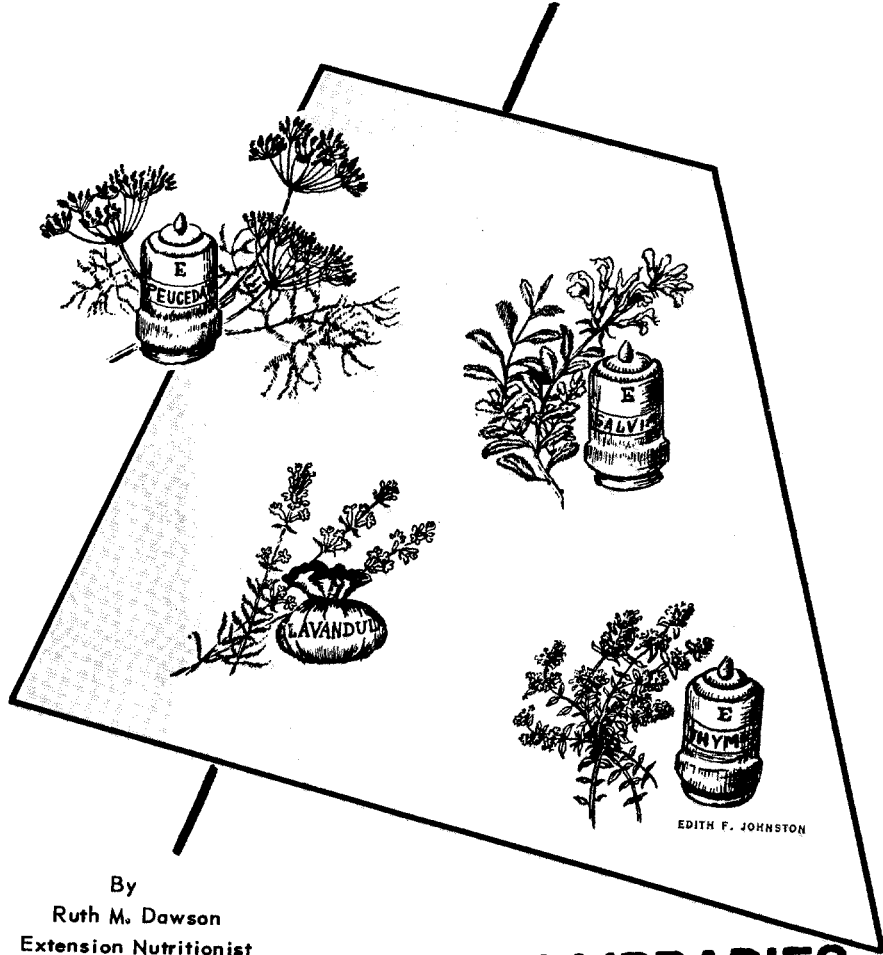


NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY



3 0109 00815 8902

HERBS



EDITH F. JOHNSTON

By
Ruth M. Dawson
Extension Nutritionist

S
544.3
.N9
A8
no.318

NDSU LIBRARIES

NDAC Extension Service, Fargo
NORTH DAKOTA AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

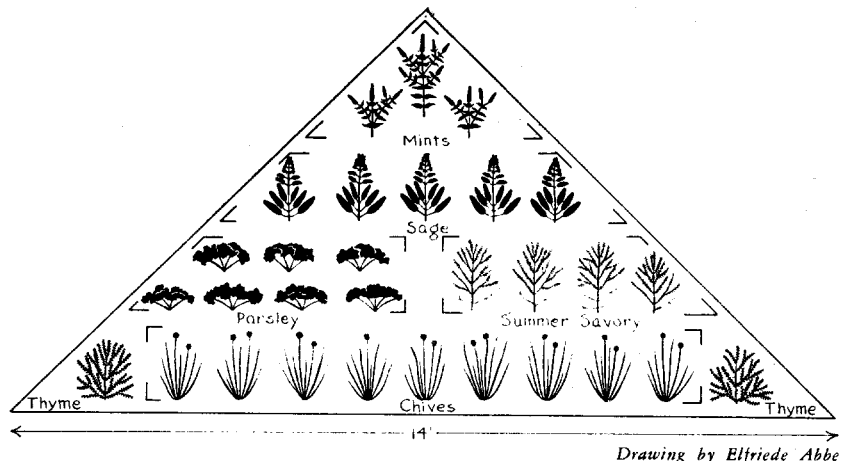
HOW TO GROW, DRY OR FREEZE HERBS

Savory herbs are aromatic plants, the various parts of which possess pleasing odors and tastes. They are used in cookery to season, enrich or otherwise alter the flavor and odor of certain foods to make them more pleasing to the taste. The leaves, seeds, fruits, buds, barks and roots of certain plants have been used for this purpose since ancient times.

“Take a few packets of seed, some plants – begged or borrowed, a sunny plot of ground, and add a dash of imagination.”

