



## Greetings!

The holiday season is finally here and I can practically smell the fresh baked pumpkin pie, turkey with all the trimmings, and—my favorite—the Christmas tree. If you're anything like me, you're looking forward to spending time with family and friends and enjoying each special day. But if you're worried about bad breath, be sure to leave a good first impression with one of my halitosis helpers. And before winter settles in, make sure your trees, shrubs, and evergreens are cleaned up and tucked in.

*Jerry Baker*

In the News...

## There's an App for That?

Your garden beds are tucked in for the winter, so what better time than now to start planning for next year? Don't let the onset of cold, blustery weather stop you from digging in—virtually, anyway. Gardening apps for smartphones and tablets can help you design plots, choose crops, and maybe even improve yields. <https://bit.ly/2msOaCo>

**“When the bold branches bid farewell to rainbow leaves—welcome wool sweaters.”**  
—B. Cybrill

*This Season's Hot Topic:*

## Before the Winter Winds Blow...

If you live in an area where winter is serious business, then even the sturdiest trees and shrubs will benefit from a little extra TLC when the temperatures begin to drop. This simple routine should keep your woody pals safe and sound till spring:

- Before temps fall to 50°F, give your trees, shrubs, and all the other plants in your yard a good, thorough wash-down with my Fall Cleanup Tonic (at right). Plants that go to bed clean are more likely to wake up healthy in the spring!
- Apply a thick coat of an antidesiccant spray (available at garden centers) to all of your evergreen trees and shrubs to guard against drying winter winds. Most sprays won't last through the winter, though, so be sure to repeat the process in early February if you can.
- Give evergreen shrubs and small trees coats of burlap (never plastic) to protect them from harsh winds. Just wrap the fabric around the plant, and tie it on with twine.
- To guard a hedge or row of shrubs, pound stakes into the ground at each side, and stretch a burlap screen across from end to end. (**Note:** Depending on the length of the planting, you may also need to insert stakes in the middle of the row as well as along the sides.)

### Fall Cleanup Tonic

Fend off snow mold, foul fungi, and other wild and woolly wintertime nasties with this excellent elixir.

- 1 cup of antiseptic mouthwash
- 1 cup of baby shampoo
- 1 cup of chamomile tea

Mix the ingredients in a bucket, then add 2 cups of the mixture to a 20 gallon hose-end sprayer, filling the balance of the jar with warm water. Overspray your turf when the temperature is above 50°F. Follow up with your regular fall lawn feeding.



Do you buy baby wipes even though you don't have a baby? You're not alone. Marketing studies show that 36 percent of the baby wipes sold in supermarkets are bought by folks whose children are more than 4 years old, or who don't even have any children.

Check out  
our gallery of  
DIY videos at

[jerrybaker.com/how-to-videos](http://jerrybaker.com/how-to-videos)  
to get the most out of your hose-end sprayers,  
aerating lawn sandals, and more!

## Coffee, Celery, and 5 Other Ways to Slay Dragon Breath

Does your breath smell so bad that even your dog can't stand to be near you? Here's a handful of solutions that'll give bad breath the boot:

1. Chew a teaspoon of ground **coffee** straight from the can. But don't swallow the grounds. After chewing for a few minutes, spit the coffee out, and swish your mouth out with a cold-water rinse.
2. Every time you bite into **celery**, you get a little burst of water that helps flush food particles and odor-causing bacteria from your mouth.
3. Crush a whole **clove** (no, not of garlic—the spice!) with your teeth a little, and roll it around your tongue, then spit it out. Cloves are aromatic and halt halitosis, and they're also good little bacteria fighters. Not a bad combo!
4. Squeeze the juice of half a **lemon** into ½ cup of water, swish it around your mouth, and spit it out. Lemons boost the flow of saliva, which helps flush out whatever's causing the foul odor in the first place.
5. Get your saliva flowing by chewing on a piece of **gum**. Any flavor will do—it doesn't have to be mint.
6. An **apple** a day won't just keep the doctor away—it'll keep bad breath at bay, as well.
7. Drink eight glasses of **water** a day to help keep saliva production going and reduce the buildup of bad breath-causing bacteria.



### ANOTHER GREAT IDEA!

**Has this ever happened to you? The weather takes an unexpected cold turn during the night, leaving your uncovered veggie crops to Mother Nature's mercy. If it happens again, don't panic and rip out what's left of your garden. You may be able to revive hardy crops like chard, collards, and mustard. Simply sprinkle the plants gently with water from your garden hose before the sun shines on them. That may be enough to prevent damage so you can keep on harvesting.**

### Oh Christmas Tree!

This year's Christmas tree will keep its needles longer if you follow this routine: When you bring the tree home, cut 1 or 2 inches off the bottom of the trunk, and immediately set it into a bucket of cold water with 1 cup of molasses added to it. Let the tree soak for two or three days before you move it to its stand and start trimming it.



*That's not  
all, folks!*

Check out [jerrybaker.com](http://jerrybaker.com) for fantastic features like:

- ▶ Jerry's Blog with what's new in gardening, health care, and household hints.
- ▶ Critter Control solutions for battling bugs and thugs in your home and garden.
- ▶ How-to videos to guide you through the growing season.
- ▶ Jerry's favorite tips and tonics—you're just a click away from a super solution!