



Dallam and Hartley Family and Consumer Science



April Showers Bring May Flowers

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I thought it was only fitting to attach the well know "April Showers Bring May Flowers" Poem since we are entering April, and we are all hoping for rain!!

April Showers Bring May Flowers

April showers bring May flowers,
 That is what they say.
 But if all the showers turned to flow-
 ers,
 We'd have quite a colourful day!

There'd be bluebells and cockle-
 shells,
 Tulips red and green,
 Daffodils and Chinese squill,
 The brightest you've ever seen.

You'd see tiger lilies and water lilies,
 Carnations pink and blue,
 Forget-me-not and small sundrop
 Glistening with the dew.

We'd have fireweed and milkweed
 And many more different flowers.
 Mexican star and shooting star,
 Falling in the showers.

And if all the showers turned to flow-
 ers
 On that rainy April day,
 Would all the flowers turn to show-
 ers
 In the sunny month of May?

by Karen Chappell

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Earth Day is April 22, 2014, so let's do our part to help protect this precious place that we live!!

We can start by conserving water. Since everyone is ready to start getting our yards ready for spring here are some water conservation tips to use outside.

Water Conservation tips in the yard and garden



1. Plant drought-resistant lawns, shrubs and plants

*If you are planting a new lawn, or over seeding an existing lawn, use drought-resistant grasses such as the new "Eco-Lawn." Replace herbaceous perennial borders with native plants. Consider applying the principles of xeriscape for a low maintenance, drought resistant yard, group plants according to their watering needs.

2. Put a layer of mulch around trees and plants.

*Mulch will slow evaporation of moisture while discouraging weed growth. Adding 2-4 inches of organic material such as compost or bark mulch will increase the ability of the soil to retain moisture. Press the mulch down around the drip line of each plant for a slight depression which will prevent or minimize runoff.

3. Don't water the gutter.

*Position your sprinklers so water lands on the lawn or garden, not on paved areas. Also, avoid watering on windy days.

4. Water your lawn only when it needs it.

*A good way to see if your lawn needs watering is to step on the grass. If it springs back up when you move, it doesn't need water. If it stays flat, the lawn is ready for watering. Letting the grass grow taller (to 3in) will also promote water retention in the soil. Most lawns only need about 1" of water each week. During

dry spells, you can stop watering altogether and the lawn will go brown and dormant. Once cooler weather arrives, the morning dew and rainfall will bring the lawn back to its usual vigor. This may result in a brown summer lawn, but it saves a lot of water.

5. Deep-soak your lawn.

*When watering the lawn, do it long enough for the moisture to soak down to the roots where it will do the most good. A light sprinkling can evaporate quickly and tends to encourage shallow root systems. Put an empty tuna can on your lawn—when it is full, you've watered about the right amount.

6. Water during the early parts of the day: avoid watering when it's windy.

*Early morning is generally better than dusk since it helps prevent growth of fungus. Early watering, and late watering, also reduce water loss evaporation. Watering in the day is also the best defense against slugs and other garden pests. Try not to water when it is windy—wind can blow sprinklers off target and speed evaporation.

7. Add organic matter and use efficient watering systems for shrubs, flower beds and lawns.

*Adding organic material to your soil will help increase its absorption and water retention. Areas which are already planted can be "top dressed" with compost or organic matter. You can greatly reduce the amount of water used for

shrubs, beds and lawns by:

- the strategic placement of soaker hoses
- Installing a rain barrel water catchment system
- Installing a simple drip-irrigation system

Avoid over-watering plants and shrubs, as this can actually diminish plant health and cause yellowing of the leaves. When hand watering use a variable spray nozzle for targeted watering.

8. Don't run the hose while washing the car.

*Clean the car using a pail of soapy water. Use the hose only for rinsing—this simple practice can save as much as 150 gallons when washing a car. Use a spray nozzle when rinsing for more efficient water use. You can also use a waterless car washing system, (EcoTouch).

9. Use a broom, not a hose, to clean the driveways and sidewalks.

10. Check for leaks in pipes, hoses, faucets and couplings.

*Use hose washers at spigots and hose connections to eliminate leaks.

Courtesy of:
<http://eartheasy.com>





It is time to get our yards ready for Spring!!

