season’s GREENings**

My gram always had a holiday cactus that was in bloom for the Christmas season. Gram had a green thumb and knew that she had to keep the cactus in a cool dark room for about a month to help force the cactus to bloom. Gram wasn’t one to do much repotting which turned out to be a good thing when it came to the holiday cactus because they like to be a bit pot bound. Every year after blooming Gram would prune back the cactus and share those sections with friends and family to root in potting soil so they can enjoy blooms in the upcoming years, as well.

https://extension.psu.edu/christmas-cactus-getting-them-to-bloom

The Frasier fir, *Abies fraseri*, is one of the most popular choices for live Christmas trees, that is, if you can find it in our area. It’s no surprise that New Jersey does not offer the best growing conditions for this tree which is widely grown for Christmas tree production purposes in the Appalachians, which offer its’ ideal growing conditions and also which accounts for several reasons that make this a popular choice. The Fraser fir has a wonderful fragrance, soft needles and strong branches and also great needle retention. The Appalachians have made the Fraser adapt to rain, fog, cold and wind by regulating their stomatas and the photosynthesis process. The stomatas close when cut, and the result is the ability to retain their needles long after being cut. However, it is still vitally important NOT to allow the water source to go dry while you enjoy your holiday tree.

https://nc4h.ces.ncsu.edu/christmastrees-chapter-2-why-fraser-fir/

Ground pine, princess or creeping cedar are all common names of a *Lycopodium* species that is used for Christmas decorations, perhaps due to their resemblance of a small Christmas tree. However the recommendation is to harvest in moderation due to its tendency to be very slow growing. Ground pine is actually related to the fern species and reproduces by both spores and rhizomes. A stand of ground pine is a rare sight to find growing native in northern hardwood forests of 10 to 30 years old. They prefer cool moist places in a soil full of nutrients. Interestingly, the spores of the lycopodium were an ingredient in flash powders for the first cameras.

https://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/plants/pdf/hgic1753.pdf
http://forest.mtu.edu/kidscorner/ecosystems/lycopodium.html
http://www.tulane.edu/~bfleury/diversity/labguide/mossfern.html

When considering the greens that you might want to use for holiday decorating you can look into your own back yard for possibilities. A few tips to keep in mind, if you choose boxwood, be mindful of its’ very distinctive odor which will become more prevalent if used indoors. If you are considering ivy, be aware that it will quickly wilt without a source of water, so it may be best used in floral arrangements with a consistent source of water. If you use cedar, be aware that there can be a pollen release at room temperature, so it might be best used outdoors. Pine is easy to use and relatively long lasting, but be mindful of the sap. Use gloves and protect your furniture. Be cautious of berries that may be poisonous to people and pets.
Armchair Gardening

During these way-too-dark days of winter, many gardeners spend time going over new plant selections, thinking of something new they have never tried in their gardens, dreaming of how to get more space in their already-crowded gardens. Here’s a few ideas to inspire your imagination!

One “trending” concept is foodscaping or incorporating edible foods into the landscape of our homes. This concept can force us to take a different look at a tried and true favorite and re-consider the placement of the bush beans as a border or swiss chard as a splash of color. Herbs offer some choices that will provide not only an edible option, but an aesthetically pleasing one as well. This concept is becoming more popular in communities that limit the amount of actual tilled garden space allowed per homescaping.

Conifers are often overlooked during the seasons of spring, summer, and fall when deciduous trees offer up so much interest in their flowers and leaves. However, in this blanket of winter when we can appreciate the variety of greens that conifers bring to our landscape. If your homescaping does not allow for some of the large spaces that many of the conifers demand, consider trying some of the dwarf varieties of conifers to add some color to your winter gardens.

Keep in mind, it’s the nature of the beast that while the dwarf varieties offer up a smaller size, the cost is that they are very slow growing!

Rutgers Fact Sheet 992, Growing Hops in the Backyard, explains that growing hops dates back to the colonial era when hops were introduced into Massachusetts from Europe in 1629. So while craft breweries continue to gain in popularity, homebrewing has been around for a long time and it is relatively easy to produce hops on a small scale in your homescaping as a trellis plant. Hop plants, (Humulus lupulus) are propagated from rhizomes that are generally available from March to May, so you will want to start your planning now. Fact Sheet 992 will provide valuable information for your planning purposes in this new venture along with some sources for hop rhizomes. In case you still have some questions, there are additional Fact Sheets that offer information, including Rutgers Fact Sheet 1272, Common Insect Pests in Hop Yards, Rutgers Fact Sheet 1282, Downy Mildew in Hop Yards, Rutgers Fact Sheet FS1276, Frequently Asked Questions about New Jersey Commercial Hops Production. Hops could be your “new-to-you” crop that you chose to try in 2019.

