

Program 28 - MAGIC FRAGRANCE - April 14, 1941  
(Let's Plan to Grow Some Herbs)

SOMETHING TO DO AND TALK ABOUT FIRST

World trade started in the traffic of herbs, spices and aromatic herbs America owes its discovery to the search for aromatic herbs.

What is meant by an herb? The term in this broadcast means those plants used for medicine, for flavor in foods and drinks, in extracts, chewing gums, soaps, perfumes and lotions. Ask the Trailhitters what common herbs they know. They can probably name the mints, anise, mustard, chives, dill, caraway, sage. The Thanksgiving turkey is flavored with savory herbs.

George Washington had an herb garden. It is maintained to this day.

DO YOU KNOW THESE WORDS?

sachet      culinary      medicinal      annual      perennial      herbarium

LISTEN FOR THESE IDEAS

1. What are some of the common herbs? What are they used for?
2. What herbs are used for sachets?
3. What herbs are used for culinary purposes?
4. What herbs are used for medicine?
5. What common plants of the field are useful herbs?
6. How can you grow some herbs for home use?

SOMETHING TO DO AND TALK ABOUT LATER

1. How can herbs be made into attractive Christmas presents?
2. Do you know of any gardeners who raise herbs for profit?
3. How are herbs harvested?

Wisconsin School of the Air  
Afield with Ranger Mac  
April 14, 1941

#### MAGIC FRAGRANCE

Hello Boys and Girls:

Yesterday I made a plaster-of-Paris cast of the head of Abraham Lincoln, and as I removed the cast from the mould, the thought entered my mind - "What makes great men great?" "Is there anything strange about great men?" Certainly they possess the same senses that we ordinary folk possess. Certainly they possess no more of these senses than we do - just five of them. So I came to the conclusion that there is nothing very strange about great men. They are very much like us, only deeper, higher, broader; they think as we do, but with more intensity; they suffer as we do, but more keenly; they love as we do, but more tenderly. Many of the incidents of Lincoln's life stored in my memory from school days are connected with his acts of kindness, many of them toward dumb animals. His life illustrates the fact that we cannot be just and true and great unless we are kind-hearted. Ranger Mac is mentioning these things now because the week starting April 20th is Humane Week, Kindness to Dumb Animals Week. And since to cultivate kindness is an important part of education, Humane Week will be observed in schools through the length and breadth of our land, and of course, Trail-hitters will plan to do the same thing - April 20th to 26th.

Our trail today is a fragrant trail because it is lined with herbs. If you look up the definition of an herb you will find it is a plant that naturally dies to the ground, like asparagus; that has no stem that can endure the winter, like a tree. So an herb is any plant that naturally dies down to the ground. But in the world of gardening, the word herb has come to have a special meaning. To the gardener herbs are plants grown for flavoring, perfumes, for medicines and for greens; to give scent to the paint, powder and rouge which ladies use with the idea of improving upon nature and making themselves more lovely and attractive; for creams and lotions men use in shaving; for improving roasts, stews, soups, stuffing, sauces, beverages, and the cheaper cuts of meats. I

have before me a book of 400 pages that describes how herbs can be used for most every ailment we poor human beings have been troubled with for all ages, from colic of the child to rheumatism of the old. Herbs for medicines, herbs for pickles, spiced fruits, preserves, ketchup, confectioneries of many kinds, cakes, pies, spiced meats, sausages, sauces, perfumes and soaps, gargles, cough syrups, extracts, chewing gums, liquors of many kinds and other products that require flavoring. There is a romantic story behind most every herb used today, for some of them can be traced back before history was written. Most interesting and romantic of them all is the story of spices, for commerce in spices took an important part in trade between countries, exploration and the spread of civilization. America was discovered by Columbus in an attempt to find a short route to India in order to secure the spices and herb products grown and produced there. Most of the herbs we now grow in our gardens came originally from Africa and Asia. They came to us by way of the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. When mankind migrated, these useful plants were brought along. Roman invasions brought herbs to France and England, and centuries later, when these peoples migrated, they took these useful plants with them.

I got my idea for this broadcast while watching a 4-H Club girl crush the dried leaves of some of our common herbs, pack the fragrant pieces in little cellophane sacks, neatly tied with a ribbon, to be sold in art stores in some of our large cities. The room was so fragrant with the scent of these herbs that it suggested that the nose as well as, if not as much as the eye, can bring us much pleasure. Most of us think of flowers as being the fragrant part of a plant, but with most of these herbs, the flower is not the fragrant nor the important part of the plant. The fragrance is found in the leaves, and these leaves added to salads, meats, soups and beverages make them more appetizing; and if properly dried and stored away can be used in the winter for the same purpose. This Club girl was making little sachets - little bags of fragrant leaves to be put in closets and drawers to give fragrance to the clothing and linen - lavender and

