

## Saratoga County 4-H Field Days Inspires Over 1,000 Students

More than 1,000 Saratoga County students from 12 schools representing eight public and private school districts participated in this year's Saratoga County 4-H Field Days at the 4-H Training Center on Middle Line Road in Ballston Spa. Held over two days, the program featured both Agricultural Field Day and Environmental Field Day, offering hands-on educational experiences that connected youth with agriculture, natural resources, and the environment.

Designed to enrich classroom learning and support school curriculum goals, the field days welcomed students in grades 1–6 to explore a wide range of topics through interactive presentations led by local experts, educators, and community organizations.

The 4-H Animals, Food and Agricultural Life Field Day introduced younger students in grades 1–3 to the world of agriculture and farming. Children had close-up experiences with animals and learned about food production and daily agricultural life through engaging demonstrations and activities. Presentations featured horses, goats, calves, sheep, chickens, alpacas, rabbits, bees, maple production, seed germination, herding dogs, fibers, and more. Saratoga County Dairy Ambassadors also shared the importance of dairy farming and dairy products in New York State agriculture.

During Environmental Field Day, students in grades 3–6 explored topics related to trees, water, wildlife, soil, conservation, and environmental stewardship. Naturalists, forestry professionals,

conservation educators, and environmental agencies helped students better understand the interconnectedness of the natural world through hands-on learning experiences. Presenters included representatives from organizations such as Adirondack Search and Rescue, Saratoga National Historical Park, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Saratoga Tree Nursery, Moreau Lake State Park, Saratoga Spa State Park, Capital Region PRISM, Saratoga County Soil & Water Conservation District, Saratoga County Stormwater Management, USDA, Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park, New York State Department of Health, and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County. Topics included tree identification and planting, invasive species, frogs, turtles and snakes, water quality, healthy soils, macroinvertebrates, ticks, pollination, bluebirds, fish advisories, and wildlife education.

Through these engaging field days, Saratoga County 4-H continues to provide meaningful educational opportunities that inspire youth to learn about agriculture, environmental science, and the natural resources that shape their communities.



# Christmas Tree Farming 101

Tuesday, July 7, 2026 | 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County

24 Martin Road, Voorheesville, NY 12186

Cost: \$6/person

Register here:

[https://pub.cce.cornell.edu/event\\_registration/main/events\\_landing.cfm?event=ChristmasTreeFarming101\\_201](https://pub.cce.cornell.edu/event_registration/main/events_landing.cfm?event=ChristmasTreeFarming101_201)

**Presenter:** Jingjing Yin, Regional Commercial Horticulture Educator

Are you interested in Christmas tree farming but not sure where to start? Are you just starting to grow Christmas trees but not sure if you are on the right track?

Join us for a two-hour workshop designed for beginners. This workshop will discuss Christmas tree farming basics. Some of the topics that we will cover include site selection, soil health, species selection, nutrient management, weed management, and pest management.



Join us for the  
**Cornell Horse Symposium**  
Friday, June 12, 2026  
at Cornell University



Join owners, educators, and industry professionals from New York and beyond for a day! Registration is \$35 and includes all lectures, two afternoon activity sessions, and a boxed lunch.

**(Deadline to register: June 3, 2026)**

[Event Information & Registration](#)

## CAR SEAT CHECK

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County is partnering with New Country Toyota of Clifton Park for a FREE car seat check to insure your car seat is properly installed. Nationally Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians and Instructors will be on site.

