

From: Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>
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Edition 10.13	Paul Parent Garden Club News	April 1, 2010
	<p style="text-align: center;">FEATURED QUOTE :</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"Plants give us oxygen for the lungs and for the soul." ~Linda Solegato</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 15px; margin: 10px auto;"></div> <p>You've heard Paul mention cotton seeds for our newsletter subscribers. Well, they've finally come in! Here's what you do if you want to grow some cotton. (please don't write just to have them--we have plenty, but they are not unlimited).</p> <p>Send Paul an email with: Your name and full mailing address. Please also tell us on what radio station you listen to Paul Parent (or, if you listen to the podcasts, just tell us that). Thanks, and we hope you all enjoy your cotton seeds!</p>	<p>Gifts for the Gardener</p> <p>Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!</p> <p>Contact Information:</p> <p>E-Mail: Click to contact us.</p> <p>Telephone: (207) 985-6972 (800) 259-9231 (Sunday 6 AM to 10 AM)</p> <p>Fax: (207) 985-6972</p> <p>Address: Paul Parent Garden Club 2 Blueberry Pines Dr Kennebunk, ME 04043</p> <p>Phone Hours: Monday-Saturday 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM</p> <p>Where can I find Paul on Sunday mornings?</p> <p>Click here to find Paul Parent Garden Club™ radio stations.</p> <p>Trains of the Colorado Rockies Trip</p> <p>Join us for a journey into the grand landscapes and fascinating history of the American West.</p> <p>Click here for more information.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have a Look Around Our Website:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">Home About Paul Paul's Recipes</div>
		
<p style="text-align: center;">Bradfield Organics Luscious Lawn Corn Gluten</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 250px; height: 15px; margin: 10px auto;"></div> <p>Bradfield Organics® Luscious Lawn Corn Gluten is a premium granulated all-purpose fertilizer developed to provide you a safe (when used as directed), clean, convenient, and easy way to fertilize lawns, trees, shrubs; vegetable, fruit, herb, flower, and rose gardens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Feeds Lawns Naturally· Helps Build Strong Turf· Convenient Granulated Form Makes Spreading Easier <p>DIRECTIONS</p> <p>Bradfield Organics® Luscious Lawn Corn Gluten 9-0-0 can be applied at any time of year. As in nature, there is no bad time to start building soil fertility. As part of your Bradfield Organics® fertilizer program, apply 20 lbs. per 1,000 square feet of lawn, garden or</p>		

flowerbed area each Spring and Fall.

CAUTION

Do not apply to areas when seeding is contemplated within 60 days. Root system from newly germinated seeds tends to wither in the presence of corn gluten meal.

The Easter lily was once the most popular flowering plant of the spring season for our home. The pure white flowers in the shape of a trumpet seem to announce the arrival of spring and the first sacred holiday of the season. Easter lilies do not naturally bloom during this time of the year. The plant has to be forced and tricked to bloom well ahead of its normal blooming time, July. Not only that, but Easter is at a different time most years and it is a challenge for the greenhouse grower to make the lilies flower at the right time. When in college, I learned how to grow them and it is like no other plant. Temperature, light, and water will determine if you are early, late, or make them flower right on time. This year Easter is on April 4, 2009. In 2008, Easter was March, 23rd. If Easter is this early, the greenhouse grower is growing The Christmas poinsettia at the same time and in the same greenhouse as the Easter lilies.

My college roommate grew up in a family-run greenhouse and taught me a lot about seasonal plants. When we were learning about the Easter lily our professor said to my roommate, "Mr. Dunlop can you tell the class how you grow Easter ilies?" Bruce responded, "In a wheelbarrow and I moved them from a cold greenhouse if they were growing too fast or to a hot greenhouse if they were not growing fast enough." His next comment was, "I hate Easter Illies." Now you know how difficult it is to grow them, so enjoy when you purchase or receive one this year.

Easter lilies should be selected with just 1 or 2 flowers open on the plant and many tight buds for the future. This will give you more time to enjoy the flowers in your home. As the trumpets open, be sure to remove the yellow pollen sacks in the trumpet. This will extend the flowering time for each flower by a day or two. Removing the pollen sacks will also prevent staining to clothing or furniture. When the flower becomes tired, remove it right to the stem and be sure to remove the small green ball at the base of the flower. This is the seedpod, and if not removed it steals energy from the plant, making your other flower bloom for a shorter time.

Always remove the plastic or tinfoil wrap around the pot to prevent water buildup and rotting of the bulb. Keep moist but never wet and there is no need to fertilize. Keep the plant in a bright room and as cool as possible; remember -- a cool room keeps a plant flowering longer. Keep away from a south facing window, as the hot sun will speed up the flowering time.

Most people throw away the lily plant after the holiday. This plant is winter hardy in New England and all you have to do is care for in until May and then plant it in your perennial garden. Dig a hole 8 inches deep and add 2 inches of compost to the bottom of the hole. Remove the plant from the pot, set it in the hole, and now fill the hole with soil and firm the plant in place with your hands. Spread a handful of perennial food around the plant and work it into the soil. Water weekly for the next 4 weeks and the plant will prepare for next year by splitting in two and make two flower stems with flowers during next July.

