

Nutrition – Nature’s Way

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The summer months have been busy and despite the weather conditions, many edible wild plants are in abundance.

Droughts are taking their toll around the globe and (sadly) food prices will rise. [Many nations](#) are hurting and some areas such as East Africa are in serious trouble. It is really important to learn what wild plants are an alternative food source. The Earth is in climate change and there are many factors that explain why (for example [radioactive material being dumped in the Arctic](#)).

This newsletter will focus on how you can eat healthy without it hurting your budget and how to boost your immune system. In addition, to help you forage without being attacked by mosquitoes, I have an easy-to-make recipe that helps to greatly reduce (perhaps eliminate) mosquito bites.

Let’s start with a recipe for an immune boosting tea that tastes amazing! If you are not growing these ingredients or cannot find them while foraging then finding a local source to obtain these ingredients is best (always support local where possible)! Although there are no “exact” measurements, these are guidelines to use: 3 parts yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), 2 parts cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*), 2 parts thyme (any variety of thyme works), 2 parts catnip (*Nepeta cataria*) and 1 part peppermint (*Mentha piperita*). Blend together well. Measure 1 tbsp in 1 cup (500ml) boiling water. In order to gain maximum benefit, drink the tea as hot as you are able to. Have a cup or two a day!

Echinacea, ginseng and astragalus are other essential herbs to have on hand to make immune boosting tea. Even the [US National Library of Medicine](#), National Institutes of Health states that these are immune boosting and “cancer patients may wish to use these botanicals to inhibit tumor growth or to boost resistance to infections.”

Weed of the Month Wild Bee Balm



[Wild bee balm](#) (bergamot) is rich in antioxidants and in thymol. It is thriving this summer with the hot conditions. Making a tea is a tasty way to treat bacteria and gingivitis!

- Contains vitamins A, B1, B2, and C.
- The primary flavonoids include: rutin, hyperoside, Quercetrin, luteolin and quercetin.



Nyssa (middle) and Sable (right) have been amazing help at festivals!



Rogers Television taping me while baking with dandelions and plantain.



Inexpensive Healthy Eating!

Foraging throughout the growing season provides us with a fresh supply of goodness. There are ways to preserve some wild edibles so that you can use them throughout winter months. Dehydrating, drying and freezing are all great options as to how to benefit from the goodness of foraging year-round. Due to space I can't get into "how to" details but if you want more information I will gladly send you a PDF file with these details and much more – please email k.stephenson@ediblewildfood.com and in the subject line write "Cheap Healthy Eating."

Buy Bulk

Purchasing a large bag of (healthy) rice, dried beans, lentils, chick peas and so on goes a long way! Store them in air tight containers or glass jars. Buying bulk is inexpensive and these items go a long way.

Sprouting

Sprouts (when done at home) are inexpensive and they give us incredible health benefits. I will provide more detailed information about how to sprout and where to get affordable seeds in "Cheap Healthy Eating."

Homemade Juices with Foraged Plants

Store bought juices are usually loaded with white sugar and/or fructose. Making your own juice is easy, inexpensive and much healthier for you. For example, wild grapevine grapes can be frozen and they make an incredible juice. Red sumac also freezes well and makes a powerful vitamin C drink. Highbush cranberries are another easily found berry to take advantage of.

Vitamin C the Canadian Way

There is no arguing that fresh citrus fruit contains lots of vitamin C. Purchasing fresh or frozen orange juice is not cheap and really, if you read what is in them they truly are not helping our health much. It sure won't taste the same, but for a drink that will boost your vitamin C levels then pine, spruce or cedar trees are a fabulous (and free) source. Make an herbal tea with them and drink it as is or make a large quantity, let cool and place in the fridge.

Cereals

Get out of the cereal aisle of your grocery store! Just about everything in there is not only very expensive but those cereals claiming to be healthy have some not-so-healthy ingredients. My health food store and a chain store called Bulk Barn sell a brand of organic cereals that are cheap! Yes! Nature's Path brand of kamut, puffed millet and other grains are very healthy. Each 170g bag costs about \$2.60 (no air in the bag). I blend together millet, kamut, some granola and raisins and eating a half bowl of this is by far more nutritious than boxed cereals and it is filling!

Fields of Nutrition

Time to self-promote! One of my projects as a writer has materialized. It has been a fascinating journey and thanks to my family, Fields of Nutrition is now a hardcopy magazine. This publication contains 30 common plants that are found in many countries and not only are there photographs to help identify each plant; it contains each plant's health benefits and nutritional information. Fields of Nutrition is only (Canadian) \$10 plus postage. Order before August 15 and receive a free PDF copy of Free Food from Foraging! [Click here to order!](#)



German **Chamomile** makes a great tea!

Insect Repellent

Many factors go into why insects such as mosquitoes "like us" including diet, colour of clothing, body scents and so on. The following recipe is not only simple to make but I found this was very effective in almost eliminating all mosquitoes around me.

This recipe contains essential oils which means this insect repellent must be stored in the dark because light breaks down the effects of the essential oils. Storing this in an amber-coloured spray bottle is best.

Also, if you sweat a lot or are going out in conditions you know you'll perspire then take this along with you. Perspiration dilutes this therefore reapplying is required.

10 ml almond oil
 10 ml isopropyl alcohol
 40 ml water (distilled is best but any water will work)
 25 ml (1/2 tsp) lavender essential oil
 50 ml (1 tsp) cedarwood essential oil
 100 ml (2 tsp) citronella essential oil

Mix all ingredients and shake well. Spray on exposed skin, hair and clothing. Shake well before each use.



Red Sumac is loaded with vitamin C and makes a great cold drink!

It has been a busy summer getting out and teaching others what free food (wild edibles) are out there to enjoy! I am touched with the support many of you have given me and I am truly grateful. Thank-you everyone!