



Greetings!

Ol' Man Winter has arrived in full force, and by the look of things, it seems like he's settling in for a long visit. Right now, most of us can only dream of green grass and the beautiful blooms of spring. But the growing season will be here before we know it, and there's plenty to do in the meantime. Start by treating your houseplants to some indoor bloomer basics, and feeding your fine-feathered friends—they're hungry! Then pamper your skin with some cold weather savers that'll keep you silky smooth all winter long. And while the weather outside is frightful, why not whip up a cup of hot cocoa and sit by the fire. Before you know it, you'll be up to your ears in great garden greens!

In the News...

Yikes! There's Spiders in the Grapes!



Jerry Baker

This winter, use extra caution when shopping for fruit—you never know what might be lurking within. Black widow spiders are known to be discovered at supermarkets across the country, primarily in red grapes. These venomous villains, known for their red, hour-glass shaped mark, have a bite that can be fatal, especially in small children and the elderly, if left untreated. So stay safe when picking your produce—check your grapes!

“Every gardener knows under the cloak of winter lies a miracle.”
—Barbara Winkler

This Season's Hot Topic:

Cold Weather Skin Savers

If you're anything like me, you usually spend weeks winterizing your home and yard, but no time at all winterizing your poor skin. And come February, it's as dry as a bone. Well, not this year! Here's how to keep your skin as soft and smooth as a baby's bottom!

- Turn down the heat. In the shower, that is. Hot water may feel great, but it removes natural oils from your skin.
- Moisturize. As soon as you step out of the shower, slather on a lotion to seal in the moisture your skin just soaked up.
- Select the right soap. Check your health-food store for oil-based bars that contain super-moisturizing olive or coconut oil, and are scented with palmarosa, rosewood, or sandalwood.
- Drink plenty of water—at least eight, 8 oz. glasses a day will do the trick!

Skin-Soothing Mask

Soothe and refresh dry winter skin with this mix:

3 tbsp. of yogurt

3 tbsp. of oatmeal

Mix the ingredients until the oatmeal softens, then spread the mix over your face and neck (away from your eyes). Relax and let the mask work for several minutes. Once it begins to dry, rinse it off, and gently pat your skin dry. Then follow up with a good moisturizer.



Although tomatoes top the list of most-grown vegetables in American gardens, the most-eaten award goes to potatoes. Statistics show that we consume two spuds for every tomato, and the average American gobbles up 126 pounds of taters each year!

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to get the most out of your hose-end sprayers,
aerating lawn sandals, and more!

Don't Forget the Birds!

It's peak bird-feeding season, folks! When winter settles in, birds turn to feeders to conserve energy they'd otherwise expend seeking out wild foods. So it's time to switch your feeder menu to a hearty, high-calorie diet. Here's how to do it:



- Stock up on lots of basic seeds, plus specialties that birds in your neck of the woods favor.
- Put out a generous supply of suet and fats, which are lifesavers when temps dip below freezing.
- Don't forget the water! Refill your birdbath every day so your feathered friends don't get parched.
- And try one of these birderrific recipes for a real feeding frenzy!

Yo-De-Lay-Hee-Hoo!

Give your feeder an alpine accent by adding "muesli," a cereal of Swiss origin, to your mix.

½ cup of lard

½ cup of suet or fat scraps, chopped

¼ cup of peanut butter

1 cup of muesli, any brand

Mix the first three ingredients together, then work the muesli into the fat. Form into a block to fit your suet feeder, and serve.

Woodpecker Windup

Here's a seed mix hungry winter woodpeckers flock in droves for:

4 parts dry corn kernels

3 parts peanuts, chopped

3 parts peanuts, whole

2 parts black oil sunflower seeds

Mix all of the ingredients thoroughly, and pour into a tray feeder.



ANOTHER GREAT IDEA!

Has your latest cold interfered with your senses of smell and taste? Sprinkle a few drops of eucalyptus essential oil onto a cotton ball, and store it in an old pill bottle. Then when you're congested, take a few quick whiffs. Your passages will open up just like that, and you'll come to your senses.

A Terrific Tonic for Happy Houseplants

Now that the days are shorter and the skies are gray, your rooms might seem a little drab. So turn your attention to your houseplants (or treat yourself to a few) and let them brighten your days! Spotted or striped, patterned or plain, houseplants come in every color of the rainbow. Here's a simple formula that will keep your favorite flora bright and beautiful all through the year.

Houseplant Colorizer Tonic

1 twice-used tea bag

1 teaspoon of antiseptic mouthwash

1 teaspoon of baby shampoo

1 teaspoon of ammonia

1 quart of water

Mix ingredients in a bucket, and let the mix steep for 10 minutes. Fish out the tea bag, pour liquid into a handheld sprayer bottle, and mist-spray your plants' foliage every week or so.

*That's not
all, folks!*

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