



Flagstaff's Community Supported Wild Foraging Newsletter

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www.environment.nau.edu/food/cswf

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Summer is over and the fall harvest has begun. We have been working with the Becky and Dana from the Henry Cordes Ranch near Cordes Junction. They, like many rural Arizonans, have a deep history with the land and foraging. At the same time much of their family knowledge has been lost. They have been telling us stories of the land and in turn we have been sharing knowledge of useful plants in their area. This is just one of the examples of how this project has brought people together. Since the last delivery we have also sold the New Jersey Pizza Company, the La Posada Turquoise Room and Buzz's Yerba Mate Bar prickly pear fruit. Buzz's has prickly pear juice for sale and NJPC has prickly pear lemonade and sorbet!!! Thank you to Alisha, Becky and Matt for their collecting help.



Please fill out your survey and let us know how we are doing. It will help us immensely. You can send it to us or bring it to the last delivery. Patty West, Northern Arizona University, P.O. Box 5765, Flagstaff, Arizona 86011.

Future events: Sustainable Foods Fair for the Four Corners Networking - Marketplace - Tribute: Come and volunteer to talk about wild foraging with others. The Four Corners Sustainable Food Event, October 18th at La Posada in Winslow, Arizona. Put this great event on your calendar to learn more about sustainable practices, especially food in this area. Vendors from all over the four corners will be there for you to learn more about. Find out more about the event on the CSE website. Get your tickets to the local food dinner online.
<http://www.environment.nau.edu>.

Upcoming last delivery and Potluck October 16, 2003: Mesquite flour, apples, crabapples, and more exciting surprises (even for us). We will be out seeking forageable foods! We will email or call you with details about the potluck.

Wild foods in this week's delivery:

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| Oregon Grape berries (<i>Berberis</i> sp.) | Slippery Jack mushrooms (<i>Suillus luteus</i>) |
| Prickly pear fruit (<i>Opuntia</i> spp.) | Mallow (<i>Malva neglecta</i>) |
| Rosehips (<i>Rosa woodsii</i>) | High Bush Cranberry (<i>Viburnum</i> sp.) |
| Lemon-scented pectis (<i>Pectis angustifolia</i>) | |

RECIPES

Oregon Grape Berries

Before popping these guys into your mouth you may want to add some sugar. The berries are used in similar ways as the Elderberries in your last delivery. Most of the recipes I can find are for Oregon Grape wine and jam. You can also make a drink by mashing them up, adding some sugar and water and a little milk if you like and drinking this juice. If you can come up with some other recipes that you like then let us know!

Oregon Grape is a very useful plant for us humans. You will see some species of *Berberis* in landscaping and others in the wild. We picked the ornamental variety for you since the berries were huge and abundant but you can eat the wild variety as well. The berries, roots and bark have been used for millennia as a food, drink, medicine and dye. The roots and bark dye bright yellow and are a powerful antiseptic used internally and externally. They make a strong medicine so be careful if venturing into this plant for medicinal purposes. The berries have been used as a tonic for illnesses. Freeze them if you are not using them right away.

Oregon Grape Jelly

Water, Grapes, Sugar

Wash grapes and barely cover with water. Let simmer until tender.

Mash.

Pour through jelly bag (old nylons works great), pressing all the juice out.

Measure.

Use 1 Cup sugar to 1 Cup juice (or test for pectin). Bring juice to boil

for 5 minutes, then add the sugar and boil rapidly to jelly stage.

(Boil 3

to 4 cups juice at one time.) Seal in hot sterile jars.

Oregon Grape and Apple Jelly

Grapes, Water, Green apples or crabapples, quartered, Sugar.

Prepare same as above. Prepare apples by washing, quartering, covering with water and simmering until tender. Strain. Take 2 cups of

each juice, combine and add 3 cups sugar. Boil rapidly to jelly stage.

Seal in hot jars.

