

Try eight unusual veggies today

David Coon is on a mission. Not exactly a Mission Impossible save-the-world mission; more of a quest. He's out to educate others about the potential for unusual vegetables in the garden and the kitchen.

Coon, an Oregon State University Extension Service master gardener, knew he was on to something when he'd be stopped in the grocery store by shoppers fascinated by the produce he was sending through the checkstand.

Try them out and see what you think.

Shishito pepper: A small, usually sweet pepper that runs around 2 inches. Perhaps one in 10 will surprise you with a little kick, but "never crying hot," Coon said. He turns the green pepper into snacks by throwing them in a hot pan with some oil for a few seconds and then dresses them with a dash of kosher salt. The plant originally came from the Americas and was one of the first new world peppers to make it around the world, first gathered by Europeans, then passed along to the Far East.

Kohlrabi: Coon's research shows kohlrabi originating in central Asia and now pop-



KYM POKORNY
Your Garden

ping up occasionally on grocery shelves. It looks like a bulb about the size of a baseball and tastes like a cross between cabbage and broccoli. Use it raw, sautéed, steamed, roasted or stuffed.

Broccoli rabe or rapini: Related to turnips, rapini arrived in the U.S. in 1927 from Italy. It looks a little like mustard with tiny broccoli heads and features a pleasantly peppery taste. Coon has been known to sauté, braise, stir-fry and steam it, but advises not eating it raw.

Mache — also known as lamb's lettuce (not lamb's quarters), corn salad and field salad: This plant — related to broccoli but with small heads — has been cultivated in temperate Europe since Neolithic times, according to Coon. It's easy to grow and tastes like sweet, nutty lettuce with no bitterness. Leaves are used in salads.

Spigarello: Common in southern Italy, spigarello is related to broccoli. Eat the small heads, stems and



FLICKR

Shishito peppers are small and usually sweet.

curly leaves in salads, steam, sauté or throw in soup. The flavor, Coon says, is sweet and grassy, a mix of kale and broccoli.

Sorrel (also called spinach dock or narrow-leaved dock): Native to Europe, western Asia and north Africa, sorrel has leaves used raw in salads or in sauces and soups. The flavor is tart and lemony with a crunch when raw. Coon said it makes a great pesto and pairs well with eggs, cream and pasta.

Scarlet runner bean: A vining bean with beautiful, red flowers that call out to hummingbirds. Comes from Central America and is widely grown in England. Try these

mild beans raw, steamed, sautéed or as a dry bean.

Cardoon: This Mediterranean native is one of Coon's favorites, not only because of the mellow taste similar to artichoke, but also for the dramatic statement its big, silvery leaves make as an ornamental plant. Instead of eating the head and heart like artichokes, cook and serve the stems. Before using, Coon suggests peeling off the ridges on the stem, which contain strings like celery, and blanching them to remove some bitterness and to keep their pretty green color. Eat raw, sautéed, steamed, boiled or in soups and stews.

MI TOWN

As the damp and soggy month of April trudges on, we're all hoping that the arrival of Miss May will bring sunshine and flowers and our long awaited — and overdue — arrival of springtime. The tulips and daffodils have been beaten into submission by the rain, the blossoms from the trees have been blown onto lawns, sidewalks and driveways much to our collective disappointment. Sightings of azalea and rhododendron blooms and lilac buds all over MI Town give us hope and optimism.

Celebrate Arbor Day at the Monmouth library today at 3:30 p.m., where there will be a fun and interesting program about trees, plus an opportunity to bring home a seedling to plant in your



PATTY TAYLOR DUTCHER
Columnist

own yard — or in a container near a sunny window in your house or apartment. One seedling per family, please.

A sure remedy to the dreary rainy days is hearing happy children sharing laughter, energy, curiosity and a love for learning. Mark your calendars for Saturday, when the Independence library celebrates El Dia de los Ninos (Children's Day) and El Dia de los Libros (Book Day). The fun begins at 3:30 p.m. Everyone is invited to celebrate and dis-

cover all the good and interesting programs available for children and adults right in our own community.

Speaking of books and libraries, another sure sign of springtime is the Annual Spring Book Sale at the Monmouth library on May 5 and 6. If you haven't gotten around to donating those books you finished — or those gifted ones you don't intend to read anyway — please drop them off this weekend so the Friends of the Library volunteers can add them to the items for sale. May 5 from noon until 2 p.m., is the friends' members only sale. The sale is open to the public from 2 until 8 p.m. that day. Saturday sale hours are from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.

The Monmouth Garden Club spring plant sale is being held May 5 right outside the library meeting room. This is a great opportunity to get some great sale prices on plants — plus learn all about plants and trees from those who have excellent gardening knowledge and expertise.

At press time, the garden beds at our house are still too wet for planting, but the little seedlings are growing in the cardboard containers on the back deck. The Monmouth library has veggie and flower seeds available in the seed lending library, at no cost. If you're looking for plant starts, check the farmers' markets in Independence on Saturday. If we all wish and wish for sunshine, perhaps it will happen.

PEDEE NEWS

Pedee Church escaped rain once again on Easter's sunrise service at Womer Cemetery, even though the sun was, as usual, not in evidence through the clouds. None of the 35 people in attendance were bothered by that, though, as all celebrated the risen Christ before going down to eat breakfast, organized by Shawn Brotherton and cooked by the men in the church.

