

HERBS AND HERB LORE

Good day everyone...it's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.

Herbs have long fascinated me, particularly concerning what they can provide in the way of food taste. I know an herb-ologist--if that's the right term--who has hundreds of herbs growing in her garden; circular patches devoted to herb foods; famous herbs of the bible; herbs for making liquids; herbs for the making of jams and jellies. It is one of the most interesting, small, back-yard gardens in Pennsylvania. I note that whenever I do a story about herbs, or their own medical use, my mailbag is fuller than at any other time. Many Pennsylvanians, go into the woods for the wild mushroom--have their favorite secret places, particularly in areas which have brought forth coal, and provide themselves and their friends with the wildest--and most tasteful mushrooms--to be found anywhere. Last year, Dr. Don Yoder of the University of Pennsylvania asked some questions of folks who bought a copy of "Pennsylvania Folklike"--the magazine which is usually distributed at the folk festivals. The questions were interesting, asked by Dr. Don Yoder, of the University of Pennsylvania. Perhaps you have some of the answers he was seeking. If so, send them to me at Room 1, Department of Commerce, Harrisburg and I'll pass them on. What herbs were gathered by your family in the wild state; in fields and woods? What use were they put to? Did your kitchen garden include herbs? How and where were they

planted? How were the annual seeds extracted and kept? What herbs were used for the healing of sores, wounds, ailments, stomach trouble and common afflictions? Were there herb doctors in your community? What were their activities? How and where were herbs stored in the farmhouse--and how dried? Were there special herb containers? Did your family pick certain herbs on certain days of the year only, and why? Or did they pick them at certain phases of the moon? How did the pow-wow doctors in your community use herbs? What herbs did your family use in the preparation and flavoring of foods? Many of the herbs had different names according to the culture--the Pennsylvania Dutch certainly used dialect terms for herbs. And of course, there were many sayings, proverbs, songs and jokes or stories concerning the use of herbs. What were they? You might still be able to assist Dr. Don Yoder of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. If you have answers to any of these questions, send them along. We are getting into folk festival time again, when the country folk talk about herbs; use them; plant them; eat them. It's herb time so why not gather them--and information about them. It will be put to good use.

This is Pete Wambach. It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.