**Thursday, June 4 | 4 pm—8 pm**  
**New Country Toyota of Clifton Park**  
202 Route 146, Mechanicville

**For date and to schedule an appointment call 518-885-8995.**

**What to bring to your car seat check:**

- Your child (if possible)
- Your car seat manual
- Your vehicle owner's manual
- A cleaned-out vehicle (remove other items for easier access)

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for **June 17, 2026 | 7 pm | Extension Office**

**CCE Saratoga's Board of Directors**

John Mancini - *President*

Liz Newsom - *Vice President*

Mark Preissler - *Secretary*

Jim Pettis, Jr. — *Treasurer*

Tom Venditti

Alex Guilmette

Ian Murray—*Board of Supervisors Representative*

Danielle Hautaniemi - *Cornell Representative*



*If you would like to attend, please reach out to Wendy at [wlm8@cornell.edu](mailto:wlm8@cornell.edu).*

**TASTE NY**  
at the  
**ADIRONDACKS  
WELCOME CENTER**

**WEEKLY TASTINGS**

Every Thursday from  
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Open to the public - Free

5/28 - Fulkerson Winery  
Cold Pressed Grape Juices

6/4 - Whole in the Wall Pesto w/  
R&G Cheesemakers Mozzarella

6/11 - King Bros. Dairy  
Cookie Monster Ice Cream

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Workshops with  
The Wild Center:  
6/12 - The Treasure Troll  
7/17 - The Painter Troll**

12-4pm

Free

Open to the public, held outdoors at  
The Adirondacks Welcome Center if  
weather permits

**CURRENT SPECIALS**

**June is dairy month!**

Follow socials for specials and samples  
all month long

Father's Day gift basket  
available 6/1 to 6/21  
or while supplies last

Farm-made bug spray now available  
from Thymeless Homestead

20% off Whole in the Wall Pesto  
(sold frozen)



*Follow us on  
Social Media!*

Discover upcoming events, local  
favorites, travel tips,  
and everything happening in the  
Adirondacks.



Facebook



Instagram

Explore • Discover • Enjoy the Adirondacks

I-87 Northbound (Between exits 17 & 18), Queensbury, NY 12804  
Market staff available from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

# CLEAN, DRAIN, DRY

Memorial Day weekend marked the official start of the Watercraft Inspection Steward season across the region. Stewards are stationed at public boat launches throughout the area, where they work to educate boaters and outdoor recreationists on how to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) between waterways. Their efforts play an important role in protecting local lakes, rivers, and ecosystems for future generations.

Before heading out on the water this season, boaters are encouraged to follow the six steps of “Clean, Drain, Dry”:

- Check all boating and fishing equipment for invasive species.
- Clean off any visible or invisible mud, fish, or animals before transporting equipment.
- Drain all water-holding compartments, including ballast tanks, live wells, and bilge areas.
- Dry boats, trailers, and equipment thoroughly before entering another waterbody.
- Disinfect anything that came into contact with water if it cannot be completely dried before reuse.
- Visit your local boat steward for additional information and guidance.

These simple actions can make a big difference in slowing the spread of aquatic invasive species and protecting New York’s waterways.

To learn more about the Clean, Drain, Dry program visit <https://on.ny.gov/4uX4c5s>



NYS DEC

## What to Expect When You Meet a Boat Steward

When you meet a boat steward they will:

1. Ask if you already practice preventative measures to stop the spread of AIS.
2. Give instruction about how to inspect and “clean, drain, and dry” your watercraft and equipment.
3. Ask which waterbody you last visited so that the steward can determine if you are coming from infested waters and what species are there. Boat stewards will have access to this information for many lakes and ponds through the [iMapInvasives website](#).
4. Have a wealth of information about aquatic invasive species. Feel free to ask them questions!
5. They may also direct you to visit a free on-site or nearby decontamination, or “decon” station. At decon stations, your boat will be washed with high pressure hot water.

[View our interactive map](#) to find a boat steward or decontamination steward near you.

For more information about public boat launches in New York State, visit our webpage on [all boat launch locations](#).



# Camping Season is Upon Us! Protect Our Trees by Using Local Firewood



Moving untreated firewood is one of the main ways invasive pests and diseases spread to new areas. Many people take wood from their properties as they head out to camp, hunt, etc., but most don't realize their wood may be hiding the eggs, larvae, spores, adults, or even seeds of invasive species that threaten the health of our forests. Transporting infested firewood allows invasives to spread further and faster than they would have on their own. In 2009, a [regulation](#) was enacted to prevent this accidental and often long-distance spread by limiting the transport of firewood.

