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HERB SEEDS

from

(THE) LITTLE HOUSE

MARGARET NORTON
 146 LEONARD STREET
 ANNISQUAM, MASSACHUSETTS

SPRING - 1940



SEED COLLECTIONS50 Each

Each collection contains 6 separate packets of seeds, and all four of the collections are different. Since they are put up in advance no changes can be made in the selection. These collections are attractively packaged, and make interesting and welcome gifts.

SALAD HERB GARDEN
KITCHEN HERB GARDEN
SWEET HERB GARDEN
SURPRISE HERB GARDEN

What to do with Herbs

Uses . . .

It would be impossible to list all the uses of herbs in this small space. The culinary herbs may be used singly or in endless happy combinations, to enhance, not dominate the dish they season. The fragrant, or aromatic herbs are their own excuse for being; they may be dried for Pot-Pourri and sachets, picked for nosegays, or simply enjoyed for their sweetness as they grow.

Cultivation . . .

With a few exceptions herbs will thrive in rather poor soil and demand very little care. The annuals are happy with plenty of sun and not too much water, while the perennials need the same treatment as those in the flower garden; they should be divided every two or three years and cut back often. Most herbs like a little lime now and then, but many authorities claim that too much feeding will make the plants less aromatic. To make better drainage in the herb garden a generous addition of coal ashes to the soil will be helpful.

Harvesting . . .

Herbs should be harvested when their growth is at its height. In general the leaf crops should be cut just before the plant begins to set buds; blossoms should be gathered just as they open, while seeds should be collected just before they are ripe enough to fall.

It is best to harvest the crop on a warm, dry day, choosing only the best leaves and flowers. Some herbs will yield two or three crops, according to the season.

Lavender should be cut when the first bud is open, for this is when the flower spike contains the maximum amount of oil.

Drying . . .

The simplest method of drying small quantities of herbs is to tie them in bunches, which may be hung in a warm dry room, not in the sun, but with a good circulation of air. In general, the quicker the leaves can be dried, the better their color and flavor. Parsley, Chervil and Tarragon are best hung for 2 to 3 days and then finished in the drying oven. Too hot an oven gives the leaves a queer baked taste, and spoils the color. After the leaves are dry and brittle, they should be crushed lightly with a rolling pin; the stems may then be easily removed and the finished product stored in an air tight can or jar.

Paper bags absorb moisture from the air and should not be used for storing herbs, since any dampness destroys the flavor very quickly.

Flowers and seeds should be spread out on trays or papers in a shady place until thoroughly dry, then stored in air-tight containers.

Most herbs, properly cured and stored, will keep their flavor for at least a year, and many of them will last much longer than that.

Herb Seeds Each Packet .10

ANGELICA—*Angelica archangelica* (Perennial until it sets seed - 5 ft.) The stems are candied to use in cake decorations, while the seeds are used for flavoring. The plant makes a handsome background for other herbs.

ANISE—*Pimpinella anisum* (Annual - 12 in.) The seeds of this plant are used medicinally and for flavoring.

BALM—*Melissa officinalis* (Perennial - 2½ ft.) The leaves have a delicious lemon flavor and scent. They may be used in cold drinks, or dried to make tea. The plant is attractive, and seeds itself freely.

BASIL—*Ocimum basilicum*, Sweet Green
Ocimum basilicum, Sweet Purple
Ocimum basilicum, Bush Green
(Annual - 8 in. - 18 in.) The leaves of this plant have a flavor reminiscent of clove, and are used especially with tomato dishes, and to make basil vinegar. Sweet basil is best for drying, while the Bush Basil is more delicate for green use.

BORAGE—*Borago officinalis* (Annual - 2 ft.) The leaves are used as a pot-herb and make a delicious cream soup, while the blue star flowers may be candied. It is a handsome plant, easily grown.

BURNET—*Poterium sanguisorba* (Perennial - 8 in.) The tender central leaves are used in salads and cold drinks.

CAMOMILE—*Anthemis nobilis* (Perennial - 8 in.) The dried flowers are used to make a tonic tea, and a hair rinse, while the plants, if kept cut, will make a very satisfactory lawn cover which is not only aromatic, but will withstand drought and poor soil conditions.

CARAWAY—*Carum carvi* (Biennial - 2 ft.) The most important parts of this plant are the seeds which are used for flavoring, and the root which may be eaten as a vegetable. It self-sows readily.

