



BETWEEN
THE ROWS

WENDY SCHMIDT

Free plants: Augment your place by learning to propagate

When building a landscape it is nice to know how to make more plants by propagation. Doing your own propagation gives you more plants using a little time and energy instead of a large amount of the gardening budget for just a few plants. I call them free plants, but they're not, because time and some knowledge goes into it and usually you have to wait awhile for the plants to grow.

Grafting takes a bit of care and skill, but it can give you exact copies of plants (clones).

To graft, you must line up the cambium layers of both plants precisely. To be successful you need to know how to identify the cambium (inner bark) layer. You need to stabilize the graft until it begins new growth and supports itself.

Grafting is most effective with like kinds of plants. Both should either be stone fruits, or apples, or grapes or roses. Both should also be either evergreen or deciduous.

Root division is when you dig up a clump of perennials and plant a small part of it back and either share or compost the rest the clump you dug. Usually all that is needed is to drive a shovel vertically through the clump trying not to disturb or cut too many roots.

Growing from seed is familiar to most people. Some seeds need light to germinate, others must have darkness. Potting mix with extra perlite helps seeds get a good start, as the new roots need oxygen as well as water.

With root cuttings, dig up the donor plant, remove several roots which you cut into short pieces. Plant the pieces vertically in damp soil, and shortly a new plant will form. This works well for oriental poppies.

Cuttings can be taken and rooted either in water or soil. Cuttings tend to not make roots and flowers at the same time, so pick off the flower so that roots will form more readily.

If you have garden questions or comments please write to greengardencolumn@yahoo.com. Thanks for reading!



Mike Siegel/The Seattle Times-TNS

Lefse is a traditional Norwegian food, similar to a potato pancake.

A TASTE OF NORWAY

Jackie Varriano
The Seattle Times

Lefse. It's a paper-thin flatbread, made from potatoes and cooked on a griddle, flipped with a long, narrow wooden stick, and eaten slathered with butter, sugar and sometimes cinnamon. If you're of Norwegian heritage, you've most likely eaten it at Thanksgiving or Christmas for as long as you can remember.

Growing up, when celebrating Christmas with my dad's side of the family, lefse (pronounced "lef-suh") was an outlier on the table, sitting on a cut crystal platter among bowls of meatballs, cavatelli, cheese-filled ravioli and platters of braciola. It was the one thing my Grandma Jean (the lone Norwegian amid her Italian husband and their seven children) had from her side of the family.

It was never the star of the show, and to be fair, how could a bland potato pancake shine when set up against ravioli and braciola? Still, I always looked forward to lefse, and as an adult I asked my grandma to teach me how to turn what is essentially cold mashed potatoes into a tissue-thin vessel for copious amounts of salty butter.

The recipe itself is simple: riced potatoes mixed when hot with cream and butter, chilled and mixed with flour. However, to create the mottled sheets, you need a griddle, a lot of flour or a pastry cloth — a corrugated rolling pin is optional, but any rolling pin must be covered with a pastry sock — and

that long, flat lefse stick to transfer the raw lefse to the hot griddle and to flip them while cooking.

It took me a long time and many attempts to achieve my Grandma Jean's level of thinness, as making lefse truly is a labor of love. After she died in the winter of 2019, I found myself in possession of her original Bethany Heritage Grill, her corrugated rolling pin, her pastry sock, and the realization that I could never again call her for a lesson or a conversation on how she first came to making lefse. Only then did I fully understand that, like many family recipes, lefse is so much more than potatoes.

Daytona Strong, author of the cookbook "Modern Scandinavian Baking" and the host of the forthcoming podcast Kitchen Counter Conversations, says lefse ranks "near the top of all Scandinavian foods because of the associations and memories I have with it."

"To me it represents one of the ways my family showed love and hospitality to everyone who received a package of lefse that had been prepared with love," Strong says.

While there are many kinds of flatbread popular in Norway, there are two main types of lefse made in the U.S.: hardanger lefse, which is a hard, crackerlike lefse that must be softened with water before eating, and the soft potato lefse. The potato is more common than the hardanger variety in much of the United States.

Seattle resident Charles Schrag has been making potato lefse since he was a kid, and for him, lefse is about tradition.

"Honestly, it's like a five out of 10 for me on taste," he says, with a laugh.

Schrag grew up in Freeman, South Dakota, a small, predominantly Mennonite community in the southeastern part of the state. Lefse came to be part of his family's holiday traditions by way of his Danish maternal grandmother who lived in northern Minnesota.