## The NYS Firewood Regulation

The regulation pertains to all species of wood, cut or not cut, split or not split, that is destined for use as fuel. Logs would only be subject to the regulation if their intended use is as firewood.

- Untreated firewood may not be imported into NY from any other state or country.
- Untreated firewood grown in NY may not be transported more than 50 miles (linear distance) from its source or origin unless it has been heat-treated to 71°C (160°F) for 75 minutes.
  - \* If transporting untreated firewood cut for personal use (i.e. not for sale) you must fill out a [Self-Issued Certificate of Origin](#) (PDF).
  - \* If purchasing and transporting untreated firewood, it must have a receipt or label that identifies the firewood source. **NOTE! Source is sometimes, but not always, the same as where it was purchased.** Consumers need to use the source to determine how far the firewood may be transported.
  - \* If purchasing and transporting heat-treated firewood, it must have a receipt or label that says, "New York Approved Heat-Treated Firewood/Pest Free". This is the producers' declaration that the firewood meets New York's heat-treatment requirements. Most "kiln-drying" processes meet the standard, but not all, so it is important to look for the appropriate label. Heat-treated firewood may be moved unrestricted.

## Pests and Threats That Can Spread Through Firewood

Almost every native New York tree species is susceptible to attack by one or more exotic pests. Some of these insects and diseases are already known to be present in parts of New York, and some are threatening us from other states or regions, and still others have yet to find their way to the United States (that we know of).

Some invasive pests of concern and their respective hosts:

- [Asian longhorned beetle](#) - maple, birch, ash, sycamore, poplar,

willow, elm, hackberry, mountain ash, horsechestnut.

- [Oak wilt](#) - oak, especially red oak.
- [Emerald ash borer](#) - all ash species (white, black, green).
- [Spongy moth](#) - over 500 hosts including oak, basswood, birch, polar, alder, willow, larch, hemlock, pine, and spruce.
- [Light brown apple moth](#) - apple, oak, pine, poplar, walnut.
- [Brown spruce longhorned beetle](#) - spruce.



For more information on transporting firewood visit the NY DEC [Firewood and Invasive Pests page](#).



# Understanding Over-the-Counter Sprays for Mosquitoes and Ticks

Summer is the season that brings us outdoors to enjoy picnics, barbecues and campfires. Unfortunately, blood-feeding arthropods such as mosquitoes and ticks can ruin our outdoor experiences by making us itch or by spreading disease. Over-the-counter sprays are one way that people avoid a forced retreat to the indoors. Choosing the right product and understanding how it works is important to keep you and your family safe. Here are a few considerations:

**Repellant vs. Pesticide.** There are two classes of products that you might see on the shelf. Products that contain DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus and IR3535 are *repellants*. These products interfere with the host-finding abilities of biting insects, making you hard to find. On the other hand, products that contain permethrin are *pesticides* that kill these organisms on contact. Permethrin is used to treat clothing, hats, shoes, and gear (backpacks, tents, etc.), and should *never* be applied to the skin for safety reasons.

**Repellant Formulation.** Repellants differ in their effectiveness at keeping pests away. On the bottle is a “percent active ingredient” listing, which is a measure of how long the product will remain effective. The higher the percentages, the longer it lasts. In general, products with less than 10% active ingredient provide only limited protection (1-2 hours at most). Here are some specifics about two of the common active ingredients.

- DEET comes in concentrations from 4 to 100%. Despite this broad range, studies have shown that concentrations over 50% do not provide any additional protection. Therefore, products with 20 to 30% DEET are recommended for outdoor exposure of four to five hours.
- Picaridin concentrations range from 7 to 20%, with a 20% concentration providing four to five hours of protection (equivalent to DEET at the same concentration).

**How to Apply.** For repellents, use just enough product to cover exposed skin and clothing – do not over-apply. Never directly spray your face, but rather spray your hands and apply to areas as needed. Follow label instructions carefully for applications, especially for children.