lemon berrana to make the linen sweet. Spearmint and rose geranium leaves for jellies; sage and mint for stuffings at Thanksgiving time; dill seeds for pickles; anise seeds for cookies; caraway for buns and short breads; chives and celery leaves for soups. All of these herbs are used in the ordinary kitchen. Maybe you don't realize it; but you ask your mother about them when you go home this noon. Ask her this question: "Mother, what kind of herbs do you use in preparing those fine meals for us?" Each one of you do this, then bring the lists to school and devote a lesson to finding out where these herbs come from. You would be surprised that we import to this country almost 6,000,000 pounds of caraway seed;  $\frac{1}{2}$  million pounds of anise seed;  $1\frac{1}{2}$  million pounds of celery seeds; 100,000 pounds of marjoram; almost 2 million pounds of sage leaves; and many of the other herbs in similar amounts - all used by cooks and housewives in the kitchens of our country. Many of the herbs like spices, cloves, pepper and cinnamon must be imported from other countries, but many of the herbs used commonly in our kitchens we can grow ourselves in the kitchen garden. One healthy sage plant will supply all the sage a family can use and some to give away to the neighbors. The same thing is true about the garden mint and many of the other herbs. It takes only a few plants and mother can go out to the herb garden and pluck the leaves as she needs them. Such a plot in the garden is not only useful but it can have beauty as well. It is fun to have such a garden; fun to go through it, brush against the leaves and give your nose a treat to the scent that arises. A still morning is best, for the mists and the moisture seem to hold the odors that the plants give off during the night. How few of us really use our noses! There's a little game which I like to play which shows how few of us can really use our sense of smell. You take some glass vials, or small bottles, with screw tops or with corks that fit tight. In each one put a different ingredient - vinegar, cinnamon, sage, mint, rose perfume, lavender, anise oil, camphor, almond, vanilla, licorice, onion salt which is ground up onion seed, celery salt which is crushed celery seeds, and many other of the common smells. Some of these things the children can recognize by sight so I

blind-fold the smellers or have them close their eyes. Then I have them smell of each one and tell the name of the ingredient. Try that game some time and you will be surprised how little we use the sense of smell in getting an education; that we are missing out on much of the joy of this world because we do not know how to use our nose. You can go out and tell by sight fifty different kinds of flowers, shrubs, vegetables and trees, but Ranger Mac doesn't believe there is a Trailhitter listening in today who can recognize 50 different kinds of smells. We have been taught that the nose is the part we should breathe through, and that is right; but the sense of smell is one of the five senses by which we lay hold on this earth, but it is probably the least developed of them all. Try this game in school some time and you will be surprised to find out how little the nose knows, and the many joys that might come to us through a developed sense of smell.

If you have an herb garden it will help, for you soon learn to recognize the different plants by smell as well as by sight. Herbs are useful, also, as a part of our food because we taste largely through the sense of smell. That is not a scientific way to state it, but it is true. When you have a bad cold and your sense of smell is impaired, out of working order, food does not taste so appetizing. That's a common experience. Put a clothes pin on your nose and highly seasoned food will taste flat, if you can taste it at all. You come home from school and when you open the door, the savory smell from the kitchen greets your nose, and your appetite jumps up a 100 per cent. It's great to have a keen sense of smell. It adds a great deal to your life. So you can see that herbs play an important place in our lives. It seems strange that, as a general rule, we know the least about the things we use the most.

So if you have a garden at home, plant a few of the herbs. Growing herbs is not difficult. The plot should be in a sunny place for most of the fragrant herbs come from the hot countries where they develop the oil as a protection against heat and drought; this oil gives the scent to the herbs. They want good garden soil which is well drained. Here we can grow Basil the leaves of which are used for

flavoring soups and stews; Borage whose leaves are used in salads, and whose flowers are liked by bees; caraway whose seeds are used in breads, pastry and meats; dill with leaves and seeds used for flavoring soups and sauces and in flavoring cucumber pickles; sweet marjoram with leaves used for flavoring. All of these are annuals. Here you can grow from seed or buy a plant of such perennials as sage - which is America's favorite seasoning; peppermint and spearmint. Then border the plot with a few plants of chives, which imparts the onion taste to foods without giving the onion breath; parsley and the beautiful garden thyme which is next to parsley for seasoning. If these plants are correctly placed, you can have a garden which will be a sight for the eyes as well as furnish joys for the nose and appetite.

Then if you wish to preserve some of the leaves for winter use or to put them into pretty packets for Christmas presents, cut the stalks on a dry day just before the plants come into full bloom, dry in the shade, and when completely dry, store away in glass jars and not in paper boxes or sacks. By doing this you will have some of the joys of the growing season carried over to the bleak months of winter.

If you are planting a garden, and I hope you will not miss this fun, do not forget to include a few herbs.

Good luck until next week.

Trailhitters, Listen!

Don't you whine and fret,

Here's a whole spring ahead

That aint been touched yet.

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