While it may not be practicable for every gardener to grow a large list of these savory herbs for home use, yet the growing of a limited number will prove profitable and extremely interesting. Set aside a small section of the garden about 10 by 12 feet for this purpose or, if you like, herbs can be grown as a border in your regular garden. Keep the herb bed as near to the kitchen as possible, so it will be handy. Herbs are at their best when picked and used fresh.

Any good, well-drained garden soil is satisfactory for most herbs. Work the soil well before planting. Annual and biennial herbs are usually grown from seed sown directly in the garden when the ground is warm in the spring. The perennials generally thrive better if the seeds or cuttings are started in cold frames or window boxes and the plants are later re-set in the garden. Local seed houses can supply seed of commonly grown species, such as dill, fennel, parsley, sage, chive, mint, thyme, sweet marjoram, basil and summer savory.



A plan for a small planting of herbs

Start with a small garden at first – not more than 6 to 10 herbs. A small amount of seed will produce many herbs. Keep the annuals in the center of the garden with the perennials around the border so that the roots of the perennials need not be disturbed in preparing the soil for the annuals. To keep roots from spreading over the yard or garden use bricks or tiles set in the ground deep enough to prevent this or use a metal lawn edging 6" wide.

HARVESTING THE HERBS

Herbs that are harvested in the pre-bloom stage or about the time blooming starts are basil, fennel, horehound, mint, sage, summer savory, sweet marjoram, tarragon and winter savory.

Parsley for drying is cut or picked during the leafy stage.

The following herbs are harvested by clipping the tops at the stage of full bloom: Lavender, rosemary, thyme and wormwood.

Seeds for kitchen use are best harvested as the seeds approach maturity to prevent excessive losses from breaking, to obtain a bright, clean, well-colored and attractive product, and to conserve the essential oils, aromas and flavor.

HERBS TO DRY

Whether your garden had only a few herb plants or a great many, plan to dry some of your plants for winter use.

No special skill or equipment is necessary. Pick plants when the essential oils are at their peak; that is, just before the plants blossom, and when the dew is off or after sunset.

Tie herbs in loose bunches and dry on their stems or strip the leaves from the stems. Discard all spotted, insect-eaten or withered leaves. They may be spread out in a frame made of screens covered with cheesecloth to keep out dust and bugs.

Dry the herbs in the shade, and take them indoors at night to protect them from rain or dew. Drying may also be done in a warm, dry, airy room.

Oven drying may be too hot. The best temperature for drying herbs is about 70 degrees. Quick drying is done commercially.

When the herb seeds and leaves are thoroughly dry, store in glass jars with tight covers or lids. Place paper bags over the jars to keep out the light in order to preserve the color of the herb. Soak dried herbs in a few drops of water or lemon juice for 15 minutes before using to bring out the flavor.

Some herbs may be grown in pots indoors for winter use, as chives, parsley, sweet basil, sweet marjoram, chervil and summer savory. Plant in 4 or 5-inch pots to give room for the roots to develop, and use a few pebbles in the bottom of each pot to provide good drainage. Mix peat moss with the soil for best results. Like other houseplants, herbs enjoy the sun and a room that is not too warm.

FREEZE SOME HERBS

For freezing, gather the herbs at their tenderest, green period, wash with cold water. While they are wet quick freeze on cookie sheet and when frosted with ice crystals place in containers. This method of freezing separates the leaves so that any amount may be used without thawing all of it.

“Herbs used with imagination can throw open the doors to culinary success. One should never be conscious of their presence, but merely aware of a delightful blend of flavors.

About $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of any dried herb will season a dish for four. Use three times that amount when fresh herbs are used.”





DILL



MARJORAM



ROSEMARY



SAGE



SAVORY

GROWTH AND COLOR CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAVORY HERBS*
 Information Helpful in Landscaping the Herb Garden

Name	Classification	Hgt. in Ft.	Color
Anise	Annual	1½'	Yellowish
Basil (Sweet)	Annual	3'	Mauve
Caraway	Biennial	2'	White
Chives	Perennial	1'	Pink
Dill	Annual	2'-2½'	Yellow
Fennel	Perennial	4'	Yellow
Lavender	Perennial	2'-4'	Lavender
Marjoram, pot	Perennial	2'	Purplish
Oregano	Perennial	2'	Purple
Parsley	Annual	1'	Foliage
Peppermint	Perennial	½'	Foliage
Sage, red, green	Perennial	2'	Purplish
Savory	Summer - Annual	1'	Pale lilac
Tarragon	Perennial	2'	Foliage
Thyme	Perennial	1'	Purplish

* This table is taken from "A garden of Herbs", by Eleanour Sinclair Rohde.

References Used

1. Culinary Herbs, Cornell Extension Bulletin 841.
2. How to Grow Your Own Seasoning, Successful Farming Magazine.
3. Savory Herbs, Culture and Care, Farmer's Bulletin No. 1977, United States Department of Agriculture.

North Dakota Agricultural College and the United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating. E. J. Haslerud, Director of Extension Service. Distributed in furtherance of the Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914.