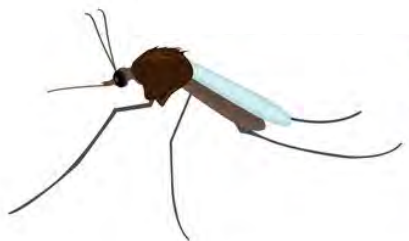
Treatments using permethrin to protect clothing should be done outdoors in an area with limited wind. Treat materials according



to the label, paying particular attention to the amount of time needed for the product to dry. In most cases, once the material is dry, it is safe to wear. Additional information can be found on the [TickEncounter website](#), including information about having your clothing professionally treated.

**Clean Up.** After outdoor exposure, a shower is recommended to remove repellants applied to skin. This should be followed by a tick check. See TickEncounter’s [Shower Cards](#) for more information.

**Other Options.** Screenhouses and appropriate clothing, such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts and a hat can be utilized to reduce problems with biting insects. Visit the following links for information on managing [mosquitoes](#) and [ticks](#) in your yard.



# Celebrate National Dairy Month This June

June is National Dairy Month, a time to recognize and celebrate the many contributions the dairy industry has made to communities across the United States for more than 85 years. Throughout the month, dairy farmers and agricultural organizations highlight the dedication of the hardworking farm families who help bring fresh milk and dairy products to grocery store shelves every day.

National Dairy Month is also an opportunity to learn more about the important nutritional benefits dairy products provide. Milk and other dairy foods contain 13 essential nutrients and can support bone health, heart health, sports recovery, weight management, and overall wellness. From milk and cheese to yogurt, cottage cheese, and sour cream, dairy products continue to play an important role in healthy diets for people of all ages.



The celebration began in 1937 as “National Milk Month,” created to encourage Americans to drink more milk during a time of surplus production. Over the years, the observance expanded to recognize the entire dairy industry, eventually becoming National Dairy Month with support from the National Dairy Council.

Today, National Dairy Month continues to celebrate the farmers, families, and communities that make the dairy industry possible while encouraging consumers to enjoy the wide variety of nutritious dairy products available. Whether you try a new dairy-based recipe, learn more about dairy farming, or simply enjoy your favorite glass of milk or scoop of yogurt, June is the perfect time to celebrate all things dairy.

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## Celebrate National Dairy Month with These Dairy-Inspired Recipes

From creamy breakfasts to refreshing desserts, dairy products can be enjoyed in countless delicious ways. Try one of these simple recipes during National Dairy Month and celebrate the farmers and families who help bring milk, cheese, yogurt, and ice cream to our tables every day.

### **Strawberry Yogurt Parfait**

*A quick and healthy breakfast or snack.*

- 2 cups vanilla yogurt
- 1 cup fresh strawberries, sliced
- 1 cup granola
- Honey (optional)

Layer yogurt, strawberries, and granola in a glass or bowl. Drizzle with honey if desired. Serve immediately.

### **Creamy Ranch Dip**

*Perfect for vegetables, chips, or parties.*

- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1 tablespoon ranch seasoning mix

Mix all ingredients together and chill before serving.

### **Classic Macaroni and Cheese**

*A family favorite packed with cheesy goodness.*

- 2 cups elbow macaroni
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 2 cups milk
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- Salt and pepper to taste

Cook macaroni according to package directions. In a saucepan, melt butter and whisk in flour. Slowly add milk and cook until thickened. Stir in cheese until melted. Combine with macaroni and serve warm.

### **Homemade Butter**

*A fun activity for youth and families.*

- Heavy whipping cream
- Pinch of salt

Pour cream into a mason jar halfway full. Shake until the cream separates into butter and buttermilk, about 10-15 minutes. Drain liquid, rinse butter with cold water, and add salt if desired.

# Tips for Planning a Safe and Fun Picnic



The cool thing about having a picnic meal is that picnics can happen in almost any outdoor scenario from the beach to the mountains. Picnics today have evolved from packing some sandwiches to assembling portable cookware to prepare elegant marinated and grilled foods. Menu planning and taking care to create the perfect ambiance are important factors for planning a memorable picnic.

