

# RAINBOW BRIDGE NURSERY

## JANUARY 2018 | NEWSLETTER

*Hello friends and neighbors.*

We hope you all had a blessed and enjoyable Christmas and wish you and your loved ones a safe and Happy New Year.

We have been making changes and preparing the nursery so you can enjoy your visits even more than before. We have built a new greenhouse and are upgrading our facility to make your visits more pleasant. A new watering system should also ensure better looking plants free of heavy water residue on the leaves.

We are planning our first of several annual FREE PLANT give aways in March or early April and will have several new items to help you with your spring planting. Look for our monthly newsletter or email notices so you don't miss it.

Thank you all for taking the time to read our newsletter. We try our best to provide you with information and tips that should be helpful with your gardening experiences. Should you need additional help, do not hesitate to come by the nursery for personal assistance. Have a great and blessed New Year.....

*The Staff at Rainbow Bridge Nursery.*



### NATURAL PLANT REMEDIES & TIPS

#### TEA & COFFEE GROUNDS

##### COFFEE:

- Great for acid loving plants.
- Contains 10.31 pounds of nitrogen per cubic yard. (NOT immediately available to the plant)
- NPK = 2.5/0.3/0.3.
- Contains: Magnesium, Copper, Zinc, Calcium, Magnesium, Iron.
- Ph. Range 6.5 to 6.8.
- Increases decomposition of other items. (Tea also provides many of the same benefits plus some additional ones.)

##### TEA:

- Tea contains 'TANNIC ACID and nutrients that are NATURAL fertilizers for your garden.
- The bags are made from the fiber of ABACA LEAF stalks.
- Tea bags keep insects at bay.
- Deters bugs from chewing on flowers/vegetables.
- Bury used bags near the roots of plants to help with water retention.
- Increases decomposition of other items.
- Helps keep weeds at bay.
- Keeps cats from urinating on your plants. (Coffee provides the same benefit)
- Beneficial worms eat the tea leaves and help to produce beneficial worm castings.
- Leftover tea bags can be used to grow seeds.
- Helps with water retention.

#### EGGS & EGG SHELLS

- High in Calcium. (39.15%)
- Helps prevent 'Blossom End Rot' on fruit and vegetables.
- Pour water from boiled eggs after cooling directly to soil around plants. (High in calcium)

**Note:** Rinse egg shells and microwave for 3 minutes. Grind to a powder and sprinkle around base of plants. This works better than bone meal and will also make your roses and other plants bloom better, brighter and longer.

#### **INDOOR PLANTS ARE NATURAL AIR FILTERS**

While many of us prefer to spend time in the great outdoors, it seems society today is spending more time indoors due to work and family commitments and other schedule constraints. Because we're seeing more indoor time, it's natural to want to make our living and work spaces more pleasant and attractive.

One quick and easy way to do that is with the addition of plants. However, indoor plants are pulling double duty by not only beautifying the space, but acting as air filters and purifying the air 24 hours a day.

There are many chemicals in the air around us. While we can't even see them, they may be affecting our health. These chemicals come from every day products such as carpeting, paint, upholstery, finishes or glues, furniture and plastic. Many of these products contain chemicals like benzene, formaldehyde and trichloroethylene. Unfortunately, many of these products we can't easily avoid.

You might ask yourself what NASA researchers have to do with plants and clean air. When working on the best ways to clean air in space stations, NASA's Clean Air study found house plants are an effective and natural way of removing pollutants and toxic chemicals in the air.

NASA researches have tested many indoor plants for their air purifying abilities. The researchers have discovered many houseplants actually absorb these chemicals from the air, which in turn makes the air cleaner for us to breathe. So, it boils down to the fact that not only do living plants make an indoor environment more attractive, they're really good for us. All it takes is about eight to 15 plants in an average size home.

Researchers at NASA also discovered some plants are better air filters than others. They have compiled a list of what they consider to be the top 10 plants most effective in removing formaldehyde, benzene, ammonia and carbon monoxide from the air, all of which have been linked to health issues. The list includes bamboo palm; Chinese evergreen; English ivy; Gerbera daisy; Dracaena fragrans (corn plant); varieties of 'Janet Craig', 'Massangeana' and 'Warnecke'; mother-in-law's tongue; pot mum; and peace lily.