Mallow

You have seen this plant before (only fresh) in one of our first deliveries. I have never been very fond of eating this plant fresh. It tends to be bland and chewy. But, I have a renewed interest in it dried thanks to Katrina Blair up in Durango. Once a week she serves an 100% raw and locally harvested lunch. She uses many wild foods in her dishes. Being raw, she has gotten creative with dried foods. She makes crackers from blending nuts and seeds with water and then drying them. She dries wild greens and adds them to energy bars along with wild berries and chokecherries. I was not able to track down her nettle and mallow bar recipe but I think that we can get creative and come up with our own. The idea is to sprinkle these nutritious and locally abundant weeds into our foods for a little green boost. They will re-hydrate with moisture and do not need to be cooked. They will stay vital for up to a year dried. If you really want her nettle and mallow bar recipe then come to the Sustainable foods from the Four Corners event in Winslow on October 18. She will be there.

Prickly Pear Fruit

One last delivery of tunas to get you through the winter. These guys are really RIPE so if you don't use them right away, put them in the freezer. Cactus fruits have been (and still are) an important food supplement for people here in the American southwest for centuries (Desert Plants, winter 1981-82). The fresh fruits are excellent sources of vitamin C and potassium, and are said to balance blood sugars and possibly prevent diabetes.

Prickly pear juice

METHOD I: Place fruits in a colander or strainer and rinse the desert dirt off. Use tongs to load a batch into your blender. Rinse the colander/strainer, line it with cheesecloth and place it over a large bowl. Process quickly until liquefied and then pour the liquid mixture into the colander that has been lined with cheesecloth. This will strain out all of the seeds and stickers and you will have a prickly pear juice that can be used or frozen for drinks, sauces, syrups, jellies, etc. Toss the pulp in your compost pile.

METHOD II: *(from Faye Libbey)*

Pick the fruit off of the plant as described in Method I. Rinse and use tongs to load into plastic bags. Freeze the bags of fruit for at least a couple of days. Remove from freezer and pour the fruit into a strainer or colander as described above. The freezing will have softened the fruit and when thawed the juice will easily flow to be strained for your use.

<http://www.tucsoncactus.org/>

METHOD III: This method makes a thicker juice, or syrup. The way I process the tunas (prickly pear fruit) is to pour them into a pot (so as to not touch the little irritating spines), dirt and all with a little bit of water--like you were making apple sauce. Boil them down until tender then mash them with a potato or refried bean masher then strain through cheesecloth into a bowl. Squish all the juicy bits out of the pulp. Compost the pulp. You can boil the juice down if you want prickly

pear syrup and can add sugar here if you want it a bit sweeter. This method is good if you want to make prickly pear margaritas since you will have a thicker sweeter juice.

METHOD IV: Rinse fruit and put through a juicer, then strain and use for syrups, jellies, or salsa.

Prickly Pear Salsa

You can add prickly pear juice to any salsa recipe, but here is one you can try and use fresh or can!

3 cups chopped tomatoes

1 cup mixed peppers (some hot and some sweet)

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup prickly pear juice

3 cloves of garlic (chopped)

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped onion

3 Tbsp Vinegar (apple cider, balsamic, or any kind that you like)

chopped cilantro to taste

dash of salt

dash of pepper

Honey to taste (mix honey with a little hot water to melt it before adding)

Mix together, put on ships and eat!!!

If you are going to can it you can cook it first or cook jars after they have been filled. There are some great canning books that you can get at your local library. One is called "Putting Food By."

Slippery Jack Mushrooms

Slippery Jacks are in the family *Boletaceae*, related to many edibles that you may have tried before. This "slippery jack", so named because of its slimy cap. The genus *Suillus* have the classic tube-like spongy pores (instead of gills like many mushrooms) and have slippery caps. They were abundant in our forests during our month of late summer rains. Take some caution with any mushrooms since people respond differently to every species. **TASTE A SMALL AMOUNT AT A TIME AT FIRST AND ALWAYS COOK MUSHROOMS.** I would go a step further with Slippery Jacks and **peel the slippery coating off** of the cap after it has been soaked. Some people do not digest this part of the mushroom very well. The tops are easy to identify since they will be

opposite the spongy pores and easy to peel off. There are some great websites including these mushrooms if you want to do a little living room research.

These mushrooms are yummy just rehydrated in water then sautéed in olive oil with salt and pepper. Or try this fall recipe:

Mushroom Stuffing

Ingredients: $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ cup dried Slippery Jack mushrooms; $\frac{1}{3}$ cup wine*; 2 oz. cream cheese; $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. lemon pepper; $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. oregano; $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. tarragon; $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. basil; $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. garlic powder; bread crumbs.