If you have lilies and have a problem with orange bugs that eat holes in the leaves of the plant, treat the plant as soon as they come out of the ground this spring with Bayer Advanced Tree and Shrub Systemic Spray. Use one tablespoon per gallon of water and water the plant with the mixture. Use a quart of the mixture for each clump of bulbs and the plants will be "insect free" for the rest of the year. Happy Easter!

This gourmet food has been prized since the Romans and is still regarded as one of the great delicacies of the vegetable garden. In the spring, the asparagus is the first to emerge from the ground and much better tasting when grown in your garden and fresh picked than what you buy in the store. Growing asparagus is a long-term project for your garden, as it will take 2 to 3 years after planting before you can harvest those delicate and tasty shoots. On the positive side, once established the plants continue to produce for 25 years or more, and sometimes up to 50 years. The harvest season is also quite short: six weeks and the plant is not very productive for the amount of space it takes in your garden. That is why it is the most expensive vegetable to buy.

Plant asparagus roots in a sunny location. The soil should be well drained, light, rich in organic matter and deep. The pH should be as close to neutral as possible. The better the soil, the better the production will be. Set out roots at the end of the garden so they are not bothered in the future when working in the garden. Wet spots can rot the roots of the plants and if this is your problem, use a raised bed to grow the roots. It is important to prepare the soil before planting as this vegetable is in the ground for a long time and you will not get a second chance to mend the soil later. Compost and animal manure are the best fertilizers for this crop and should be applied to the garden each spring prior to the new shoots coming to the surface. Mycorrhizae fertilizers are best when added to the soil in the spring and fall, so look for the new Vegetable Thrive fertilizer. Mycorrhizea will help make a bigger and stronger root system. Asparagus plants grow tall so be

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sure to keep them out of the wind.

When you plant asparagus, purchase 2 year-old roots from your garden center and look for male roots. Male roots are more productive and larger shoots will develop from those roots. One year-old roots will save you money but you will have to wait one additional year to pick. The spring is the best time to plant asparagus and I suggest that you call your local garden center and have them call you as soon as the roots arrive. Roots in a poly bag that have been in a heated building tend to dry up fast and take longer to get established. A bundle of fresh root packed in peat moss is better and less likely to have a mold problem like plants in a poly bag. This is the time when paying more for a product is worth the investment. You will have this plant in your garden for a long time, so begin with quality.

Dig a trench 18 inches wide and 12 inches deep. Make a small mound of soil that you have conditioned in the center of the trench every 18 inches. Spread the roots around the mound of soil so the crown is 2 inches higher than the roots. Now cover the roots and crown with 2 to 3 inches of conditioned soil, firm them in place and water well. As the plants begin to grow slowly, fill in the rest of the trench until even with the rest of the garden. Fertilize spring and fall with Dr Earth vegetable food with probiotic, Bio-Tone fertilizer or Converted organics garden fertilizer. Use limestone, wood ash or Mag-I-Cal to keep the soil sweet and neutral. Once the shoots are up and growing I like to spread 2 inches of compost over the entire planting bed for weed control and to help prevent moisture loss during the summer. Water 2 times a week to keep soil moist but NEVER wet. You will enjoy the foliage in your garden and remember the foliage makes energy for the plant to make it stronger and more productive for next year.



When you think of the weeping willow, think of water. Weeping willows love a wet soil, love growing near a stream or pond and--be sure to remember this--the weeping willow will destroy your septic system if it is close by! Most trees have as much of a root system below the ground as they have branches above the ground. The weeping willow has double the roots of most trees, so be careful where you plant it on your property. This tree is one of the most loved in our landscape because of the beautiful golden bark branches that are also graceful and weeping. These long branches will grow right to the ground from the top of the tree. During the winter, the tree will almost shine with the sun on it.

The tree has a rounded appearance year round. Gold branches without leaves in the winter and in the fall with golden-yellow leaves. During the summer, the leaves are a rich green color with a bit of shine to them. The leaves are 2 to 4 inches long and ½ in. wide, shaped almost like your finger. The weeping willow is one of the first plants to develop leaves in the spring. The golden leaves of spring really stand out among other trees still dormant in early April. This plant will grow 50 to 75 feet tall and just as wide. Each year the weeping willow can grow 3 to 5 feet a year if there is plenty of water.

When you plant this tree, place it in the back yard where you can admire it from afar. The branches are not strong and heavy; wet snow can create a mess of broken branches after the storm. It is a messy tree and many small branches will fall during the year making for constant cleanup. However, in the right place, the weeping willow will keep your yard dry and usable again. You need to weigh the pros and cons before you plant this tree on your property.

The weeping willow will make a great wind-break, noise-barrier, or screening for privacy and will provide you with shade quickly when planted in groups. When planted alone it makes a great specimen plant. The tree is not one that will last long in your yard, as it matures in 20 to 25 years and falls apart quickly. Trees planted in the full sun location do much better than trees planted in the shade.

