

## ***HIGH FALLS GARDENS E-LETTER, SPRING '05***

***Dear Friend of High Falls Gardens,***

*Spring is slow to arrive here in the mid Hudson Valley but, thanks to grow lights, thousands of tiny seedlings of Asian medicinal plants are poking out of the potting soil. And at more locations across the country this year – even Manhattan! Last fall's debut of the fresh dried domestic herbs is attracting more attention. The 2005 season will see a wider roll-out of our mission -- to place the bounty of local farms in the hands of skilled herbal practitioners, for the health of the whole.*

### ***\*\*\*\* Medicinal Herb Consortium Offers Sample Pack \*\*\*\****

As a special offer for the 2005 harvest, the Medicinal Herb Consortium (MHC) has decided to bundle together samples and ship the whole lot to practitioners willing to evaluate and experiment. The Sample Pack features three dozen species in their colorful, aromatic glory as shown last fall -- including perennial favorites hé shǒu wū, gǒu qǐ zǐ, líng zhī, huáng qí and xī yáng shēn -- in one or two-ounce-sized, fresh-dried samples identified by the individual farm where grown.

The offer is designed to entice teachers, clinics and practitioners who compound their own herbs. We want to stimulate more comment and feedback. The whole package is \$100, with a deposit of \$50 to make a reservation. Amounts are limited this year; herbs will be shipped in November on a first come, first served basis. To reserve your Sample Pack, send a \$50 check payable to "Medicinal Herb Consortium" to High Falls Gardens, Box 125, Philmont NY 12565.

The 2005 Sample Pack is a step toward establishment of a grown-to-order, website-based link direct from small ecological farms to herbal practitioners. It is one outcome of the MHC's 2004 national feasibility study of direct-marketing Chinese medicinal herbs to practitioners. (The MHC consists of five medicinal plant growers associations in different U.S. states which have begun to produce Asian, mostly Chinese, medicinal herbs.) Watch for more details of MHC study findings in future issues of this newsletter and other national media.

Eventually, practitioners will be able to order preferred types and quantities through the website. However, the MHC hopes practitioners will follow the season along with them. Orders will be placed in January for delivery in November. The advantages? Absolutely fresh, ecologically grown herbs each year with all revenues going back to local farms, managed through a low-cost cooperative system. Why ... it's community-supported agriculture!

### ***\*\*\*\* Botanical Studies for A&OM: The Mushroom Effect \*\*\*\****

Snow covered the ground, but all winter the pledges, programs, people and places were popping up all over, just like shiitake mushrooms in Scott Snyder's cellar. (Scott is head of the West Virginia Herb Growers Network.)

Last fall, High Falls Gardens announced a national campaign to collect three-year pledges from practitioners and students of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, toward a broad upgrade of the Student Gardens program to be known as Botanical Studies. Our goal is 1,000 pledges, which is around six percent of the number of licensed professionals nationwide. That rather impressive statistic will be used to persuade a large educational foundation to fund Botanical Studies for three years. During that time we will reinforce existing garden sites, create a few new ones, train teachers, adapt methods and materials, all to ensure that every student of A&OM will have access to hands-on contact with our plants.

*Why is this so important?* Well, right now the ball of the master game is in the practitioners' court. The farmers are willing and eager to produce fresh and local herbs, but they require practitioners' judgment and skill in assessing qualities, medicinal equivalency or acceptability. An enormous amount of work must be done to make this medicine our own.

But what discovery and joy are in the process! The most extraordinary response to the announcement of the pledge campaign has come from the many students who are contributing small sums each year to support this work.

Administrators, take note. Student gardens are an amenity, but also something more. In field workshops I've heard some pretty strong statements, such as "This is the only way I can really learn the herbs," and even "This is why I chose to study Oriental Medicine!" I believe we're seeing the process of evolution of the profession.

### ***\*\*\*\* Welcome, New Student Gardeners! \*\*\*\****

Each of the past five springs, new Student Gardeners have emerged with the daffodils. The patch has naturalized and is spreading! This year (so far) we welcome the following new members of the program.