The word “picnic” derives from the French *piquenique*, meaning a meal eaten outdoors. Picnics became a grand activity during the early 19th century. Wealthy London residents formed what was known as “The Picnic Society” which featured shared dishes and casual entertainment. At Victorian era picnics, pastries, ham, and other baked meats were enjoyed. For an idea of what picnics looked like during the 19th century visit some of the artwork by Monet, Renoir, Cezanne. Their paintings illustrate the glamour and romanticism of picnics during this period of history.

When planning a picnic there some essentials that must be on your list. The following tips will help you plan.

## Seating

To set the mood, select the perfect picnic blanket. Today, there are many options for picnic blankets, including blankets that are waterproof on the bottom. You will also need a picnic basket or insulated canvas tote bag. In case there is someone attending your picnic that doesn't like sitting on the ground bring picnic chairs. There are also portable picnic tables if you prefer to enjoy nature seated at the table.

## Serving

A cooler is also a must to keep cold foods and drinks cold. Of course, perfect picnic “tableware” is important. Pack plates, utensils for both eating and serving, napkins, and cups or wine glasses. To ensure that there is a level surface for drinks, bring a cutting board. You will also need to have a sharp knife on hand, just in case you need it. A bottle opener may be necessary if you are serving bottled refreshments. To complete the meal, consider your menu and bring the appropriate condiments, such as fruit preserves, salt, pepper, mustard, mayo, ketchup, etc. When packing condiments such as mayo or other egg based food it is important to keep it at a temperature of 41 degrees Fahrenheit or lower to keep it safe from harmful bacteria.

## Cleanup

As with any meal, cleanup is a must. Paper towels and wet wipes are items to pack. Dishtowels are great to secure and buffer dishes during transport. Bring large zipper-top bags or extra plastic containers to pack up dirty utensils. Trash bags are essential to keep the environment clean and free of litter.

## Other Essentials

Be sure to protect your skin with sunscreen and a hat. Insect repellent is also a good idea. Board games and activities can add another layer of fun to your picnic.

## Food Ideas

Finger foods are always a hit. Chicken fingers and drumsticks, corn cobs, cheese trays, and fruit on skewers are tasty choices. Salads are a great option because there are so many diverse recipes. Keep salads and dressings cold at 40 degrees Fahrenheit or lower in the cooler. Prior to the picnic prepare dressings in small jars for easy accessibility and care. A food flask will keep soups and stews warm.

## Keeping Food Safe to Eat

To keep food safe from harmful bacteria it is important that proper food temperatures be maintained both indoor and out. Food must never remain in the “Danger Zone” - between 40°F and 140°F - for more than 2 hours, or 1 hour if outdoor temperatures are above 90°F. This is when bacteria in food can multiply very quickly, and lead to foodborne illness.

Cold perishable food should be kept in the cooler at 40°F or below until serving time.

- Once you've served it, it should not sit out for longer than 2 hours, or 1 hour if the outdoor temperature is above 90°F. If it does - discard it.
- Foods such as chicken salad, potato salad, and desserts in individual serving dishes can be placed directly on ice, or in a shallow container set in a deep pan filled with ice. Drain off water as ice melts and replace ice frequently.
- Organize the cooler contents. Packing beverages in one cooler and perishable foods in another is a good way to prevent perishable foods from being over exposed to warm outdoor temperatures.
- Keeping coolers closed as much as possible will help to keep the contents cold longer.

Hot food should be kept hot, at or above 140°F.

- Wrap it well and place in an insulated container until serving.
- Just as with cold - these foods should not sit out for more than 2 hours, or 1 hour in temperatures above 90°F. If food is left out longer, throw it away to be safe.

If you are planning to grill or prepare meats after arriving at the picnic site keep raw meats in a separate cooler at 40°F or below away from other food to prevent cross contamination. Cook raw meats immediately upon arrival.

Wash fruits and vegetables even those with skins and rinds that are not eaten when packing for your picnic. This will keep fruits and veggies clear of germs and bacteria that may occur from handling at the market or home. Pack in a sealable container.