By referencing two Rutgers Fact Sheets, 787, Starting Vegetable Seeds Indoors, and 129, Planning a Vegetable Garden, we find that both leeks and onions are listed as having a good ability to transplant and they take 10-12 weeks to grow. The plants can be planted outdoors as early as April. So given that information, we find that February is a good time to start those plants indoors by seeds. If you are not sure where to obtain the seeds request Rutgers Fact Sheet 1163, Mail Order Vegetable Seed Sources for the New Jersey Gardener.

Many clients express the desire to install raised beds, and there are a number of advantages to raised beds. However, some consideration needs to be given to a few possible disadvantages before a homeowner commits to this project.

First, the construction of raised beds can be costly, with materials and soil. Once installed, raised beds are fairly permanent making pre-planning a must. There are certain crops, like sweet corn and plants that take up a lot of room that may be better suited to more traditional farming. Lastly, hand labor is needed for the garden tasks. Take advantage of the winter “down-time” to do your research and see if you want to raise the beds or not!

http://extension.uga.edu/publications/detail.html?number=C1027-3#Raised
Spice is Nice...

You may be reaching into your spice shelf this time of year for nutmeg, but do you know where that spice comes from? It is the seed of the tropical evergreen tree, *Myristica fragrans* and the first harvest of the tree doesn’t occur until 7-9 years after planting. Nutmeg & mace are actually a two for one deal. The mace is the dried lacy covering that clings to the shell. It is peeled away and then the nut is dried in the sun until it rattles. As a cook you are used to seeing it in powdered form when you use it in gingerbread cookies or on your eggnog.

http://ucanr.edu/blogs/blogcore/postdetail.cfm?postnum=23081

Cinnamon is one of the spices we reach for regularly during this season for both sweet and savory dishes alike. But did you know that cinnamon is actually the bark of a tree that grows in India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Brazil, Vietnam, and Egypt. Once harvested the bark of the tree is dried and then rolled into sticks or ground into powder form. It is actually one of the main ingredients in Coca-cola! Cinnamon has been shown to have health benefits, as well, including strengthening the immune system, improving alertness and memory/cognitive development and possibly lowering LDL cholesterol and triglyceride levels. So sprinkle liberally this year on the eggnog and enjoy!

https://www.washington.edu/wholeu/2016/03/03/is-cinnamon-good-for-you/
http://u.osu.edu/commoditychainproject/ingredients/cinnamon/
https://cleveland.ces.ncsu.edu/2010/11/just-when-you-thought-cinnamon-was-treated-alike/

An old Zanzibar saying reads “…The Clove tree will not grow except within sight of the mountains and within smell of the sea…” As a native of Indonesia and India the evergreen clove trees grow to heights of 30 feet and the cloves that we know as garnishes for our holiday hams are actually the unopened dried flower buds of the clove tree. The name clove is derived from the latin word clavus which means nail and resembles the shape of the brown hard dried clove. Cloves are used for a wide variety of uses including pomanders, pickling fruit, perfumes, and for some medicinal purposes. In days gone by, Europeans actually used valuable spices like cloves as currency and one pound of cloves would buy three sheep.

https://libweb5.princeton.edu/visual_materials/maps/websites/pacific/spice-islands/cloves.html
https://www.lib.umn.edu/bell/tradeproducts/cloves

The wonderful star anise used so often at this time of year comes from a small evergreen tree that is native to southeast Asia called *Illicium verum*. The mahogany colored pods are shaped like an 8 point star and they have a smell similar to fennel. Star anise is known for its’ rather bold flavor and is often mixed with other spices such as true cinnamon, fennel, cardamom, cloves, coriander, pepper, nutmeg, and bay for meat and poultry sauces and marinades.