"My mom's side of the family would always get together for Thanksgiving and we would set up in the kitchen, mixing the dough the night before and then make an assembly line the next morning to make a huge pile of lefse," Schrag says.

His grandma Katie Baird's recipe calls for a box of potato flakes (a well-known shortcut that is said to provide consistent, good results) and evaporated milk.

"My grandmother's cryptic instructions were that you had to cool it outside (overnight), not in the fridge. I think it was a way to save fridge space, but it was tradition," Schrag says.

Making lefse together is a "good way to welcome new family members," Schrag says. "It's just an accessible recipe and they feel empowered and welcome really quick."

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Multiple grocers operated in McKennon Building

By Ginny Mammen

Coming east on Adams Avenue we find the building at 1110 Adams which has the historic name of Pattison Grocery on the National Register of Historic Places.

According to that record it was constructed in 1892 by J. D. McKennon. The Sanborn Map of 1893 indicates a grocery store located at this location which is verified as McKennon's Grocery in both the 1893 and 1903 city directories. J. D. did not just run a grocery. He was a farmer who produced the beef and some of the produce he sold, an enterprising businessman and an ambassador for Union County.

In 1898 it was reported that he had 15 carloads of potatoes ready for shipping on a train to Arkansas. And he provided an ice wagon for delivery to various homes and businesses. In a 1901 advertisement he stated, "Remember we started out with a promise not to be undersold. We will stay with it if we go broke." J. D. didn't go broke, but he did leave the grocery and went onto new endeavors.

Between 1904 and 1911 there



Larry Fry Collection

The McKennon Building at right.

were new owners of the grocery at 1110 Adams — the Pattison brothers, Harry and Robert. This was truly a quality grocery with lots of fresh fruits, vegetables and meat. It also included a bakery which advertised "Raisin Bread made with California Sun Maid Raisins fresh every morning at Patterson Bros. Grocery. It contains plenty of those luscious nuggets of energy. Cost 10 cents a loaf."

Harry and Robert were in the grocery business until Dec. 1, 1930 when they sold the store to G. H. Barnhart of Starbuck, Washington.

One grocery is about the same as any other, but the people who were involved with the first two stores that operated in 1110 Adams were quite different.

J. D. (James Dallas) McKennon was born in Arkansas in June of 1858 to William, a farmer, and Loucreta McKennon. His first wife, Anna, died in 1880 and he remarried in 1885 to Lewie Rector. In mid 1887 J. D. was elected as Marshall of Alma, Arkansas. Sometime in the late 1880s the young couple moved west.

J. D. was pretty well established in La Grande early in the 1890s. The January Weekly Oregon Statesman (Salem) reported in January 1892 that he was one of the three officers of the chamber of commerce of La Grande filing Articles of Incorporation for the chamber.

Then, in March of 1892 it was reported that he was elected city councilman for the third ward of La

Grande. In July 1896 he went to the Democratic Convention in Chicago to "assist in the nomination" of William Jennings Bryan for president. It was reported by The Dalles Daily Chronicle that while in Chicago he also "will look after the shipment (carload of berries sent from La Grande) when it arrives in Chicago and will see that the berries go at the best market price."

After selling the grocery in the early 1900s J. D. remained active buying and selling land and had a hand in the building of the sugar factory. James Dallas McKennon died in 1922. A dear friend of our family, his grandson Dallas McKennon, whose voice was the voice of many Disney characters as well as the "Old Timer" on the Fibber McGee radio show, was a visitor to La Grande in the 1970s and '80s, each year leading a children's parade.

The Pattisons came to La Grande from England in the late 1880s — the widow Mary Pattison and three of her nine children, Robert, Harry and Herbert. Whether they all came at the same time cannot be established. In 1900 Herbert, at

age 21 and the youngest of the boys, was living in a boarding house on Depot Street and was working as a cooper. Robert, age 33, was married and working as a clerk. There are no records for Harry until 1910 which shows him, age 34, as a wage earner in a grocery store. At that time he was single and his mother was living with him. Mary was a corsetiere working out of her home.

In the early 1900s Harry and Robert teamed up and took over McKennon's Grocery. Herbert also became a grocer, but whether he ever worked with his brothers we don't know. In around 1913 he took a break from La Grande and moved to Pennsylvania to work in the grocery business there. He came back in mid 1915 saying "Business is slow in the east."

Over the years he worked for at least four grocers in La Grande, the Snodgrass Grocery, Staples Grocery, Ormond's Grocery and the Mammoth Grocery where he was listed as one of the proprietors. All of the Pattisons except Robert remained in La Grande after retirement.

Keep looking up! Enjoy!