

## Down to earth

# Start spring gardening slowly

All you have to do is shoo a garden writer out of the area and she'll come back with a new bag of garden ideas.

Place your old banana skins under the surface of the soil to decompose and you will be feeding your soil calcium, magnesium, sulfur, phosphate, sodium and silica. Bananas are a big thing in many households, so if I were doing it I would dig a shallow hole and cover up the debris with soil.

The residue left in an empty milk carton is good too. Rinse out your container and water your plants.

Heads and the rest of the residue after you have eaten fish are excellent to bury. It was suggested that if you have cats who might dig up the dinner byproducts, you could cut an inner tube and lay it on the ground. Cats will not bother thinking it's a snake.

This idea of using discarded fish parts reminds me of the time I visited Axel Greenburg. He was deep in a directing role in Hollywood. We sat out on the beautiful porch that overlooked a colorful valley.

I asked, "What are those sticks doing in your pots of large foliage plants?" He replied, "We are very fond of fish and after dinner we bury the scrap. After the ground is covered, we place a stick in the soil so we won't repeat at the same location." The plants were very healthy.

If you have a mole run in your garden, just stuff buds of garlic at inter-

vals getting the fruit first. Birds dislike long strings of black thread. Later in the season, those who have fruit trees will complain about the birds getting the fruit first. Birds dislike long strings of black thread. The dangling threads block their thoroughfare for free flying and they like open branch areas for a quick exit.

With these sage comments related to gardening, you can tell I have been in New England.

Year after year you have received my sage advice regarding "The Three Temptations." It goes like this.

The first time the weather is sunny and warm, bang your coat back up, put the rake away, go for a walk. The second time the great urge comes to turn the world upside down with a rake, just pick up sticks, bang up your coat and just be glad you are alive.

With the third tempting day, take it easy, watch those pruning shears or you will cut off your spring flowers. Walk around the garden with a hoe, but use judiciously as perennials have shallow roots. You can spread fertilizer.

It is reported that last week I saved a husband from a day of toil due to his good memory concerning "The Three Temptations."

In early spring you can plant peas, onions, radishes, spinach, lettuce, leek, purslane, poppies and calendula. They all require a cool growing season.

If you can, plant your rows going north and south, insuring an equal amount of sunlight. If you are gardening on a slope, be sure and use a contour pattern.

When you see the contents of your packet of seed you will know how deep to plant. They should be planted two or three times the maximum diameter of the seed.

by  
ALICE  
WESSELS  
BURLINGAME



## You could save by eating out

Eating out is more or less expensive than eating at home, depending on how you look at it.

If you compare only raw food costs to menu prices, the home prepared meal is less expensive, a Purdue University researcher told participants at a recent conference on Food Service Research held at Michigan State University.

But if you consider the homemaker's labor, at \$1 per hour and the cost of energy required to prepare the meal, the restaurant meal is often less expensive, said Dr. Lee Kruei, assistant professor in the Department of Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management.

Many at-home costs are impossible to quantify, he pointed out. Nevertheless, he compared the cost of two fast food type meals—fried chicken and roast beef sandwich—and the cost of fixing the same meals at home.

Home prepared costs for the fried chicken were broken down in terms of low-priced (baked chicken using a coating mix) and high priced (using a deep fryer).

Totalling the cost of potatoes, gravy, margarine, milk (for potatoes and cooking), rolls, cabbage slaw dressing, frying oil and dishwashing soap, the low-priced home prepared chicken dinner came to \$3.72 for a family of four. The high-priced fried chicken came to \$6.02. This compared to \$5.70 including tax for the fast food chicken.

However, when Kruei added labor and energy costs to the totals, the low-priced home prepared meal came to \$4.76 and the high-priced meal was \$7.25, eight per cent more than the restaurant meal.

Kruei also compared similar costs for the same dinner for three, two and one adult. For the single adult, the raw food cost was 31 per cent less for the low-priced meal and two per cent less for the high-priced dinner. But when energy and labor costs were added in, the home prepared meals were 12 per cent and 42 per cent higher than the restaurant meal.

All indicators are pointing to a continued trend in dining out, Kruei said, noting that food service industry sales are expected to grow at a rate of three-four per cent annually, at least through 1985.

He added that there is a "tug-of-war" over the consumer dollar going on between restaurants and supermarkets. A number of ad campaigns are directed at luring patrons away from restaurants, Kruei said, recalling an ad which states: "The ins eat in and the outs eat out."



Soft luggage

Soft, monogrammed, waterproofed luggage made of ski wear fabric is created by Becky Magnus (at left) who will teach the craft in Farmington Community Center. Barbara Dermody will be a student in the Monday morning classes which begin April 30, when participants will make a duffle bag, a garment bag, a

cosmetic bag and a tote bag in the four week course. Driving a small car motivated the teacher to custom-make her own luggage that sheds water, slides in the snow and squeezes into small spaces. Registrations are being taken at the center, 477-8484.

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