https://iwp.uiowa.edu/silkroutes/star-anise
http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state/newsdetail.cfm?NewsID=35961
We have seen trends come and go in the world of gardening, and I thought it would be interesting to see what is trending for 2019. I found some possibilities in the 18th annual report from the Garden Media Group in its recently released 2019 Garden Trends Report: Rooted Together – Reconnecting with the Natural World. The eight trends they identify are:

- Indoor Generation
- Screen Age
- Golden Hearts
- Root to Stem
- Silence of the Insects
- RoboGardening
- Moonstruck
- Get Minted

So, what do all of these catchy titles mean? In reading the report, the overall take-away for me was that in this cyber techno-world of computers, the report suggests the trend will be a paradigm shift in the re-discovery of connecting to nature and protecting the earth. Those of us who already reach toward nature know the health and well-being benefits of gardening and being outdoors and this report gives some hope to those who will trend with the discovery of all things agriculture!

And so it goes,

Pam Burton

Garden Media Group's 2019 trend predictions is in the November issue of Nursery Management magazine.


---

Cranberry, Apple, and Sausage Stuffing

**Ingredients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whole Wheat Bread</th>
<th>White Bread</th>
<th>Onions</th>
<th>Celery</th>
<th>Sage</th>
<th>Rosemary</th>
<th>Thyme</th>
<th>Apples</th>
<th>Cranberries</th>
<th>Parsley</th>
<th>Chicken Stock</th>
<th>Butter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 1/2 cups</td>
<td>3 3/4 cups</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>3/4 cup</td>
<td>2 tsp</td>
<td>1 tsp</td>
<td>1/2 tsp</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3/4 cup</td>
<td>1/4 cup</td>
<td>3/4 cup</td>
<td>4 tbsp</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Directions**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees
2. Place white and whole wheat bread cubes in a single layer on a large baking sheet.
3. Bake for 4 to 8 minutes in the preheated oven, or until evenly toasted.
4. Place toasted bread cubes in a large bowl.
5. In a skillet, cook the sausage and onions over medium heat, stir and break up the lumps until evenly browned.
6. Add the celery, sage, rosemary, and thyme; cook, stirring, for 2 minutes to blend flavors.
7. Pour sausage mixture over bread in the bowl. Mix in chopped apples, dried cranberries and parsley. Drizzle with chicken stock and melted butter, and mix lightly.
8. Spoon into turkey.

[tp://ifplantscouldtalk.rutgers.edu/recipes/?id=11](tp://ifplantscouldtalk.rutgers.edu/recipes/?id=11)
Gardener’s Checklist for December:

- Select a live or cut Christmas tree while the selection is good. Your live Christmas tree should be put in a cool location for no more than a week before planting. Keep the tree outdoors until it is time to decorate it.
- Keep poinsettias out of cold drafts and away from heat sources. Place them where they will get as much light as possible.
- Popcorn and cranberry garlands are easy to make.
- Cover or move indoors any stone statuary to prevent frost cracks.
- Protect furniture from the sap of fresh, needled evergreen boughs when decorating for the holidays.
- Don’t let dried evergreen decorations become a fire hazard.
- Trim an outdoor evergreen tree with treats for wildlife. FS 1022
- If you’re considering the native American holly for your landscape, please be advised that it will grow to 40-50 feet in height with a spread of 18-40 feet. FS1151
- Begin planning your garden as the seed catalogs arrive in the mail. Check out the new offerings from mail order companies and try a few new plants next year. Make sure plants are hardy for this area before ordering and choose disease-resistant varieties. They make gardening easier and they reduce the expense of pesticides. FS1163
- Evaluate your landscape. Plan to fill in gaps with appropriate plants in the spring.
- Gather holiday greens from your landscape but prune carefully. Spray the greens with an antidesiccant to retard water loss.
- Limit traffic over dormant lawns. Grass is easily broken now and the crown of the plant may be severely damaged or killed.
- Begin bringing in some bulbs potted for forcing. Put them in a cool location with bright light. FS1220
- Plant your live Christmas tree as soon as possible after Christmas.
- Rotate houseplants to achieve even growth.
- Keep succulents and cacti on the dry side.
- Do not feed houseplants during the winter months and reduce the watering.
- Raise the humidity for your houseplants by grouping them together.
- Water houseplants with room temperature water. Move the most tender plants away from windows on cold nights.
- When dusting the furniture, consider washing the dust from your houseplants.
- Keep your Christmas tree stand filled with water.
- Plants make nice holiday gifts.
- Apply mulch to strawberries once the plants have become dormant, typically in early to mid-December. FS097
- Get caught up on your garden reading list.
**Gardening Tips for January:**