Here are a few homemade compost tips

Compost Tea

What is Compost Tea:

Tea Compost is a liquid extract of compost that contains plant growth compounds and beneficial microorganism. Liquid extracts have been used for hundreds of years in agriculture to promote plant and soil health. These extracts have historically been derived from a wide range of plant materials and animal manures, using a variety of processing methods. Aerated Compost Tea is a more recent concept that incorporates aeration technology to create optimum levels of oxygen for growth and reproduction of beneficial aerobic microorganisms. Compost teas are not being produced and used in large-scale agriculture, viticulture, horticulture, nurseries, lawn care, and residential gardens.

Benefits of Compost Tea:

Compost Tea is a good overall plant health booster. Remember –healthy plant are able to resist pest and diseases! Compost tea is typically used:

- * To provide nutrients for foliar or soil application
- * As a microbial inoculant via soil application to help build soil microbial populations.

www.extension.oregonstate.edu



Compost Tea for Outdoor or Indoor Plants:

1. Fill a bucket 1/3 full of quality finished compost.
2. Add water to the top of the bucket. (unchlorinated is the best, or good well water)
3. Let the mixture steep for 3-4 days. Stir it now and then.
4. Strain the mixture through cheesecloth or other porous fabric (burlap, old shirt) into another bucket. Add the remaining solids to your garden or compost bin.
5. Dilute the remaining liquid with water so it is the color of weak tea (use a 10:1 ratio of water to tea.)
6. Use tea immediately for optimal absorption in the soil around plants.

<http://www.homecompostingmadeeasy.com/composttea.html>

Tip:

Scatter coffee grounds as mulch. Dig them into your soil to both lighten and enrich it. Tomatoes love them. Who knew used coffee grounds could be so beneficial.

Coffee grounds.



Your garden will love you.

Free Compost Tea:

This tea is good for indoor plants. You will need to save some egg shells for this one.

Directions:

1. Find a clean glass or plastic jar.
2. Add a little water.
3. Whenever you use an egg, put the shell in the jar. (You can use a spoon to crunch them in there.)
4. Whenever you make coffee, put the used grounds in the jar.
5. After you have put a few egg shells and coffee grounds in, top it off with water, shake and let it sit.
6. Let it sit for about a week.
7. Do not let it sit in direct sunlight or over your oven (where it will get warm). You want all the nutrients to leach out of the egg shells and grounds.
8. When you are ready to feed your plants, you just strain out the eggs and grounds (you can do this by pouring the contents of the jar through a paper towel into a big cup or bottle.

<http://mypurplebrickroad.blogspot.com>



This is how it will look when you start.

After sitting for 1 week.





Easter Fun Fact

Have you ever wondered why Easter is always at a different time of the year?

The answer is: Easter is a moveable feast. It can be as early as March 22 or as late as April 25. Easter Sunday is the first Sunday after the first full moon that occurs on, or after March 21.



Here is a little history and how other parts of the world celebrate April Fools' Day or All Fools' Day.

History:

Some historians believe April Fools' started in France, but no one knows for sure. It may stem from a calendar change in the 16th century France when New Year's Day was moved from April 1 to January 1 when the Gregorian calendar was adopted.

Around the world:

In France, April 1st is called "Poisson d'Avril."

French children fool their friends' by taping a paper fish to their friends' backs. When the "young fool" realizes the trick, the prankster yells "Poisson d'Avril!"

In Scotland, April Fools' lasts two days. Victims of pranks are called gowks (cuckoo birds) and are sent to run phony errands. The second day is known as Taily Day, and pranks involving the backside are played. Supposedly, it is the origin of "kick me" signs.

In England and Canada, pranks are only played in the morning of April 1st.

In Portugal, April Fools' Day is actually celebrated on the Sunday and Monday before Lent. They throw flour in their friends' face.

In Poland, everyone takes part in April Fools' Day activities, including media and some-times public institutions. All serious activities are completely avoided for the day. One of their favorite jokes is pouring water on people.

In certain areas of Belgium, children lock out their parents or teachers and only let them in if they promise to give them sweets.

As for the United States, we play pranks on people.

Mark Twain was a big fan of April Fools' he would pin signs on fools saying "It's better to keep your mouth shut and be thought a fool than to open it and leave no doubt" and "Let us be thankful for the fools. But for them the rest of us could not succeed" and "The first of April is the day we remember what we are the other 364 days of the year."

Homemade Fabric Softener and Dryer Sheets

Fabric Softener

Ingredients:

- * 6 cups water
- * 3 cups white vinegar
- * 2 cups hair conditioner

Directions:

- * Mix water, vinegar, and hair conditioner in a 1 gallon container
- * Stir, do not shake it : it will cause foaming
- * Use the same amount you normally use in a rinse cycle or spritz it on a wash cloth and throw it in the dryer.

www.onegoodthingbyjillee.com



Dryer Sheets

Ingredients:

- * Fabric Softener
- * Old rags

Directions:

- * Soak cloth in fabric softener, wring out excess, then lay out to dry first before using.
- * To use: toss the dried cloth in the dryer and use again and again until it no longer works. Re-soak when needed (you should be able to do a few dozen dryer loads per fabric softener soak.)

www.thefrugalpantry.com



I am always looking for ways to get rid of static, I use dryer sheets and fabric softener. Here a few tips that I have found and I am excited to try:

- * **Aluminum foil balls:** Wad up some aluminum foil into balls and toss in the dryer.
- * **Safety Pins:** attach safety pins to 2 articles of clothing that you will be drying
- * **Vinegar:** Pour 1/4 cup vinegar into the fabric dispenser of the washing machine. You will have no need for dryer sheets and your laundry will not smell like vinegar.

www.thefrugalpantry.com





Kale—the new Super-Food....

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What is Kale: Kale is a leafy green vegetable (*Brassica oleracea*) sometimes called borecole. It's related to cabbage, broccoli, collard greens and Brussels sprouts.

Varieties of kale are grown all around the world, in a number of different climates, and the plant is able to grow well into the cooler months. Additionally, the leaves of the kale plant freeze well, and some sources claim the leaves taste sweeter if harvested after a frost.

Kale has received a lot of attention in recent years for its powerhouse nutritional benefits, making kale (along with blueberries, spinach, beans, and certain other vegetable) one of the so-called "superfoods".

Here are some reasons why there is so much talk about Kale

Kale is what people are calling the new power food because there are so many health benefits.

Kale was once called the 'poor people food.'

Kale feeds your immune system for protection inside and out.

Kale has more iron than beef per calorie, very high in Vitamin K, and full of powerful antioxidants.

8 Benefits of Kale:

- **Can help lower cholesterol levels.**

The fiber in kale binds bile acids and helps lower blood cholesterol levels and reduce the risk of heart disease. It is best when kale is cooked instead of raw.

- **Kale is a detox food.**

It is filled with fiber and sulfur which are great for detoxifying your body and keeping your liver healthy,

- **Low in calories.**

A cup of chopped kale only has 33 calories. Great for weight loss.

- **Great at fighting many cancers.**

Kale is rich in organosulfur compounds which are known to fight cancer, especially colon cancer.

- **Supports a healthy immune system**

Kale is full of sulforaphane which helps nourish the immune system.

- **Visual Benefits**

Kale is abundant in two carotenoids, lutein and zeaxanthin, which act like sunglasses filters preventing damage to the eyes from excessive exposure to ultraviolet light.

- **Supports normal blood clotting, antioxidant activity, and bone health.**

The high amount of Vitamin K helps to nourish those activities in the body health.

- **Great for helping digestion and elimination.**

It is very high in fiber.

There are also some cautions of Kale:

- **To much Vitamin K** can cause problems for anyone taking anticoagulants such as warfarin because of the high level of Vitamin K may interfere with the drugs. Consult your doctor before adding kale to your diet if you are on this type of medication.
- **Kale and Oxalates.** Kale contains oxalates that interfere with the absorption of calcium.



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Baked Parmesan Kale Chips

Ingredients:

- 1 bunch Kale (12oz after removed from stems)
- 1 tsp olive oil (spray)
- A sprinkle of sea salt
- 1/2 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly spray two large baking sheets with oil.
- Wash and thoroughly dry kale. Remove the leaves from the thick stems and tear into bite sized pieces.
- Place on baking sheets, spray with olive oil and sprinkle with salt
- Bake about 10-12 minutes, turning and moving them

around as they shrink to make sure they evenly crisp up.

- Top with shredded parmesan cheese, keeping a close eye on them, bake an additional 5 to 6 minutes until the edges are crisp but not burnt.

Notes:

- Time will vary depending on your oven.
- You can use shredded cheese or grated cheese
- Don't over-crowd the baking sheet.

Nutritional Information:

Servings: 6 * Serving Size: 1/6th * Calories: 50.2 * Fat: 2.8g * Protein: 3.6g * Carb: 3.4g * Fiber: 1.1g * Sugar: 0.7g * Sodium: 126 mg (without salt)

Courtesy of: www.skinnylast.com