# SARATOGA COUNTY TO HOLD FREE RABIES VACCINATION CLINIC

**DOGS, CATS, AND FERRETS WELCOME.**



**JULY 14, 2026**  
Registration will open June 23.

**SEPTEMBER 22, 2026**  
Registration will open September 1.

**Location:**  
4-H Training Center  
556 Middleline Road, Ballston Spa

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT  
SARATOGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
**(518) 518-7460**

## **TIMES:**

- **Cats** | 5:30 - 6:30 PM  
(Must be in a carrier)
- **Ferrets** | 5:30 - 6:30 PM  
(Must be in a cage or carrier)
- **Dogs** | 6:30—7:30 PM  
(Must be on a leash)

**By Appointment Only!**

[www.SaratogaCountyNY.gov/Rabies](http://www.SaratogaCountyNY.gov/Rabies)

Public Health Law § 2141 requires dogs, cats, and ferrets be vaccinated against Rabies. All vaccination certificates are written for one year unless prior proof of vaccination is provided. Owners must provide proof of vaccine to receive a three-year certificate for their animal.

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## **CORRECTION**

### **Turkey Hunting Hours**

In the previous newsletter, it was stated that legal turkey hunting hours extend from one-half hour before sunrise until sunset. This is incorrect. Hours are one-half hour before sunrise until noon.

*Note: As of May 31, turkey season is over until the fall.*



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CORNELL IPM Program

## **What's Bugging You?**

*Not all things that buzz, crawl or slither are pests. Figuring out WHAT is bugging you is the first step.*

Each month at New York State Integrated Pest Management's "What's Bugging You? First Friday" events, experts share practical information and answer questions on using integrated pest management (IPM) to avoid pest problems and promote a health environment where you live, work, learn and play. We end with an IPM Minute, and cover a specific action you can take in the next few days to help you avoid pest problems. **Events take place online from 12:00 pm to 12:30 pm.**

### **JUNE 5: Protecting pollinators in urban areas | Say NO! to bug zappers**

How do bees survive in urban areas, and what can you do to encourage these important pollinators? Then, learn why you should avoid outdoor bug zappers. [Register here.](#)



# Homesteading



DBC Ag Products - published in MORNING AgClips

## 9 Ways to Prevent Parasites in Your Flock

Take proactive steps to minimize internal parasites amongst your birds



Photo: Getty Images, Unsplash

Do you find yourself throwing away eggs after treating your flock for internal parasites? Although it's nearly impossible to keep your chickens completely worm-free year-round, proper management can help prevent parasite issues in your flock.

### Why should you care about worms in your birds?

Worm, or parasites can cause poor growth, decreased egg production, and in severe cases, death. Internal parasites can also make a flock more susceptible to diseases or make existing diseases worse.

Backyard birds can easily ingest internal eggs while scratching the ground and foraging for bugs, including snails, slugs, grasshoppers, ants, and earthworms. Insects can also harbor parasite eggs, which infect your birds when ingested.

### Signs of Parasites

If your birds are not behaving normally and seem distant from the rest of the flock, it could be a sign of parasites causing illnesses. Pay close attention to your birds for additional symptoms of internal parasites.

- Appetite loss
- Weight loss
- Watery droppings
- Dehydration
- Hens stop laying
- Separation from the rest of the flock
- Balance and coordination loss due to weakness
- Poor feather quality
- Dull combs, wattles, and eyes

### Prevent Parasites in Your Flock

While parasite infections can be serious, being proactive can help prevent parasites from ever becoming an issue. Here are nine ways to help keep your birds happy, healthy, and parasite-free.

1. Avoid overcrowding - give birds plenty of room to be comfortable. Overcrowding can cause an abundance of germs in a small area.

