

Advice given on drying process

Walnut, filberts harvest time hard to miss

Harvest time for walnuts and filberts is impossible to miss. When the nuts start falling from the tree they're ready to gather and dry.

"For best quality, walnuts and filberts should be harvested, dried and stored properly," says Ray McNeilan, Oregon State University extension home gardening agent.

When the walnut husk

can be easily separated from the nut, the walnut is mature. Walnuts are usually harvested after fall rains have cracked the husk to the point of letting the nut drop to the ground.

McNeilan advises gathering the walnuts as soon as possible after they have fallen from the tree. The kernels of nuts that remain on wet ground will become discolored rapidly

Walnuts that drop from the tree with the husk still intact should be left on the ground until the husks become loose. This usually takes a week or two. Then remove the husk by hand.

Like walnuts, filberts are harvested after they have dropped from the tree. Remove any husks that remain on the filberts before drying them.

Walnuts should be

started in the drying process within 24 hours after they have been harvested. This isn't necessary with filberts because they are less perishable than walnuts.

Both walnuts and filberts can be dried in the shell or they can be shelled and then dried. Shelled nuts require less heat and drying time. However, nuts generally store longer if

left in the shell.

Temperature and air circulation are both important in the drying process. Put the nuts on screen trays, in onion sacks or some other type of mesh container that allows free air passage.

Temperatures of 95 to 105 degrees Fahrenheit are recommended for drying nuts. Small quantities of nuts can be dried in the warm air stream above a

furnace or radiator, as long as the temperature doesn't go above 105 degrees F.

"Filberts take about two days to dry, walnuts take three to four days," says McNeilan.

Walnuts are dry when you can bend the divider between the nut halves and it breaks with a snap. If the divider is still pliable, the walnut isn't dry enough.

Filberts are firm at the

beginning of the drying process, then become spongy. As they approach dryness, they become firm again. The best way to determine when filberts have finished drying is to break one open.

Color is another indicator of dryness in filberts. The internal color gradually changes from white to a creamy color, starting at the outside. When the color

change reaches the center

of the kernel, the nut is dry. Nuts should be placed in a cool place in a closed container if left in the shell. Store walnuts in a closed container to protect them from the Indian-Meal moth, which can cause walnuts to become wormy in one season.

Shelled nuts can be put in plastic bags or fruit jars and stored in the freezer.

Understanding drug therapy minimizes risks

Older persons have unique medication needs

Oregon State University is spearheading the nation's effort to educate gerontologists on medication use and problems in the elderly.

The vast majority of the persons who have the greatest amount of contact with and responsibility for serving the elderly have no formal training in the health aspects of geriatric care, explain two OSU professors who are heading the training effort. They are William Simonson, associate professor of pharmacy, and Clara C. Pratt, director of the university's gerontology program and an assistant professor of home economics.

They have developed a special course to train those who work with the elderly about the unique medicine needs and problems of older persons. The project is supported by a \$60,000 grant from the U.S. Bureau of Health Manpower, part of the Public Health Service.

"It's estimated that up to 85 percent of the elderly (over 60) in the United States take at least one prescription drug regularly and that while the elderly presently account for only 11 percent of the population, they purchase approximately 25 to 30 percent of the prescription and non-prescription drugs sold in

the country," Simonson explained. It has been found, too, that about half of the elderly do not take their medicines (drugs) properly for various reasons.

"Undoubtedly, medications enable many elderly to stabilize or improve their health status and consequently the quality of their lives. Nevertheless, responsibilities and some risk are associated with this medication use," he emphasized.

In the health care process, many persons are involved in the area of social and health services for older adults, Simonson said. "Few have an adequate understanding of proper drug therapy and the particular physiological and psychological needs and responses of the elderly, however," he stressed.

"Inappropriate medicine taking may well have a detrimental effect on health and well-being," he said, "and adverse drug reactions and interactions (where two drugs being taken together produce undesirable side effects) are significantly more likely to occur among the elderly," Simonson stated.

"The increased dangers of medication use in the elderly occur because as a group they consume large numbers of medications and because age-related

changes in physiology (slowdown in liver and kidney functions, for example) affect the absorption, distribution, metabolism and excretion of many medications.

"While some physicians, pharmacists and nurses have the educational background that enables them to understand the complexities of drug therapy in the elderly, other health and social service professionals typically do not," said Simonson.

"It is vital for the comfort and welfare of the elderly that the people caring for them have some understanding of drug therapy and the varied ef-

fects of different medicines in this fast-growing segment of our population."

The big majority of the people working with the elderly such as physical therapists, nurses aides, health care administrators, recreation specialists, counselors, social workers, nutritionists and financial advisors are college educated, Simonson observed.

"But they're not taught about common medication concerns among the elderly," Simonson noted "OSU,

in fact, was the only U.S. university in 1980 that offered such a course for non-

medical students preparing to work with the elderly."

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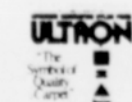
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