

Diggin' in the Dirt: Wet Springs and Apples

By Chip Bubl
Oregon State University
Extension Service - Columbia County

2017 OSU Extension Canning Classes

Come learn how to safely preserve foods from your garden this season! Participants will practice making and canning recipes in the kitchen, and will process a jar to take home. Space is limited, so call soon to reserve your spot! Pre-registration is required.

Where: Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District, 35285 Millard Road, St. Helens, OR 97051

When: all classes 9am-12pm

Friday, July 7th ~ Canning Fruits and Pie Fillings

Friday, July 21st ~ Pickling Vegetables and Fruits

Friday, August 4th ~ Pressure Canning Vegetables and Meats

Friday, August 18th ~ Canning Tomatoes and Salsa

Cost: \$25 per class or \$80 if you register for all 4 classes

Scholarships are also available

Registration: Call the OSU Extension Service: (503) 397-3462

Or register online at: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia>

OSU 4-H Adventure Evenings!

This summer we are starting something NEW, 4-H Adventure Evenings. They will be held on Friday evenings in a local park and will have some type of theme. Each evening will have an "Open Grill," you bring the meat/

main course for your family and a second dish to share with others. The first one will be June 16 at McCormick Park in St. Helens. Theme: Friday Nite Flights (Disc Golf). You are welcome to bring your own Disc or I will have some that you can borrow. The grill and food will be ready at 6 pm-ish and Disc Golf will begin about 7:15 pm, we will be done by 8:30 pm. Please bring your own dinner service and condiments for your food. The purpose is to have FUN with your family and to bring a friend to enjoy the 4-H Program. So, mark your calendar, invite a friend and plan to attend. Call (503) 397-3462 for more information.

Weed management and identification class at the Oregon State University Extension office in St. Helens

There will be a Weed Management and ID class held at the Oregon State University Extension office in St. Helens on Monday, June 19 from 6:30 until 8:00 pm. The class will focus on garden and landscape weeds and some of the techniques, tools, and herbicides that can help you manage them. Participants are encouraged to bring some weeds for identification. There will be ample time for questions. The class is free and open to the public. For more information, call the Extension office at (503) 397-3462.

Wet springs, missing honey bees, pollination, and apples

There was a bumper apple crop in 2016. This year looks less productive. Some apple varieties are alternate bear-

ing, which means that the bumper crop last year means almost no apples the next. That could have been modified by aggressive early fruit thinning (within 4 weeks of fruit set) last year. Other trees are not prone to alternate bearing and, given a normal spring, produce consistent crops from one year to the next. But this was not a normal spring. April was very cold and wet. In some ways, that was good because it slowed flowering. But when flowers started in early to mid-May, there were still plenty of cold, rainy days mixed in with some sunny ones. Honey bees were almost non-existent. Orchard mason bees were out but there were so many blossoms to choose from, all blooming at the same time. Many flowers weren't pollinated. It looks like the fruit crop will be light to at best medium this year in most locations.

Since apple trees were about three weeks late to bloom this year, it stands to reason that the codling moth (the insect that lays the egg that becomes the big "worm" in the apple) is also late to emerge. Normally, they show up about the middle of May. Their first eggs are projected to hatch around June 10. To reduce damage from this insect, sprays need to be applied within a week of that day and be continued over the course of the summer at 2-3 week intervals. Probably the most useful "organic" products available to the home gardener are those with "spinosad" as the active ingredient. These products are also reasonably effective on the codling moth and the apple maggot fly which starts to lay eggs

about the end of June. Always read and follow the instructions on any (organic or conventional) pesticide label.

Take excess produce to the food bank, senior centers, or community meals programs. Cash donations to buy food are also greatly appreciated.

The Extension Service offers its programs and materials equally to all people.

Free newsletter

The Oregon State University Extension office in Columbia County publishes a monthly newsletter on gardening and farming topics (called Country Living) written/edited by yours truly. All you need to do is ask for it and it will be mailed to you. Call (503) 397-3462 to be put on the list. Alternatively, you can sign up for email notification of when to find the latest edition on the web at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia/>.

Contact information for the Extension office

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Natural Path to Health: Allergies

By Dr. Carol McIntyre

So many of us suffer from seasonal allergies and this year I can include myself in that category. This is the first year I have experienced such intense sneezing, watery/itchy eyes, nose and even itchy ears and throat! Being that one gains understanding from experience, I wish this was one I had bypassed. In doing so however, I have discovered some very important aspects of symptom relief and healing to prevent further allergy attacks.

Acutely, one can use some of the 'go to' formulas out there such as Claritin, Benadryl etc; however, in doing so many people build a resistance to these over the counter drugs and once it stops working for them they search for another and swap between different formulas trying to find relief. There are nasal sprays, sublingual tablets that dissolve under the tongue and even lozenges that offer relief.

I have been using different homeopathic and

herbal combinations to help relieve my symptoms. Yes, I had one very bad day where my eyes were swollen and I couldn't stop sneezing, but then my relief came. A new formula containing Butterbur, Quercitin, nettles and other supportive herbs provided great relief for me. In addition I used essential oils in the diffuser at night such as Peppermint or the Breathe formula.

Also, I kept my window closed while sleeping. Usually I like to sleep with my window cracked for the fresh air... but upon waking at 3 am the other night with a terribly scratchy throat (and running to the honey jar for relief) I decided to change my mind. Sleeping with the window closed has prevented the pollen from wafting in and irritating me early in the morning. I have mentioned in previous articles that the pollen count is highest from 4 am - 10 am. This year the news has reported that the pollen count in certain areas is more than three times the 'severe' count. Protecting yourself from exposure if one way to reduce symptoms. There are special screens you can purchase as well to block

the pollen.

Everyone is different and will have something unique that works well for them. There is not one solution. Or is there? There is a known pathology of tissue degradation that leads to many different disorders/diseases - including allergies. When I say allergies I mean environmental and food allergies. Typically, a person will have a stressor in their life (on any level) which creates inflammation and begins the process of tissue break down or degradation. Once the tissues break down, barriers are broken and symptoms prevail. This could be in a reaction to food, stress or environmental. Preserving the barrier is the key to ultimate health.

Think about how many times people present with skin disorders, headaches, GI issues, etc. under the presence of stress or illness. When the immune system is compromised it can lead to many things. How do we strengthen the immune system and particularly strengthen our borders? Some great supports are aloe, MSM, herbals such as DGL, marshmallow and others that reinforce a strong barrier. If the barrier is strong then the immune system will react appropriately and the system will stay in balance. Without a strong barrier, the system will break down and symptoms will present.

Think about your every day decisions. The food you eat, the way you process stress, the supplements, foods and herbs/nutrients you consume. Alcohol, sugar and preservatives all inhibit our bodies' natural ability to repair naturally. Use these in moderation or minimally at best. Supplement with healthy fats, herbs and the other avenues suggested above.

If you have questions, ASK! I am willing to help and I have a sign up sheet outside the office for discussion groups. Education is key. Let's do this! Thanks for joining me. ~ Be Well.

Vernonia's Voice is published twice each month on the 1st and 3rd Thursday.
Look for our next issue out July 6.



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