



# Big Tree News

The world gets better when we do....

Big Tree Herb Farm

February 2021

Hello Everyone,

Hope this finds you all well. Well we are on the home stretch of this challenging winter! It is almost March—already the days are longer and the sun feels stronger and the hope of spring is right around the corner. This is the time of year when we start to grow our seedlings indoors, which is always exciting and filled with promise and anticipation. We will be trying a few new herbs this year due to customer requests and new ideas that we have had during the winter. We also will have some new additions to our farm this summer which we will be sharing with you in upcoming newsletters.



I decided to focus this month's newsletter on some of the herbal roots that we use the most: Dandelion, Burdock and Astragalus—my three favorites for their many healing qualities. They are a bit more challenging to harvest and prepare but their amazing benefits totally outweigh the extra effort!

Roots are grounding, and the practice of gathering roots should be one of deep reverence. When gathering herbal roots, for me, there is a sense of deep connection between the body and the earth, even more so when using an herbal preparation made with herbal roots....

## Inside this issue:

<b>Big Tree News</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>This month's Herbs</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Burdock</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Astragalus</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Dandelion</b>	<b>4</b>



## Root Herbs

As the weather gets colder in the late fall and winter, I start to crave root vegetables, there is something about the heartiness and earthiness of the roots that are the comfort foods during cold weather. Root herbs are the same, they hold the energy of the earth and are used for deep nourishment. Roots are best dug up in the fall or early spring when the energy of the plant is still stored there. As spring and summer unfold, the plant's energy moves upward to provide nourishment for the leaves, flowers, seeds or fruit, leaving the root less potent.



In order to reap the benefits of herbal roots you want to make a medicinal decoction, since it is a bit harder to extract the nutrients from these tough parts, so a slow simmer is required. Place 4-6 TB of the dried root pieces in a small saucepan. Add one quart of cold water. With the heat on low, bring the mixture to a slow simmer, cover and let simmer for 25-45 minutes. For a stronger decoction, simmer the herbal roots for 20-30 minutes, then pour the mixture into a quart jar and set aside to infuse overnight. Strain and drink....

## THIS MONTH'S HERBS ARE Roots Burdock, Astragalus and Dandelion







**Did you know...**

**Burdock has a round, prickly seedpod cleverly designed to attach to whatever passes by—animal, bird, or person. This is a highly effective mechanism for seed dispersal and was the inspiration for VELCO!**

**Burdock: (*Arctium Lappa*)** is one of the safest, tastiest and most effective detoxifying and cleansing herbs in both Western and Chinese medicine.

Burdock root can be used for:

- Strong liver-purifying, hormone balancing herb with particular value for skin, arthritic and glandular problems
- Can be used internally and externally to treat eczema, psoriasis and other skin-related imbalances
- Also for other skin problems such as acne, boils and other “hot” skin issues
- Makes an effective wash for dry, itchy, irritated skin—apply a cloth soaked in the tea directly to the skin or use in the bath
- Burdock has a beneficial effect on the lymphatic system, which is an important part of the immune system. Drink 3-4 cups per day for swollen lymph glands.
- Blood cleansing and detoxifying
- Anti-inflammatory and anti-infective for serious female conditions such as endometriosis inflammation, glandular imbalance and excess fluid retention
- High in vitamins and minerals: Vitamin A, Bioflavonoids, Vitamin E, B-Complex, Sulphur, silicon, copper, iodine and zinc.
- Helpful to encourage skin rashes to come to the surface such as carbuncles, mumps and swelling.



**Burdock Root Beer Tea**

- 1 part Burdock Root
- 1 part Cinnamon Chips
- 1 part Sarsaparilla Root
- 1/2 part Dandelion Root
- 1/4 part Ginger Root (chopped or grated)
- One pinch of Stevia
- Sparkling water

Prepare a decoction with the herbs (see Page One). Strain and mix with sparkling water—1/4 cup water with 3/4 cup of tea and serve over ice.

This makes a delightful detoxing drink!!

