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## JOHN'S CORNER: NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS

*by John Ferguson*

We here more and more each day about the use and importance of natural or essential oils. They have been used in the medicine of Egyptian, Chinese, Greek, and other cultures for thousands of years due to the benefits they provide. Modern research has found these essential oils effective against cancer. From the organization, "Truth About Cancer" the top oils are:

**Frankincense** - It is anti-inflammatory which works against all cancers as it inhibits enzymes responsible for inflammation. It boosts our natural immune function and stimulates the production of white blood cells. It reduces stress and improves circulation, and has been shown to contract and tone tissue, which helps speed regeneration. It provides neurological support including the ability to destroy toxins that may lead to neurological damage. Additionally, It has been known to ease arthritic pain, help balance hormones, promote skin health, and aid in our digestion. No wonder it was valued by the Wise Men, and given as a gift to baby Jesus.

**Lavender** - This oil contains the phytochemicals perillyl alcohol and linalool both of which have been found to support cancer healing. It is a know pain reliever and *Lavender angustifolia* is anti-tumoral. It has also been shown to reset programmed cell death lacking in cancer cells. It reduces the weight of tumors and inhibits cell growth. This oil reduces stress, depression, anxiety, supports immune system function, and improves the quality of our sleep. Additionally lavenders oils have anti-bacterial properties.

**Myrrh** - This oil has been known for its healing properties since antiquity. It has noticeable effects on cancer cell growth and contains anti-inflammatory properties. It promotes a healthy



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hormone balance, which is essential in healing cancer. It is used as a pain reliever and is anti-fungal.

**Peppermint** - This oil has anti-oxidant and cancer inhibiting properties, which suppress the growth of tumors. It has anti-angiogenic effects that prevent cancer from developing its own blood supply. It is a well-known antiseptic and contains antimicrobial components that fight respiratory infections, open wounds, tonsillitis, and laryngitis. It is also effective against several antibiotic resistant bacteria.

**Tumeric (Curcumin)** - Curcumin has been shown to inhibit enzymes such as the COX-2 that cause inflammation, which can lead to cancer. It activates genes that suppress tumors, starve cancer cells of the required food (sugar and simple carbohydrates), and prevents them from getting oxygen they need to live. Curcumin interferes with several other areas of cancer cell metabolism and prevents cancer stem cells from growing. This nutrient helps regulate blood sugar, speed the healing of wounds, helps prevent dementia, and other ailments.

**Parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*)** - Parsley oil come from the seeds, roots and leaves of this plant. The leaves are often used in many culinary dishes and as a garnish. This oil is an ingredient in soaps, cosmetics, detergents, colognes and perfumes. It has been used for centuries to treat various illnesses including jaundice and malaria. This oil has powerful antibacterial and antifungal properties that can help treat pimples, acne and skin infections. Parsley oil has been found to help prevent hair loss when diluted. Parsley oil exhibits antimicrobial, antiseptic, astringent, carminative, digestive, diuretic, and detoxifying properties.

**Comfrey (*Symphytum officinale*)** - Comfrey is a perennial herb that has been used for centuries as a healing agent. The plant is native to Europe but is found all over the world. Comfrey contains the chemical "allantoin" a substance that promotes new skin cell growth, reduces inflammation, heal bruises, pulled muscles and ligaments (University of Maryland Medical Center). Historically it was used in tea form to help with stomach problems, and several other health issues. Comfrey also contains several chemicals that can be toxic to ones liver if consumed in large amounts.

How About Our Wild Greens?



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**Dandelions** (*Taraxacum officinale*) - this herb has been used all over the world to help treat health problems for thousands of years. The name is from the Greek word *taraxos* meaning "disorder" and *akos* meaning remedy. Chemicals in dandelions dissolve cholesterol, lower blood sugar, stimulate our immune cells, and retard tumor formation. Dandelions are full of nutrition with more vitamin A than broccoli, carrots, or spinach. They are a good source of potassium, iron, calcium, zinc, and vitamin E. They also have enough vitamin C to prevent diseases like scurvy.

**Lambs Quarters** (*Chenopodium album*) - This herb has been used in Europe since the Bronze Age. Their leaves are a rich source on vitamins A & C, as well as folate, calcium, iron, protein, and good fiber.

**Nettles** (*Urtica dioica*) - nettles are exceptional when it comes to nutrition, containing 25% protein, calcium, magnesium, potassium, selenium, zinc, and vitamins A & C. In Europe, they are a traditional meal every spring as they start growing before many other greens. They can be used as a replacement for any green, mixed with other greens, and used in soups and stews.

**Chickweed** (*Stellaria media*) - This is another common weed with a long history of use for nutrition all over the world as it is one of the first greens to grow in spring. Birds love it, hence its common name. It is high in vitamin-C and phosphorous and taste like spinach when cooked. It has been used throughout history to treat inflammation and ulcers. It can be crushed and applied to sooth irritated skin. When brewed as a tea it has been found to help with colds and flu.

**Purslane** (*Portulaca oleracea*) - Purslane is a relative of chickweed that thrives in hot sandy soil, often where nothing else will grow. Purslane has the highest amount of the extremely beneficial omega-3 fatty acids of any plant. It contains more beta-carotene and six times more vitamin-E than spinach. It has very good levels of vitamins-A &C, along with iron, magnesium, and potassium.



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**Garlic mustard** (*Alliaria petiolata*) - This invasive plant from Europe is a pest but is highly nutritious. It is full of vitamins, iron, calcium, and omega-3 fatty acids. It is used in stuffing for pork or beef or mixed with other vegetables to give them a zesty flavor.

**Hydrangeas sp.** - Even many of our ornamental plants can have herbal or health benefits. This plants contains *hydrangin* a naturally occurring phyto-chemical which makes it effective against kidney stones. It also includes flavonoids like *kaempferol* and *quercetin*. Dr. Mercola has a long paper on the health benefits of hydrangeas on his website.

Some of the above information above came from the American Gardener Magazine 2016, Dr. Mercola's newsletters and a few other sources.

Trees are healthy!

- One study found that in areas without trees there was an abundance of disease carrying mosquitoes. Conversely, areas with lots of native trees had very few disease causing mosquitoes.
- Another study that covered 35 counties in the USA, found that in areas with greater tree cover, children had far less cases of diarrheal disease.