* After the ground freezes, mulch shrubs and perennials with straw, pine needles, or branches of the discarded Christmas tree to prevent heaving of the plants during periods of freezing and thawing.
* Inspect stored bulbs and rhizomes and discard those that are rotting. FS1155
* Salt on sidewalks and driveways can injure nearby lawns and plants. Try sawdust or sand instead. Cat litter works well if you haven’t obtained the less expensive materials.
* Mealy bugs on house plants can be killed by touching them with cotton dipped in alcohol.
* Economical “sticky stakes” for trapping whiteflies and aphids can be made by cutting bright-yellow cardboard or plastic, such as recycled detergent bottles or margarine tubs, into strips. Coat with petroleum jelly. Insert into pots or hang near problem areas.
* To keep pests at bay, red and green cabbages, greens and root crops can be grown under floating, lightweight row cover fabric for the entire season without detriment to plants. Row cover fabric will need to be replaced for plants that stand in the garden as long as cabbages when it becomes torn or brittle. Row cover fabric will also keep neighborhood cats off the newly plants garden.
* Your local delicatessen or fast food restaurant often has surplus 5-gallon plastic pickle buckets. This is a good size for growing containerized plants and for general use in the garden.
* Some mail order seed companies offer pelleted seeds of lettuce, carrot, and a few other small-seeded crops. Pelletized seeds have a special coating to make them larger and easier to handle. FS1163
* One way to file seeds as they come in the mail is to use index card tabs to divide a cardboard file box into categories for each vegetable or flower. As new seeds arrive, place them alphabetically into the proper slot. Drop notes into the file to remind yourself what is on order to avoid duplication.
* Remove bagworms from evergreens. FS1144
* How energy efficient is your landscape? Do you have evergreen trees or shrubs blocking a window where the sun’s warmth would be welcome now? Consider replacing them with a deciduous plant that would let sun in during the winter but cast cooling shade in the summer.
* Perform a soil test. The pH scale ranges from 1 to 14 with 7 being the point at which soil has a neutral reaction. The majority of plants, including vegetables, grow in soils which have a slightly acid reaction, with a pH of 6.0 to 6.5. One exception are the ericaceous plants which include azaleas, rhododendrons, andromedas and blueberries. They require a more acid soil with a pH of 4.5 to 5.5. FS797; FS553
* Wood ashes will raise soil pH. Use them only if the pH is less than 7.0 based on a soil test. The safe rate of wood ash application to lawn or gardens is 15 to 20 lbs. per 1000 square feet per year. Remember, a little wood ash is beneficial, but a lot is not.
* The flower for January is the carnation.
* Have a Happy and Healthy New Year!
Gardening Tips for February

♥ Take stock of leftover seeds. Get them organized and do some germination testing if they’re more than a few years old or if storage conditions have not been cool and dry. Even under ideal storage conditions, some vegetable seeds have a fairly short life and probably will not be good one or two years after purchase. These include sweet corn, onion, and parsnip.

♥ Purchase new cool-white fluorescent bulbs for your indoor grow lights.

♥ If the soil dries out against a house under the eaves where rain rarely reaches, water well during a thaw to prevent loss of plants. Remember that plants require water during the winter to replace water lost due to wind desiccation and lack of rain or snow.

♥ Make final plans for the annual and vegetable gardens and get the seeds ordered soon. A frequently overlooked factor in vegetable garden planning is the date of the family vacation. Choose planting dates and varieties carefully, so your garden won’t be ready for a full harvest when you are out of town. FS1163

♥ Look for sales on fertilizer, seed starting supplies, tools and organic mulches.

♥ Get your hand tools organized and sharpened. Check the handles on shovels and hoes to make sure they’re firmly attached. Paint the handles of garden tools red or orange. This will preserve the wood and make the tools easier to locate in the garden.

♥ Branches of forsythia, pussy willow, spirea, and dogwood can be forced for indoor bloom. Make long, slanted cuts when collecting the branches and place the stems in a vase of water. Change the water every four days. They should bloom in about three weeks. For something unique to force for winter flower arrangements, consider red maple, buckeye, birch, hickory, larch or oak branches.