2. Clean coops at least once a week - Cleaning and adding fresh bedding prevents infected droppings from accumulating.
3. Avoid introducing infested chickens to the flock - Purchase your chickens as newborn chicks. If you purchase adult birds, quarantine them for a minimum of two weeks to monitor their health and assess for potential disease and parasite symptoms.
4. Avoid giving feed or treats on the ground - Ground pecking for feed and treats increases the risk of your flock consuming parasitic bugs and encountering droppings from contaminated birds.
5. Keep chickens off freshly tilled ground - Chickens love to eat bugs and the freshly tilled ground turns up insects possibly hosting parasite eggs. Keeping your flock away from freshly tilled areas can help limit their exposure to an overabundance of tasty bugs.
6. Keep wild birds away from your flock - Wild birds could be infected with parasites and shed parasite eggs through their droppings.
7. Use integrated pest management (IPM) practices to control insect populations - IPM practices are an eco-friendly way to eliminate or control factors required for pests to survive.
8. Test and sanitize drinking water - One sick bird can infect the rest of the flock simply by contaminating the waterers. Test and sanitize the water, and keep waterers and feeders cleaned to help control or reduce the chance of spreading infection.
9. Target worms - Use an all-natural supplement to help break down the natural defenses of intestinal worms and their eggs. This makes parasites more susceptible to attack by the bird's immune system, stomach acids, and bacteria in the gut.

Naturally preventing diseases before they start is the best strategy to support the immune system of your birds, prevent expensive, time-consuming veterinarian visits and maintain a happy, healthy flock.



CCE WARREN COUNTY

## Make Your Own Jams & Jellies

**WHEN:** June 13 | 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

**WHERE:** CCE Warren County, Warrensburg

**COST:** \$15.00

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Warren County will be holding a “Make Your Own Jams & Jellies” class. This hands-on workshop will cover food safety skills (a must when preserving food) and several methods of producing jams and jellies using fresh and frozen fruits.

Each participant will bring home a jar of jam or jelly.

For more information, contact Alyssa Hayes. Pre-registration is required, call 518-623-3291.



THE NATIONAL GARDENING ASSOCIATION, By Charlie Nardoizzi

## Edible Landscaping - Herb Gardening Basic 101

Millions of households in the United States grow herbs - in vegetable and perennial gardens, in containers, or on windowsills. And with good reason! In addition to their obvious role in cooking, herbs are also attractive and add color, interesting textures and forms, and rich or subtle fragrances to the home and garden.

### Uses for Herbs

The most popular use for herbs is in cooking and nearly every recipe can be enhanced with the addition of appropriate herbs. Can you imagine tomato sauce without oregano? Thanksgiving stuffing without sage? Some dishes are defined by the herbs they contain - pesto without basil just isn't pesto!

Herbs have many other users as well. Many types make wonderful teas, either individually or combined in blends. Chamomile makes a soothing tea for unwinding after a hard day.

Many herbs are also believed to have medicinal properties. The echinacea that has become popular as a cold remedy is extracted from the purple coneflower, a common garden perennial.

Of course many gardeners grow herbs simply because they are attractive and durable plants. Bee balm not only makes a tasty tea, it is also a reliable perennial with lovely red, pink, or white flowers. And chamomile's daisy like blooms brighten up any sunny border.

### Where to Plant

Plant herbs where you can get to them easily for frequent harvesting, especially if you plant to use them in cooking. Consider planting a special kitchen garden near the house, so you can readily harvest herbs, greens, and other frequently used crops. You can also grow herbs in containers or even window boxes.

Most herbs prefer full sun - at least 6 hours per day. Herbs that will tolerate some light shade include chives, cilantro, dill, and mint. Remember that if you plant perennial herbs in the vegetable garden, keep them in a separate section so you'll be sure to avoid them during spring and fall tilling.

### Types of Herbs

Like all garden plants, herbs can be categorized as annual, perennial, or biennial. Annual plants grow for only one season and so must be planted each spring. Perennials live for several years. Their foliage dies back in the fall, but the roots overwinter and resume growth the following spring. And biennials grow for two years, growing foliage the first season, overwintering, then forming seeds and dying back at the end of the second season.

Here are some examples of each type of herb.