The Native Americans were the first to recognize the willow tree for its beauty and medicinal value, using willow extract to relieve pain, arthritis, and fever. The dried bark can be used as a detergent to clean clothing and crushed young leaves can stop severe bleeding. Salicylic Acid found in the willow bark is an anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving ingredient. As Native Americans moved across the country looking for food and fertile soils to grow crops, they also looked for the native willow tree. The willow grew where fresh water was found and without water, the people could not survive.

In Irish legend, the willow is the wood used to make the harp sing. The most famous Celtic Harp is the "Brian Boru" and is exhibited at Trinity College, Dublin. Made in the 15th century, the harp has a pillar and head-piece made of oak, a sound body of willow and is strung with brass. The willow is the resonating-vessel that receives the vibration from the strings and makes the music.

In Jewish tradition the willow is one of four woods used in the "Feast of the Tabernacle" to give thanks for the harvest. In your garden, the willow means resonance and harmony. When looking for a site to drill a well, dousers always use the willow branch to find water. You see, the weeping willow is much more than just a tree.



This begonia is a creation of horticulturalists from all over the world. No flower has had so many ancestors and undergone so many complicated modifications. Begonias named for Michel Begon, a botanist who spent many years developing new varieties of the plant. He was at one time

governor of French Canada and is responsible for many of the current varieties we have today. Tuberous Begonias are known for their flowers, whose shapes vary a great deal, resembling hollyhocks, carnations, camellias, and roses. Some varieties have a single flower, some have double flowers and some have both single and double flowers on the same plant.

Tuberous begonias are like no other summer flowering bulb, as they will flower all summer long and well into the fall. They are the showiest and the largest family of shade loving bulbs. They also have more applications than any other bulb when planted in the garden. Begonias can be planted in containers of all types and even in hanging baskets. Try them in window boxes, urns and even whiskey barrels. On your decks, patios, terrace, or porches they will provide you with endless color all summer.

With many hundreds of varieties to choose from, the Begonia family has the plant height, flower size, flower color, foliage texture, and growth habit for you. I like the hanging or drooping varieties that cascade flowers over the side of the container, covering it with flowers. The drooping or cascading types have clusters of small flowers on their stems and are wonderful for porches or small terraces in a shady location. The large flowering types will grow to 18 inches tall with thick stems that help to hold flowers up to 3 inches in diameter. The foliage is deep green and triangular shape with small teeth on the margins.

Purchase your bulbs now and start them indoors on your windowsill. Fill a pot with a man-made soil like Jiffy Mix half way and place the tuber with the cup side facing up. Cover the bulb with 2 inches of soil and keep it moist but not wet. In no time at all, the warmth of the window will develop shoots from the tuber and the growth will develop quickly. In the house, the plant matures quickly and by the time the weather is safe enough to be planted outdoors, flower buds will be developing. When you plant, be sure to condition the soil with compost or animal manure. The better the soil the more flowers the plant will make. When growing in containers use Soil Moist in the soil to help retain water during the heat of summer. Fertilize every two weeks with Miracle-Gro or add Osmocote pellets to the soil mixture for continuous feeding all summer long.

The Begonias come from mild climate countries and when grown in a cold region, the tubers must be dug up from the garden after a frost and stored in the basement during the winter months. Store the bulbs in a box filled with dry peat moss on the basement floor. Keep them away from heat but temperatures must be above freezing, so don't store them in your garage. I always dust the bulbs with "Rose and Flower" garden dust before winter storage. If you grow begonias in containers, allow the top of the plant to be frosted and cut the foliage off to the ground. I put the containers in the basement for the winter and they never dry up, as all the roots are still intact. Do not water during the winter! In April I just add water and it comes right back to life. Shade is not a reason not to have flowers around your property when you have so many types of Tuberous Begonias to choose. Enjoy!



This Week's Question:

What can butterflies see that we can't?

This Week's Prize:

One bottle of Vacation.

[Click Here to Answer](#)

Last Week's Question: If someone wants to slice up your tulip bulbs to cook with, what are they probably out of?

Last Week's Prize:

One bottle of Vacation.

Last Week's Winner:

Roger Moelk

Last Week's Answer:

Although a bit of a challenge, cooking with tulip bulbs can take the place of onions. The bulbs are a bit bitter and special care will be needed for a successful dish.

One winner per question - we choose winners from the list of those who answer correctly. Winners must be newsletter subscribers. We'll ship you your prize, so be sure to put your address in the form in case you win!

FEATURED RECIPE:

Baked Asparagus with Balsamic Butter

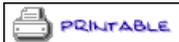


What You'll Need:

- 1 bunch fresh asparagus, trimmed
- Cooking spray
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar

Step by Step:

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C).
- Arrange the asparagus on a baking sheet.
- Coat with cooking spray, and season with salt and pepper.
- Bake asparagus 12 minutes in the preheated oven, or until tender.
- Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat.
- Remove from heat, and stir in soy sauce and balsamic vinegar.
- Pour over the baked asparagus to serve.



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