So how does it work? Plants absorb some of the particulates from the air at the same time they're taking in carbon dioxide, which is then processed into oxygen through photosynthesis. In addition, microorganisms associated with the plants are present in the potting soil, and these microbes also are responsible for some of the cleaning effect.

Don't worry if you don't have a green thumb. Many of the plants on NASA's list are easy to care for. However, keep in mind that the plants do contribute some pollen and floral scents to the air.

## Currently Available and Ready To Go

We currently have very nice Beefsteak, Red Cherry, Yellow Cherry, Italian Tree & Russian Black Tomatoes in Cell Packs, 4 Inch & 6 Inch pots, ready to go, starting at just \$1.00

We also have Green, Black, Color and White Bell Peppers that are ready to go, as well as some Jalapeno and Habanero peppers that are ready.

Our new double petals Desert Rose (Adenium) are also looking quite nice.

*REMEMBER to mention this newsletter and get a 10% discount on any purchases in January....*



## Here's a January guide to help you plan for working in the yard

- This winter has not been very cold so far, with winter-like temperatures not sticking around for long. Hopefully we won't receive any freezing temperatures, only enough chilly hours for the temp fruit crops to set flower.
- For some ideas of activities that you can do outside this month, here are a few suggestions.
- The shorter days of winter cause the grass to stop putting on new growth, so watering and mowing won't need to be done very often, maybe just every 15 to 20 days. Lawns should be watered deeply, with about 3/4 of an inch of water, when water is applied. If your irrigation is currently watering more than once a week, change your settings.
- Flowers that enjoy cooler temperatures include: alyssum, dianthus, pansy, viola, petunia, phlox, stock, flowering kale, and snapdragons.
- To protect tender plants from a freeze, cover them with a blanket or quilt and weight the edges down if windy weather is in the forecast. If using a plastic tarp to cover the plants, don't let the plastic touch the foliage, or cold damage will occur.
- Herbs for January planting include chives, chervil (winter annual), cilantro, fennel, mint, parsley, lavender, rosemary, sage, and thyme.
- If needed, Prune deciduous plants now when they are dormant, including all dead and diseased wood. For crepe myrtle trees, remove seed pods, twiggy growth and crossing branches.
- Sow arugula, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cantaloupe, Chinese cabbage, cauliflower, sweet corn, cucumber, eggplant, kale, peppers, squash, watermelon, kohlrabi, endive/escarole, beets, collards, lettuce, mustard, English or snow peas, spinach, Swiss chard, tomatoes and turnip seeds for transplanting in February.
- Vegetables that can be planted in January include arugula, beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cantaloupe, Chinese cabbage, cabbage, cucumbers, endive/escarole, eggplant, peppers, tomatoes, watermelon, carrots, cauliflower, collards, lettuce, mustard, English or snow peas, Irish potatoes, radishes, celery, kale, kohlrabi, spinach, squash, sweet corn, Swiss chard, and turnips.
- To save space when seeding carrots and radishes, sow them in the same row because carrots are slower to germinate. The radishes will be harvested before the carrots need the space. Also, cover the seeds with some vermiculite to help mark the row.
- Here is a list of fresh produce that could be available at produce stands or farmers markets in January: broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, radishes and strawberries.



## HIBISCUS TEA

**Hibiscus tea** is an herbal tea made as an infusion from crimson or deep magenta-colored calyces (sepals) of the roselle (Hibiscus sabdariffa/Cranberry hibiscus) flower. It is consumed both hot and cold.

It has a tart, cranberry-like flavor, and sugar or honey is often added to sweeten it. The tea contains vitamin C and minerals and is used traditionally as a mild medicine. Hibiscus tea contains 15-30% organic acids, including citric acid, malic acid, and tartaric acid. It also contains acidic polysaccharides and flavonoid glycosides, such as cyanidin and delphinidin, that give it its characteristic deep red color.

### 11 Surprising Benefits of Hibiscus Tea:

The health benefits of hibiscus tea, also known as Agua De Jamaica, include relief from high blood pressure and high cholesterol, as well as a disturbed digestive and immune system, and inflammatory problems as well. It helps to cure liver diseases and reduces the risk of cancer. It can also speed up the metabolism and help in healthy, gradual weight loss. It is rich in vitamin C, minerals, and various antioxidants, while also helps in the treatment of hypertension and anxiety.