- CATNIP**—*Nepeta cataria* (Perennial - 12 in.) The leaves of this plant are not only beloved by cats, but are also made into a soothing tea.
- CHERVIL**—*Anthriscus cerefolium* (Annual - 8 in.) The leaves of this delightful anise-flavored plant may be used green or dried, as a garnish, or in salads and fines herbes. It likes partial shade.
- CHIVES**—*Allium schoenoprasum* (Perennial - 12 in.) The leaves are used green in many dishes. They have all the virtues but none of the vices of onion.
- CLARY**—*Salvia sclarea* (Biennial - 3 ft.) This is a handsome plant of the sage family, with rather disagreeably aromatic leaves which are used for flavoring. The seeds were formerly used in the treatment of diseases of the eye. The plant self-sows readily.
- CORIANDER**—*Coriandrum sativum* (Annual - 12 in.) The seeds of this attractive plant are used for flavoring, and bees love the flowers. It will self-sow .
- CORNFLOWER**—*Centaurea cyansus* (Annual - 2 ft.) The blue flowers of the Batchelor's Button are very attractive in a Pot-Pourri mixture. They should be gathered when they first open.
- GARDEN CRESS**—*Lepidium sativum* (Annual - 8 in.) The leaves and seeds are used in salads for their peppery flavor. Several sowings may be made in a season, as the plant matures very quickly.
- CUMIN**—*Cuminum cyminum* (Annual - 1 ft.) The seeds are used to flavor cheese and bread, and are one of the many ingredients of curry powder.
- DILL**—*Anethum graveolens* (Annual - 3 ft.) The leaves, flowers and seeds are used as condiments, while an oil is distilled from the whole plant for perfumes. Self-sows.
- ELECAMPANE**—*Inula helenium* (Perennial - 4 ft.) The root is aromatic and is one of the herbs grown in old-fashioned gardens.
- FENNEL**—*Foeniculum vulgare* (Annual - 2½ ft.) The stems, leaves and seeds of this plant are eaten, and are especially good with fish.

HELIOTROPE—*Heliotropium Hybrid* (Perennial - 18 in.) The "Cherry-Pie" is perhaps the best loved of the sweet herbs. It is not hardy and must be taken indoors for the winter. The plants may be propagated from cuttings as well as seeds.

HOREHOUND—*Marrubium vulgare* (Perennial - 12 in.) A tea made from the leaves of this plant flavors the familiar candy for coughs and colds.

HYSSOP—*Hyssopus officinalis* (Perennial - 2 ft.) This plant makes an excellent low hedge, and the tender new leaves are used for flavoring in salads. It has an attractive blue blossom spike.

LAVENDER—*Lavandula spica*
Lavandula vera
(Perennial - 2 ft.) Plant this in rather dry soil for the sweetest blooms, and prune well in the fall to make bushy plants.

LOVAGE—*Levisticum officinalis* (Perennial - 5 ft.) All parts of this plant are used in cooking—seeds, leaves, stalks and roots. The flavor is rather like celery, but much stronger, and a little goes a long way.

POT MARIGOLD—*Calendula officinalis* (Annual - 18 in.) The petals of this flower are used for flavoring, and give bright color when mixed with Pot-Pourri. Sprinkle a few fresh petals on a plate of pea soup.

SWEET MARJORAM—*Origanum marjorana*
(Annual - 8 in.) The leaves are used both green and dried in meat and egg cookery, or as a garnish. The plant is one of the indispensable herbs.

MIGNONETTE—*Reseda odorata* (Annual - 12 in.) Everyone knows the delicate sweetness of this flower. The seedlings do not like to be transplanted, so sow the seeds where the plants are to stand.

NASTURTIUM—*Tropaeolum Hybrid* (Annual vine) Stems, leaves, flowers and seeds of this plant are used in salads. The green seeds may be pickled like capers. Plant in poor soil for increased bloom.

NICOTINE—*Nicotiana officinalis* (Annual - 3 ft.) Plant this lovely white flowering tobacco where you can enjoy its fragrance in the evening.

- PARSLEY**—*Petroselinum hortense* (Biennial - 6 in.) This is one of the best loved of the cooking herbs. It may be cut several times during the season. Be sure to dry some for winter use.
- PINKS**—*Dianthus plumarius* (Perennial - 8 in.) These are the old-fashioned spice pinks which make delightful nose-gays.
- ROSEMARY**—*Rosmarinus officinalis* (Perennial shrub) The leaves, both green and dried, are used to flavor soups, stews and meats. The plant is not reliably hardy in cold climates, and should be stored in a pit or greenhouse, but it is well worth the trouble.
- RUE**—*Ruta graveolens* (Perennial - 2 ft.) A beautiful plant with blue-green leaves and yellow flowers. The leaves have a strong pungent taste, and are sometimes used for flavoring, and in sandwiches.
- SAFFLOWER**—*Carthamus tinctorius* (Annual - 12 in.) This is the false saffron which yields a red dye, and is also used medicinally. The plant has attractive bright yellow blossoms.
- SAGE**—*Salvia officinalis* (Perennial - 18 in.) The leaves are used in cooking, either green or dried, and no turkey is properly stuffed without it. The plants should be divided every three or four years.
- SUMMER SAVORY**—*Satureia hortensis* (Annual - 12 in.) The leaves are used extensively in cooking, and with sage in poultry stuffing. The plant will sow itself freely.
- WINTER SAVORY**—*Satureia montana* (Perennial - 12 in.) The flavor is a little stronger than Summer Savory, but otherwise much the same.
- SORREL**—*Rumex acetosa* (Perennial - 2½ ft.) The leaves are used in salads and make a delicious soup. The leaves have a better flavor if the plant is not allowed to blossom.
- TANSY**—*Tanacetum vulgare* (Perennial - 2 ft.) The leaves are aromatic, and are said to discourage moths when placed among woollens. The yellow flowers last a long time, and are very attractive.
- THYME**—*Thymus vulgaris*, French, narrow leaved.
Thymus vulgaris, German, broad leaved (Perennial - 4 in.) The leaves are used for flavoring meats, gravies and soup. The plant is one of the most popular herbs.

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