\*from Rosemary Gladstar

**STEAMED GOBO (Burdock Root)**

Clean fresh Burdock roots and peel if the outside seems particularly tough. Grate the root. Steam lightly for just 3-5 minutes, then sprinkle with toasted sesame seed oil. Garnish with toasted sesame seeds.

\*This popular dish can be found in fine Japanese restaurants!





Dandelion root can also be chopped and added to a stir-fry and soup or pickled for a surprisingly delightful flavor!



Dandelion Root: (*Taraxacum Officinale*) is another amazing detoxifying, blood purifying and liver cleansing herb. Even though many people try in vain to rid their lawn of this amazing plant, dandelion's tenacity is part of its beauty. It has the ability to grow and thrive no matter what or where.

Dandelion can be used for:

- Soothing and healing to the digestive system and for bowel inflammation as a bitter herb. It stimulates bile secretion for bowel cleansing and toning.
- Helps reduce high blood pressure and its resultant edema
- Liver cleansing for conditions such as jaundice, hepatitis, cirrhosis.
- As an aid to weight loss and cholesterol lowering formulas through improved liver activity to break down fats
- As a diuretic that flushes excess sodium from the body while preserving potassium
- Dandelion root is high in vitamins and minerals such as: Iron, calcium, potassium, trace minerals, Vitamin A
- As an aid for Arthritis and Rheumatism because it increases the uptake of organic calcium in the body.

### Slimming Tighten-Up Tea

Juice of 1/2 lemon  
1/4 cup unsweetened cranberry juice  
3-4 bags of Dandelion Root Tea\*  
2.5 cups boiling water

In a 24 ounce tea pot or thermos add lemon and cranberry juice. Add tea bags and water and let steep for 10-15 minutes. Remove tea bags and enjoy tea either hot or cold or at room temperature.

Drink one cup at morning, noon and afternoon.



\*Traditional Medicinals Organic Roasted Dandelion Root Tea can be purchased at most grocery stores

### **February Tip:**

Every single part of the Dandelion can be used in the kitchen: flowers, buds, leaves and roots. It's possible to create an entire menu, including dessert and beverages from this one plant! There are whole cookbooks that are solely devoted to Dandelions. They contain everything from Dandelion lasagna to Dandelion chiffon pie to Roasted Dandelion Root Ice Cream!







Big Tree Herb Farm

If anyone has any herbal questions, please let me know.

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March's Issue of "Big Tree News" will focus on Wildcrafting (Plantain and Yarrow)



**UPCOMING WINTER**

**MARKETS:**

Big Tree Herb Farm will be at the following markets this Winter:

Rolling Green Nursery

Greenland NH

Saturdays 10am-2pm

February 27, 2021

Berwick Town Hall

Berwick ME

Sundays 10am—1:30 pm

March 14, 2021

April 11, 2021

Tri-Town in Eliot ME

Sturgeon Creek Farm

Sundays 11am—2:30 pm

March 7, 2021

March 21, 2021

**Astragalus Root:** (Astragalus Propinquus) is a powerful immune system boosting herb. It is also used for seasonal allergies, angina, hypertension hepatitis, fatigue, asthma, weak limbs, and anemia.

It helps to build and restore health to the entire body. It is a fabulous choice for preventative care since besides boosting the immune system, it also protects the heart, liver and kidneys and improves the function of all these organs.

It is also helpful for Chronic Fatigue, Fibromyalgia, Adrenal Fatigue and to help restore energy by increasing the oxygen up-take and the systemic utility of oxygen in your body.



Astragalus can also be used in cooking, added to a stir fry or soup, making a broth or in this delicious pudding:

**Astragalus and Cardamom Rice Pudding:**

- 1 cup basmati rice
- 1 can coconut milk (13.5 ounces)
- 2 TB astragalus root powder
- 2 TB cardamom powder
- 2 TB honey or maple syrup (to taste)

Add 1 2/3 cups water the rice, milk and astragalus in saucepan. Heat on medium—high until mixture starts to simmer. Reduce the heat to low, cover and cook for 20 minutes or until rice is soft.

Remove from heat, add cardamom and sweetener, eat warm and enjoy!



**HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!**