#### Annual Herbs

- [basil](#)
- [chamomile](#)
- [cilantro / coriander](#)
- [cumin](#)
- [dill](#)
- [fennel](#)

#### Perennial Herbs\*

- [catnip](#)
- [chives](#)
- [lavender](#)
- [lemon balm](#)
- [lovage](#)
- [lemongrass](#)
- [marjoram](#)
- [mint](#)
- [oregano](#)
- [rosemary](#)
- [sage](#)
- [tarragon](#)
- [thyme](#)



Photo by saikolha

\*These may not be hardy in all regions of the country. Check zone ratings.

...continued on next page

## Edible Landscaping...continued from previous page

Parsley is one of the few common herbs that is biennial. However, unless you want to harvest the seed, you can treat it like an annual and plant new plants each season.

### Herb Garden Design

Herbs can be grown with other plantings or in their own garden. You can create a traditional, formal herb garden with two paths intersecting the center to create four symmetrical gardens. Each section can feature herbs grouped by theme, such as culinary herbs, medicinal herbs, and aromatic herbs. Try to grow herbs with similar growing requirements together for easier maintenance. You can decorate the center intersection with a pot or urn filled with attractive herbs. The paths can be edged with landscape edging, bricks, stone, or even well-trimmed, woody herbs such as lavender.

Even though a formal herb garden is attractive, most gardeners would rather mix herbs in with other flower or vegetable plantings or grow them in containers. When growing herbs with other plantings, be sure they have enough room to expand and won't get shaded by tall plants.

Herbs make great container plants. To grow herbs successfully in containers or window boxes, you'll need a pot that has adequate drainage holes. Use fresh potting soil each year and keep the container well watered and fertilized. Try different combinations such as purple-leaved basil mixed with creeping thyme, or silver-leaved sage planted with curled-leafed parsley. Rare perennial herbs, such as rosemary and lavender, can have their own pot and be overwintered indoors in cold climates. You'll be amazed at how attractive and useful these potted herbs can be.

### Soil Requirements

In general, herbs prefer a moderately rich soil. An overly rich soil (or excessive fertilizing) can lead to vigorous growth. However, many people find that the flavor of overfertilized herbs is bland, probably due to reduced essential oil content.

Many culinary herbs, such as thyme and oregano, are of Mediterranean heritage and are accustomed to growing in gravelly soils. The soil in your herb garden should have excellent drainage. If yours doesn't, consider growing your herbs in raised beds or containers.

### Caring for Herb Plants

Most herbs will thrive with about 1 inch of water a week, similar to other vegetable plants. Herbs in raised beds and containers will dry out more quickly than those planted directly in the garden and may need more frequent watering. Keep garden beds weeded, especially early in the season as plants are getting established. If you have fertile soil, you won't need to add much fertilizer to herbs grown in the garden. For those in containers, you'll need to add a dilute, complete fertilizer such as 10-10-10 to keep the leaves green and plants growing strong.

Once established, most herb plants are remarkably resistant to

insect and disease attack. The oils that give them their aroma and flavor likely evolve to repel pests. However, keep an eye out for insects such as aphids, and diseases such as powdery mildew.

### Harvesting Herbs

Harvest herbs by cutting back a shoot to just above a leaf. This will both provide you with a harvest and encourage nice, bushy growth on the remaining plant. In general, an herb's flavor is most pronounced when it is harvested just before the plant begins to flower and in the morning when the essential oils are the most concentrated.

#### Tips

- Heavily harvested herb plants can look untidy. Consider interplanting herb beds with annual flowers to camouflage the trimmed plants.
- Herbs can provide important habitat for beneficial insects. Dill and fennel are two herbs beneficial insects particularly like.
- Perennial herbs that are not hardy in your region can be overwintered indoors, then brought back outdoors in the spring. For example, in USDA Zones 7 and colder, bring rosemary and lavender plants indoors in late fall. Maintain them in a cool, bright spot over the winter, and move them outdoors again in the spring. In USDA Zones 8 and warmer, rosemary and lavender can be left outdoors year-round.



Bee Balm (*Monarda didyma* 'Jacob Cline')

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