



Johnson's Garden Talk

Lawn and garden information for the friends and customers of Johnson's Garden Centers

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Savor the Flavor of Fresh Herbs

Karen Hull, Johnson's East Greenhouse Manager

Like many gardeners, I spent the bitterly cold, snowy winter months planning my spring garden. I also spent more time than usual watching television. While watching HGTV and the food network (my favorites), I observed that gardening is still a very popular pastime, but cooking has become "trendy" again. In spite of our hectic lifestyles, we're taking the time to slow down our day and really enjoy cooking again.

Cooking with Fresh Herbs

Cooking with all natural foods and fresh herbs for flavoring is important to many cooks. I personally have used homegrown herbs for years. If you have purchased fresh herbs from your grocer, you know the price.

The rewards of growing your own herbs are very satisfying. Herbs can be grown in pots indoors or outside in a sunny location. Pots full of basil to use in your Italian recipes will add a fresh flavor. Chives and parsley are also used in many recipes. The zesty flavor of cilantro in any salsa recipe is unbeatable.

Grow Herbs Indoors with the AeroGarden Kitchen Appliance!

Growing herbs in your kitchen is a handy location. If you do not have a sunny spot, the AeroGarden is for you. This free-standing kitchen garden unit (featured in our December newsletter) comes with its own automatic lighting system. The water level and nutrients are constantly monitored. There is no guesswork involved. Fresh herbs can be grown anywhere there is electricity.

Growing Herbs Outdoors

If you chose to grow herbs outside, a sunny location with well drained soil is required. Herbs can be grown in pots to be brought inside for winter use. Herbs can be planted in the landscape and borders also. I planted sage (perennial herb) next to my shasta daisies and coreopsis. It is fun to cut my own sage to use in my dressing at Thanksgiving. Herbs look great in windowboxes, alone or with annuals.

Think Outside the Kitchen

Not only are herbs grown for culinary use but also for medicinal purposes. Herbs have been used for centuries as cures for many ailments. In some cultures they are still used as a main source of healing. Herbs are also used in lotions, potpourri and bath products. The aroma of fresh lavender and rosemary is quite relaxing. Whatever end use you have in mind for your herbs, growing them is truly a rewarding way to garden. Stop by any of our locations for more information on growing your own herbs. ■