Place dried crushed mushrooms into a cereal bowl and add $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of your favorite wine*. Stir the mixture and let sit for 5 minutes so that the mushrooms rehydrate. Peel the top layer off of the cap. Mince mushrooms.

Add 2 oz. of cream cheese to the mixture and stir thoroughly until the cream cheese is completely broken down and no chunks remain.

Add lemon pepper, oregano, tarragon, basil, and garlic to the mixture and stir thoroughly.

Add a small amount, perhaps $\frac{1}{4}$ cup, of breadcrumbs to the mixture and stir thoroughly. If the mixture has not reached a thick, pasty consistency, add a bit more breadcrumbs and repeat process. If, however, the consistency is a little too thick, simply add a dash of wine and stir. The important thing is to make the stuffing have the consistency of a thick sandwich spread.

Cover bowl and refrigerate. I recommend letting the stuffing sit overnight, but an hour or two in the refrigerator will do in a pinch.

Makes approximately 1 cup of stuffing. Use this recipe to stuff winter squash, steaks, pork chops, fowl, fish, wild game, or mushrooms.

*A note on wine: Choose your wine according to your dish. If you are stuffing steaks or wild game, red wine is usually your best bet. I suggest using a dry red such as cabernet sauvignon or zinfandel. If you are stuffing fish or fowl, I suggest a dry white such as Sauvignon Blanc or Chardonnay. For pork chops or mushrooms, use whichever wine you prefer.

Rose Hips

Rose hips are one of those foods that come out just at the right time—when colds are going around and our bodies are trying to deal with the change of season. I challenge you to find a food higher in vitamin C and bioflavanoids. One of you will probably come up with one but good luck finding another source of bioflavanoids that isn't bitter like the inside of a grapefruit peel. At \$25 a pound I urge you to pick your own when your supply runs out. You can harvest any variety but some people spray their roses with scary chemicals so inquire before raiding your neighbors' ornamentals. We have harvested a common native unsprayed species for you.

Rose hips are not just for making tea. At one time you could find recipes for them as a vegetable, eaten with a little butter, salt and pepper or adding them to soups or stews. I recommend making a strong tea or decoction by simmering the hips in a covered kettle or pot for ten minutes. The tea will be too weak to taste if not simmered. DON'T DISCARD YOUR HIPS—instead eat them as a vegetable or throw them into your dinner somehow. The tea is also nice with a little wild mint.

High Bush Cranberry

Actually not a cranberry at all, this northern species is more related to Elderberries than the cranberries we eat on turkey sandwiches post Thanksgiving. They have the tartness of cranberries and can be used interchangeably for flavor. High Bush Cranberries have a small flat pit in the middle so they need to go through a strainer before going into other foods.

Cran-apple cider

Simmer all of your berries (a little over a half pound) with 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups water for 3 minutes. Put through a strainer. Add apple cider to taste. For hot cider, place juices into a pot with a cinnamon stick and a couple cloves. Simmer for 10 minutes. Enjoy!

Lemon-scented Pectis (*Pectis angustifolia*)

This beautifully fragrant herb is rare in this area and only grows at medium elevations in sandy soils when rains come at just the right time, which (lucky for us) they did this year. The herb can be used in many ways: sprinkle on chicken while its cooking, throw it into a stew, add it to your favorite tea for a lemony treat, add it to a cornbread or other bread recipe for zest.

This plant has been used by the Hopi, the Zuni and the Havasupai's for hundreds of years.

Pumpkin Bread Recipe

3 cups Sugar

4 eggs

2 cups pumpkin or butternut squash (cooked)

1 cup oil or butter

1 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup whole wheat flour

2 cups unbleached white flour

2 tsp Baking soda

2 tsp Baking powder

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp Salt

1 tsp Cinnamon

1 tsp pectis (dried and crushed)

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp lemon zest

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp powdered ginger

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup water

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup Oregon grape berries (optional)

Mix sugar, eggs, pumpkin, and oil. Mix dry ingredients in a separate bowl. Mix dry ingredients slowly into the wet mixture. Mix in berries at the end. Bake in greased and floured loaf pans at 350 degrees for one to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours.