



# Bear Creek Press

*"Food, Glorious Food!"*

Volume 14, Issue 2

April 2015

## Who's Hungry?

Before you sit down to read this newsletter, you better get a snack. Even if you are just a little hungry, please get a snack. By the time you are halfway through reading about all the new herbs, vegetables and fruit you will be hungry. Go ahead, I'll wait for you. OK, good, now we can go on. It is a food-full spring at the Bear with seeds and plants of all your favorites. There are lots of new goodies to try also. Tomatoes, peppers, greens, herbs and fruit should make both your garden and your tummy happy.

### Tomatoes

We had such good luck with cherry tomatoes last year that we are going to try lots more. Kathy liked the **Rosella** with its smoky red color and abundant harvest. The **Chocolate Cherry** sounds equally tasty, so that one is available also. If you like the idea of variety, try the **Heirloom Cherry Blend** with its multicolor offerings on prolific plants. Or you can try Carl's favorite, a little gem that is great for drying. **Riesentraube** is a German heirloom with great flavor and an abundant harvest. We slice it in half, dry it in the oven overnight and store in the freezer for pure tomato goodness all winter long.

Striped tomatoes are all the rage lately. Two-tone skins are colorful in the garden and tasty on the plate. All of these flavorful heirlooms should be fun to try. Just because they are pretty doesn't mean they lack flavor. **Green Zebra**, **Ananas Noire** and **Pink Berkeley Tie Dye** will stand out in the yard and in your salad.

Other heirlooms from Baker Creek are outstanding tomatoes. **Pink Elephant** is one of the largest tomatoes one can grow. **Amish Golden Slicer** is yummy and **Woodle Orange** wins the funny name award while producing great fruit.

### Peppers

Sweet and hot are the trademarks of delicious peppers. We have a new few of each to try out, whether you like plump peppers or ones that will take your breath away. There will be plenty of **Serrano** and **Habanero** peppers this year if you like to feel the burn. Dee dropped off some seeds he grew that are small, round, red and dangerous. We call them **Dee's Hots** and found out the hard way that they will warm your heart and body, not necessarily in that order.

For those of you that prefer sweet, there is no substitute for a **Pimento**. The medium juicy fruit is thick walled and delicious in a salad or eaten like an apple. **Mini Belle Blend** and **Yummy Mix Blend** are two other small but sweet peppers. Try them alone or in a salsa.

### Greens

Lack of space shouldn't deter you from growing greens. Grown in the new Smart Pot container, these leafy vegetables are the backbone of hearty salads. **Baby Butterhead** is a small version of one of the tastiest lettuces available. Small, full heads pack all the tender flavor of a Bibb lettuce in a compact size. **Mixed Elegance Greens** are a combination of fancy foliages to enhance the salad bowl. Colorful and lacy leaves add a texture and crunch to any tossed meal. If you prefer a bit of spice in your greens, **Mesclun Mix** or **Spicy Lettuce Mix** should brighten your day. This bit of extra flavor will go a long way in a tossed salad.

### Melon, Squash and Cukes

The scent of a ripe melon fresh off the vine is one of the most exquisite sensations of the summer. Merely the names of these fruit will make your mouth snicker in anticipation. **Thai Golden Round**, **American Sweet Passion**,

More on back

## A Little Fruity

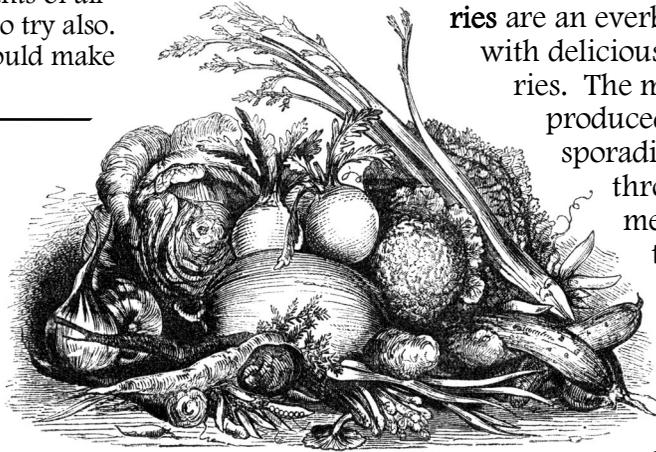
There will be an abundant, locally grown supply of one of the most succulent spring fruits at the Bear this spring. Dusty's organic **Ozark Beauty Strawberries** are an everbearing type with delicious, plump berries. The main crop is produced in June with sporadic flowering through the summer. The versatile strawberry can be canned, jellied, frozen or eaten right in the garden. Plan

to plant a plot of these exquisite delicacies.

**Glencoe Raspberries** are a thornless variety developed in Scotland. It is a bit less vigorous than standard raspberries. This is quite desirable if you have ever made the mistake of planting them on the edge of the vegetable garden as I did years ago. Purple berries boast tartness and sweetness in a single bite. Be sure to plant plenty so some make it to the kitchen.

Developed at University of Arkansas, **Prime-Ark Freedom Blackberries** are a first. These special berries are born on thornless canes the first year. The large fruit has excellent flavor, ripening in mid season just in time for summer cobbles.

After Warren gave us his beloved hardy Fig, a love affair was born. We have searched to find the hardiest figs for this area and are excited to offer a unique heirloom variety. **Violet de Bordeaux** was discovered in 1680 in Versailles Gardens and she is now considered one of the most cold tolerant figs. Violet's dark purple fruit develops on compact branches 4-5 feet tall. Two sweet crops per season are produced on her prolific limbs. On the deck or in the yard, she looks stylish in tropical fig-leaf dress. This just leaves us to ask, "where have you been all our lives?" Dear Violet merely blushes.



## Bear Creek Nursery ©

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**European Model** and **Tam Dew** elicit the fragrant warmth of a summer day. Watermelon fans can try the colorful variety **Moon and Stars**. For those with a French flair, **Ananas D'Amerique A Chair Verte** is a tasty melon that roughly translates to "eat me in the garden."

There are several heirloom varieties of squash with equally exotic names that all originated in France. **Patissons Panache Jaune Et Vert Scallop** is tasty cooked in the summer or fall. **Galeux d'Eysines** is a warty orange squash good for baking or soups. The deep red orange **Rouge Vif d'Etampes** is a classic pumpkin also delicious for pies.

We are looking forward to trying a new cucumber this year. **Barese**, an Italian heirloom, has a sweet flesh and fuzzy skin. This can be picked young for eating or allowed to grow to a size large enough to be used to paddle down a river.

### Herbs

Sister-in-law Loretta gave us this fragrant herb from her garden in Pennsylvania. **Italian Oregano** offers a wonderful flavor while posing as potential landscape plant. Dark glossy green round leaves held in a tight mound look great through the cold. Could this be considered a deer resistant groundcover as well as an herb? Try it yourself and see.

After last years rosemary debacle, we decided to stock up on this precious herb. An unnamed variety that we will refer to as **Robust Rosemary** looks as if it trained with Lance Armstrong. It is an aggressive grower with plump leaves on a fit, foliar plant. And no, we haven't been giving it any extra fertilizer.

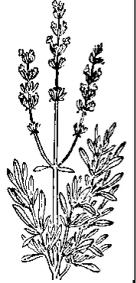
Another type was procured last year quite by accident. Named **Chefs Choice**, this rosemary is notable for its lack of resinous leaves. If you would like to cook with rosemary and avoid sticky fingers, **Chefs**

**Choice** should be your choice.

Two other popular herbs are back after a brief sabbatical. **Garlic Chives** is a mild member of the onion family that is quite flavorful. It is also welcome in the garden, blooming with round, white flower clusters in August no matter how hot and dry it is. **Purple Sage** is a colorful addition to the herb garden with its deep red leaves and bushy habit.

Lavender is a favorite in the garden with its alluring scent and fabulous flowers. **Elegance Purple** and **Phenomenal Lavender** are two new types

that are no exception. Bright scapes of deep blue flowers adorning mounds of furry foliage will entice even the most jaded gardener. A sprig of lavender on your pillow will put you to sleep even faster than this newsletter.



**April Hours: Monday ~ Saturday, 9 to 5. Sunday 11-4.**

### *Start Planting Your Garden Now!*

- ☞ Lots of varieties of Lettuce in Mixed 6-Packs
- ☞ Mixed Greens & Spinach
- ☞ Over 40 types of herbs
- ☞ 30 Varieties of Tomatoes
- ☞ 20 Varieties of Peppers



*Don't forget your seeds!*

**Enhance  
your garden  
with organic  
GoGrow Compost  
made at the Bear  
and  
Nitron Organic  
Fertilizers**



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