

Ladies,

Here are my notes from Linda Hamwi's presentation on container gardening with herbs at the Given Library. They are not in any particular order! APRIL 2013

Submitted by Janet Farrell

- Most herbs like the soil on the dry side, an exclusion might be chives. She recommends knowing the water requirements of your plant and putting them in different containers based on that need. If you want them to share a container, then put those that need more water on the same side of the pot and water accordingly.
- Fertilizer: herbs don't need a lot - she recommends 10-10-10 or 13-13-13 for the nitrogen-phosphate-potassium ratio.
- Fertilizer for flowers: she mentioned that she uses Miracle Grow Bloomer for her floral pots or any fertilizer that is 15-30-15. The first # is for green, the middle number for roots & flowers, the last # for overall plant health & utilization of nutrients. If the first number is the highest, your flowers will be all leaf and have few flowers.
- Must have good drainage. Take the plug out of the bottom of the pot
- Use fiberglass window screening to cover the hole. the water will drain, but the dirt will not!
- She prefers to put feet under her pots to raise them off the deck or patio; those plastic trays will hold water and can soak the roots if they are near the bottom of the pot and can attract bugs. She thinks raised pots will keep your deck or patio drier as well.
- Try doing a basil or rosemary topiary in the center of your pot. She cut one side off two rosemary plants, put the naked sides together and tied with raffia and removed the bottom leaves. She said they will form a ball topiary - some trimming involved.
- **USE POTTING MIX** not potting soil. She uses MIX for all of her pots, including flowers. The potting soil is too heavy.
- **ADD ORGANIC MATTER COMPOST.** She prefers mushroom mulch sold at Lowes or use cow manure - such as Black Cow brand.
- **USE 3 PARTS POTTING MIX TO 1 PART COMPOST** in your pot.
- Master Gardener Hot line in Carthage is 910.947.3188, 10 to noon  
– M-F

- She recommends Aberdeen Florist and Greenhouse, Aberdeen Supply, Big Bloomers, Dales, Green Haven as good places to get plants.
- She also goes to Raleigh to Campbell Rd Nursery, Garden Supply on Old Apex Rd, and Fairview Nursery.
- She explained the difference between an herb and a spice. Cilantro leaves are an herb. Cilantro seeds are Coriander. They taste very different!
- TSP of fresh herbs in a recipe is 1/4 TSP of dry. Also, use dry herbs at the beginning of a recipe and put in fresh herbs at the end.
- Water in the morning and try to water at the base of the plant to keep the leaves dry. Some plants like sage and basil are subject to fungus.
- HARVEST FRESH HERBS 1 HOUR BEFORE USING.
- TO DRY YOUR HERBS - don't bother hanging. Cover a pan or paper plate with paper towels, pick off the leaves, lay herbs on paper towel and stick on a closet shelf in a dark place to dry for 3 days. I must clean closet and find a shelf!
- You can use a coffee grinder (dedicated to herbs) to finely chop dried herbs.
- Dried herbs will keep for a year or so. She recommends we toss dried herbs in a zip lock bag and date the bag!
- STOP PINCHING YOUR PLANTS 1 MONTH BEFORE FROST. This will ensure that they can handle the cold and won't have tender leaves that get zapped.

Linda's pots were adorable. She went to TJ Maxx and bought large cheap colanders and did herb plantings in them. As long as a container has holes for drainage it can work. As always, Linda did a great job and fielded a lot of questions!

Janet Farrell