♥ Repot your houseplants. Check them closely for insects.

♥ Plan a perennial border. Particularly good choices for a cutting garden are daisy, dahlia, aster, gladiolus and lily.

♥ Inspect perennial beds for heaved plants during warm periods. Mulch around heaved plants. Don’t push them into the soil! Dig and replant them in the spring.

♥ Miniature roses can be a colorful addition to your landscape. They range from pure white to golden yellow to dark red. They grow well on containers and planters, or they can be used as a low-growing border or mixed in beds/borders with other perennials.

♥ Make labels for your spring garden. Plastic milk jugs or bleach bottles cut in strips 1” by 6 to 7” work well. Use permanent ink markers to write on them.

♥ Continue to feed the birds.

♥ Have you had a soil sample analyzed within the past few years? Soil sampling packets are available at your local Extension office. FS797

♥ Give a living plant as a present for Valentine’s Day.

♥ Have your lawn mower and rototiller serviced. FS102

♥ The flower of the month is the violet.

♥ Get ready for spring! It will be here next month.
Rutgers Cooperative Extensions Fact Sheets

FS#   Fact Sheet Name

Fact Sheet 019 How to Hire a Tree Care Professional
Fact Sheet 034 Build Bird nest Boxes
Fact Sheet 035 Build Brush Piles for Wildlife
Fact Sheet 074 Backyard Leaf Composting
Fact Sheet 097 Growing Strawberries in the Home Garden
Fact Sheet 099 Problems With Over-Mulching Trees and Shrubs
Fact Sheet 102 Your Lawn and Its Care
Fact Sheet 117 Using Leaf Compost
E271 Landscape Plants Rated by Deer Resistance
Fact Sheet 387 How to Start a Windowsill Herb Garden
Fact Sheet 389 Minimizing Waste Disposal: grass Clippings
Fact Sheet 426 Moss in Lawns
Fact Sheet 553 Highbush Blueberry: The State Fruit of New Jersey
Fact Sheet 797 Soil Testing for Home Lawns and Gardens
Fact Sheet 805 Vermicomposting
Fact Sheet 811 Home Composting
Fact Sheet 849 Cover Crops and Green Manure
Fact Sheet 930 Natural Pest Control
Fact Sheet 944 Roses and Their Care
Fact Sheet 1011 Landscaping to Create Backyard Bird Habitat
Fact Sheet 1022 Backyard Birdfeeders
Fact Sheet 1118 Rain Barrels Part 2: Installation and Use
Fact Sheet 1144 Bagworm Thyridopteryx Ephemeraeformis (Haworth)
Fact Sheet 1150 African Violet Care
Fact Sheet 1151 Hollies for New Jersey
Fact Sheet 1153 Growing Dahlias
Fact Sheet 1154 Orchids on the Windowsill
Fact Sheet 1155 Cannas
Fact Sheet 1156 Keeping Geraniums Over Winter
Fact Sheet 1163 Mail Order Vegetable Seed Sources for the NJ Gardener
Fact Sheet 1214 Canada Goose Ecology and Impacts in New Jersey
Fact Sheet 1220 Spring Flowering Bulbs

Call 856/451-2800 Ext. 4 When calling to request a fact sheet, refer to the Fact Sheet by FS# or by name. All fact sheets are free unless otherwise noted.

Sincerely,

Salvatore S. Mangiafico, Ph.D.
County Agent II/Associate Professor
Environmental & Resource Management
Internet: Mangiafico@njaes.rutgers.edu

Wesley L. Kline, Ph.D.
County Agent II/Associate Professor
Vegetable & Herb Production
Internet: wkline@njaes.rutgers.edu
For important announcements concerning the Cumberland County Extension Center visit:
http://Cumberland.njaes.rutgers.edu

If you have any questions concerning the website, please call our office at
856-451-2800 x1 for agriculture and
856-451-2800 x4 for Home Horticulture and Master Gardeners

Public Notification and Non-discrimination Statement
Rutgers Cooperative Extension is an equal opportunity program provider and employer. Contact your local Extension Office for information regarding special needs or accommodations. Contact the State Extension Director's Office if you have concerns related to discrimination, 848-932-3584.