Hibiscus tea is prepared by boiling parts of the hibiscus plant, known by its scientific name Hibiscus sabdariffa, particularly the flower. It is a very popular drink throughout the world and is often used as a medicinal tea. However, hibiscus flowers have various local names, and it might be called by its other, rather, common name, "Roselle".

Hibiscus tea is ruby red in color and has a sour taste. Therefore, it is also known as sour tea and has a flavor similar to cranberry. It is widely available in the market throughout the tea-drinking world and can be consumed hot or cold depending on your preference. This tea is low in calories and is caffeine-free.

Not many people are aware that almost 15-30% of hibiscus tea is composed of organic acids. These acids are malic acid, tartaric acid, and citric acid. They are commonly found in many fruits such as grapes and wine. They help in boosting immunity, promoting better skin, lowering blood pressure and cholesterol, managing inflammation, and improving digestive issues. Hibiscus tea has diuretic and choleric effects, thus controlling blood viscosity by reducing blood pressure and enhancing digestion.

### Hibiscus Tea Ingredients:

- 48 ounces water
- 3 tablespoons hibiscus flowers (organically grown)
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 1/8 cup sugar
- 1 small orange, sliced
- Ice
- 1 lemon, cut into wedges



### Directions:

- Bring water to light boil, turn off the heat and add the hibiscus flowers and cinnamon sticks. Cover and steep for 20 minutes. (can be made without the cinnamon sticks)
- Strain tea into desired container, add sugar and orange slices and serve over ice. Garnish each glass with a lemon slice.

**Notes:** This tea recipe can easily be doubled for a larger serving. When using herbs in tea making, longer is not better. Heating the herbs for extended time can release unfavorable qualities and bitterness found in herbs. The key is to add MORE herbs to strengthen flavor, NOT to leave in longer.



### Special Plant Notes:

To promote better sleep, place snake plants in your bedroom which give out bursts of oxygen at night to support better breathing. Aloe Vera works well in kitchens to neutralize benzene found in detergents and plastics.

## VEGETABLES FOR THE WINTER

If you've felt the cool mornings these past few days, you can tell winter is upon us. Now is the time to start planting and cultivating all of the vegetables and seasonings that grow best this time of year. These are all plants that do not need much attention and are resistant to cold temperatures, making them a good pick when the rest of your garden is underutilized for the winter.



### Easiest

One of the easiest vegetables to grow is the radish. Upon planting, they will grow to harvest in a matter of months. Particularly, if you pick a variety with small roots, they will grow in a month or less. When you are buying radish seeds, look into the available varieties because you will find many kinds of tastes, colors and growth periods.

Garlic requires a bit more attention but not much more, and best of all, they take up little space. When you plant your garlic bulbs, make sure they are separated but do not peel them. Spread them apart in the soil by about four to five inches. Do not start watering them until the shoots begin poking out of the ground. Garlic requires little water and if it is raining, you are good to go.

### Easy

Onions can grow well provided you have nice, fertile soil and water them regularly. The temperature in January and February will likely be the best time for our part of the country to start planting them. Whether you plant seeds or bulbs is up to you, though bulbs will be easier. If you plant green onions or scallions, it's the same process except you will be pulling these up after about six weeks.

Potatoes are another easy vegetable to plant and it can be fun to do so. Look into what variety of potato you are planting because that will determine how many eyes to put in the ground. Start growing them in February and check up on them for about three months.

### More Work

Peas grow best in the moderate cold we have in November. If you can't plant them by the end of the month or early December, try again in February. For peas, you'll need to attach a pole for the plant to crawl up as it grows, plus some sort of screen or cover to keep the birds away. Plant the seeds an inch and a half into the ground for them to start growing.

All kinds of chard or big, leafy greens will do well in the Winter. It can give your garden some color that won't be there this time of year and they will taste good. You will need to water them regularly and keep an eye on the temperature while they're growing. If we have a warm winter this year, these will not turn out as well as you want.

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***Special Plant Notes:*** Indoor plants are coming back into fashion in a big way and not purely for aesthetic reasons. As well as purifying the air we breathe of harmful toxins according to Nasa, indoor plants can also reduce stress, control humidity and lower sound pollution.