This Easter Sunday's message at Pedee Church, was in the form of a skit based on Luke 7:36-50, but set in today's time. The event described in the New Testament was about a sinful woman, played by Heidi Russell, who was so thankful to Jesus that she washed his feet with a jar of expensive perfume, wafting fragrance throughout the church.



ARLENE KOVASH
Columnist

Nicely dressed Philip North portrayed Simon the Pharisee, a very proper Jewish leader; Adam Coe represented Jesus in a white hoodie sweatshirt (and looked just like him); and Daniel Russell was a trendy pastor in jeans with sequined crosses on his back pockets, and who left in a huff when Jesus declared the woman's sins forgiven.

How was this the Easter message? Well, it's easy to be proper on Easter Sunday and be thankful that Jesus paid the price for the sins of all those other really sinful

people. But the difference between Simon the Pharisee and the woman wasn't how sinful they were, it was how honest they were with Jesus about their sin. Jesus isn't afraid of our sin, but defeated it, so we all have a lot to be thankful for in Jesus' resurrection.

Easter is also a great time to get together with friends and family in this community. Dorothy McBeth was happy to be able to go to son Darrel and Shirley's house for dinner and be with them and the rest of the family. Her son, Sam, and Terry came over and grandson, Barry, and wife, Jennifer, were there with Jennifer's daughter, Heather, and friend, Philip, as well as Shirley's mother, Elizabeth Stout.

Bill and Linda Chertudi's

son, John, and wife, Faith, came down from Vancouver on Saturday night and then, on Sunday, were joined by their daughter, Lisa, and Delmer Sisson, with son, Jordan, and daughter, Michelle Unger, and her family: husband, Aaron, and kids, Nick, Lexy, Ethan, and Emma.

There were similar gatherings in other Pedee homes and, then there were several who just enjoyed having the time to themselves, as Don and Frances Brostrom and new Pedee Women's Club member, Kathy Elson, did.

There will be a baby shower for Allison Barnhart at 2 p.m. on Sunday at the Kings Valley Community Center. Talk to Heidi Russell or Diana Barnhart for details.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

These Polk County groups would welcome individuals who have time or expertise to volunteer. Organizations that would like to be added to this list should call 503-623-2373 or email IOnews@polkio.com.

- AARP Foundation Tax-Aide — 503-930-7636
- After DARC — 503-623-9501
- American Cancer Society Road to Recovery — 1-800-227-2345
- Arc of Polk County — 541-223-3261
- Ash Creek Arts Center — 971-599-3301
- Central School District — 503-838-0030
- City of Dallas — 503-831-3502
- City of Independence — 503-838-1212
- City of Monmouth — 503-751-0145
- Crime Victims Assistance Program — 503-623-9268
- Dallas Area Chamber of Commerce — 503-623-2564
- Dallas Fire Department — 503-831-3532
- Dallas Food Bank — 503-623-3578
- Dallas Kids, Inc. — 503-623-6419
- Dallas Police Department — 503-831-3582
- Dallas Public Library — 503-623-2633
- Dallas Retirement Village — 503-623-5581
- Dallas School District — 503-623-5594
- Delbert Hunter Arboretum — 503-623-7359
- Girl Scouts of Southwest Washington and Oregon — 1-800-338-5248
- Ella Curran Food Bank — 503-838-1276
- Falls City Arts Center — 503-559-6291
- Falls City School District — 503-787-3531
- Family Building Blocks — 503-566-2132, ext. 308.
- H-2-O — 503-831-4736
- HART (Horses Adaptive Riding and Therapy) — 971-301-4278
- HandsOn Mid-Willamette Valley — 503-363-1651
- Heron Pointe Assisted Living — 503-838-6850
- Independence Health and Rehabilitation — 503-838-0001
- Independence Public Library — 503-838-1811
- Kings Valley Charter School — 541-929-2134
- Luckiamute Watershed Council — 503-837-0237
- Luckiamute Valley Charter School — 503-623-4837
- Meals on Wheels — 503-838-2084
- Monmouth-Independence Chamber of Commerce — 503-838-4268
- Monmouth-Independence YMCA — 503-838-4042
- Monmouth Public Library — 503-838-1932
- Northwest Human Services — 503-588-5828
- Oregon Child Development Coalition — 503-838-2745
- OSU Extension Service - Polk County — 503-623-8395
- Perrydale School District — 503-623-2040
- Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Polk County Inc. — 503-623-8473
- Polk Community Development Corporation — 503-831-3173
- Polk County Community Emergency Response Team — 503-623-9396
- Polk County Museum — 503-623-6251
- Polk County Public Health — 503-623-8175
- Polk County Resource Center — 503-623-8429
- Polk Soil and Water Conservation District — 503-623-9680
- Relief Nursery Classroom — 503-566-2132
- SABLE House — 503-623-6703
- SALT (Senior and law enforcement together) — 503-851-9366
- Salvation Army — 503-798-4783
- SMART (Start Making A Reader Today) — 503-391-8423
- Salem Health West Valley Hospital — 503-623-8301
- Victim Assistance Program-Polk Co. District Attorney's Office 503-623-9268 x1444
- Willamette Valley Hospice — 503-588-3600
- WIMPEG Community Access Television — 503-837-0163

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