- \* Tricia Good and Anna Tsang, Colorado School of TCM in Denver
- \* Robert Lutz, New York College of TCM in Mineola
- \* Emily Esmaili, Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine in Blacksburg
- \* Dara Barr and Erica Crowder, Pacific College of Oriental Medicine, NY campus in Manhattan

The Manhattan group, completely undeterred by surrounding stone and concrete, organized a seed germination workshop to start their seeds. Two dozen students turned out to sow seeds in three trays of plug flats. The current location of the garden is under clear plastic domes below grow-lights suspended from a coat rack in a fifth-floor classroom. Student Council president Jeremy Pulsifer presented a \$100 per year pledge (with first check) from the entire student body for the national Botanical Studies program. Thank you, students, for your deep commitment.

\*\*\*\* ***Páo Zhì Manual in Process*** \*\*\*\*

So much attention paid to sowing – what about the reaping end of the process? Now, to shed some light on that subject, a team of four editors is assembling the long-awaited manual for *páo zhì*, traditional herb processing.

HFG advisor Andy Ellis saw the need for this long ago and contributed his notes on *páo zhì* from many years of travel and study in China. The editors are using these notes as the basis of a practical manual intended to complement Philippe Sionneau's *An Introduction to the Use of Processed Chinese Medicinals*. The manual will help clinic students practice on raw herbs and even growers to do on-farm processing. We hope to add suggestions for harvesting drawn from Five Element theory and lunar rhythm models as incorporated in biodynamics practice.

The editors are Jason Wright, M.S., L.Ac., on the faculty of the Graduate Program in Oriental Medicine at New York Chiropractic College in Seneca Falls; Mercy Yule, L.Ac., who is moving from Washington state to become Clinical Coordinator at NYCC in April; Ross Lake, L.Ac., who practices in Redwood Valley, CA and also practices biodynamic farming in collaboration with Luke Frey of the vineyard family; and yours truly.

\*\*\*\* ***HFG Interns Take Charge*** \*\*\*\*

HFG has five adult interns this year, as we provide specific training in horticulture to those with the deepest investment in our work – the practitioners of Acupuncture and Oriental medicine – who may go on to teach others in their profession and/or work with the farmers.

The first of four weekend sessions (each has a seasonal theme of Germination, Planting, Cultivation and Harvest) was held toward the end of February. Interns examined seeds by family, studied germination techniques and sowed ten dozen flats of seeds. We expect the garden to fully embrace their Qi and shine forth. Thank you, Dara Barr (student), Ann Brameier, L.Ac., Angela Lee Chen, L.Ac., Jason Redinbo, L.Ac., and Ann Vitolo, L.Ac.

\*\*\*\* ***Workshop With Robert Newman Featured in Summer Schedule*** \*\*\*\*

Field workshops at the Claverack site in Columbia County, NY, are being scheduled now. Highlighted is August 26-28, when Robert Newman, L.Ac., M.S.T.C.M., central figure of the conservators network for Asian medicinal plants in the U.S., will be here. This will be the *first time* Robert has been to our garden after a whole decade of working together, and you can expect a few champagne corks to pop.

Reserve your place now: send a \$50 deposit payable to HFG at the address below. The workshop fee is \$295 (8 CEUs pending). The price includes three of Alison Appleby's delicious meals but not housing this year, although the Hawthorne Valley VSP bunkrooms are available for \$20 per night. Limited to 15, registration deadline August 5.

July 30, Aug. 6	Groups TBA	Sept. 18	HFG Public Field Day
Aug. 19-21	HFG Interns, Cultivation Wkshp	Sept. 24	Reserved for Colleges
<b>Aug. 26-28</b>	<b>In the Garden With Robert Newman</b>	Sept. 30-Oct. 2	HFG Interns, Harvest Wkshp
Sept. 10 & 17	Reserved for Colleges	Oct. 8	Reserved for Colleges

***Send your pledge to Botanical Studies for A&OM now! Remember, it's not just the money (fully tax-deductible). Your pledge is a vote that counts. Practitioners, you are confirming your profession's leadership in ensuring sustainability and quality for your medicinal herbs. Friends, you are voting for a future of truly efficacious, cost-effective health care.***

Jean Giblette, Director / High Falls Gardens / Box 125 Philmont NY 12565 USA / 518-672-7365 / [hfg@capital.net](mailto:hfg@capital.net)

© 2005 High Falls Gardens. All rights reserved.