

HIGH FALLS GARDENS E-LETTER, SUMMER '08

Dear Friend of High Falls Gardens,

Q: *What, a summer newsletter?! Aren't you too busy to write?* **A:** *Yes, we're way behind on the chores and overloaded -- but there's too much news to wait until autumn. The bees are swarming, the irrigation system and the tripods need repair, the website needs updating, Mercury is retrograde, but first -- the news!*

****** First Grant for Grower Education ******

New Mexico State University has been awarded a \$50,000 USDA grant to conduct an Asian medicinal plant grower seminar. Congratulations to Charles A. Martin at the NMSU Sustainable Agriculture Science Center at Alcalde who led the proposal team! The sponsoring agency is the Western Center for Risk Management Education, out of Washington State University. Peggy Schafer and Jean Giblette will be the primary instructors for this program, to be carried out in two multi-day blocks late 2008 and early 2009. Application details are yet to be announced, but the program is structured for established growers in the Southwest region.

This seminar is expected to be the prototype for the Medicinal Herb Consortium's grower education efforts, which will be adapted for different bioregions of the country. Although our Chinese medicinal herbs have strong adaptive capacity, it's one thing to grow for conservation or to propagate the material, and another thing entirely to grow for production. That's why our growers must collaborate on a national scale for several years at the beginning of our mutual enterprise: to compare and evaluate results, and learn which regions produce the best medicinals for any given species.



At St. Joe's in April, Kelly surveys land prepared for planting veggies. Greenhouse in background is filling up with starts -- including lots of Chinese medicinal herbs.

****** HFG is Greenhouse Guest ******

St. Joseph's Center in Valatie, NY is a monastery on 400 acres of good Hudson Valley land -- including top-rated Knickerbocker and Walpole soils. In production up until the 1970s when farming began its steep decline, the land is now being revived with the help of younger new farmers. The Brothers of the Holy Cross recently put their land into conservation and graciously invited Kelly O'Hearn and Paul Hess to do a community-supported garden, now in its second year. Also working at St. Joe's are a pasture-grazed beef producer, a beekeeper -- and HFG! We were welcomed by Kelly and Paul to share space in the fabulous old but solid glass greenhouse. We hope to increase biodiversity on this sacred land with some Chinese medicinal plants.

****** Summer Field Days, Internships and Workshops ******

High Falls Gardens Field Days

Three dates have been set aside for HFG field days this year: June 15, July 26-27, and August 2-3. Advance reservations are required. In addition, we will create a special field day for any group of six or more. Please arrange these well in advance by emailing Jean at hfg@capital.net.

Student Internship Intensive, High Falls Gardens (Claverack NY) August 20-27

The Hawthorne Valley Farm and the Healing Plant garden in Copake will cooperate with HFG to offer students a full immersion in medicinal plant cultivation, agriculture, biodynamics, conservation and ecology. Currently enrolled students of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine plus recent graduates since 2007 are eligible. The fee is \$400 plus food and lodging, although on-farm bunkrooms are available at \$20 per night. Applications are simplified this year: send Jean an email at hfg@capital.net, expressing interest in the student internship. No deposit required, but payment in full is due by Aug. 1st.

Weekend Workshop, Chinese Medicinal Herb Farm (Petaluma CA) August 23 and 24

Are you interested in cultivating the most efficacious Chinese botanicals? Or would you like to gain understanding and deepen your relationship with Chinese herbs through their cultivation? Perhaps you are concerned about losing access to

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herbs, and are interested in being a part of the development of Chinese herbs as a domestic emerging market? How about access to, or providing better quality herbs than are commonly found in the marketplace? Maybe you are a grower seeking to diversify your production. Besides offering seed and field grown herbs the Chinese Medicinal Herb Farm, which is located in the coastal hills in Northern California, also serves as an experimental farm to explore these possibilities as well as aid in herb conservation. Our weekend internship intensive allows those interested to visit with 100+ Chinese medicinals and engage in hands-on experience to grow and harvest Chinese herbs under the guidance of Peg Schafer, educator and nationally recognized Asian herb grower.

The weekend will have a mix of field activities and discussions covering the growing of herbs from seed sowing and pot culture in the nursery, to field production. We will cover soil management, planting, cultivation, and the harvesting and drying of leaf, flower, seed and root herb crops, as well as other issues concerning herb quality and cultivation.

The program is \$175, space is limited. If you are interested please email Peg at pschafer@sonic.net. Please see <http://www.chinesemedicinalherbfarm.com> for more information.

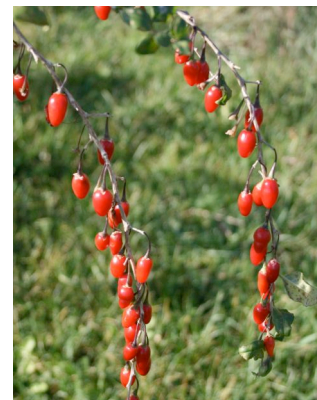
**** **Oriental Medicine and Agriculture: More Dots Connected** ****

The bill proposing changes in New York's scope of practice law for Oriental Medicine has won the sponsorship of Senator Catharine M. Young (57th District), chairperson of the Senate Agriculture Committee, who recognizes that herb crops have great potential to benefit small-scale, diversified farming operations. On May 7th the NY State Acupuncture Coalition (NYSAC) staged an event at the Legislative Office Building in Albany featuring, among other attractions, a table spread with New York Grown Chinese Medicinal Herbs provided by High Falls Gardens. Thanks to the sponsorship of Senator Young and Assemblyperson Ellen Young, the bill has been dubbed the "Young-Young" bill, otherwise known by numbers S7333 (Senate) and A10143 (Assembly). Call your reps and make sure they're on board!

I know you have all too many ways to spend your money right now, but few have more potential to shape a positive future for Oriental Medicine in the U.S. than NYSAC's efforts to get these bills passed. Help make New York an outstanding place to practice herbal medicine and support local farmers at the same time. It's easy – click on the Donate button on NYSAC's website, <http://nysacupuncture.org/>.

**** **Lycium Cultivar Named in Honor of Robert Newman's Father** ****

As those of you familiar with the HFG Seed List are aware, we have gone over to vegetative propagation of *Lycium chinense*, wolfberry, source of medicinal herbs gōu qǐ zǐ and dì gǔ pí. Now, one of our best plants has been named in honor of David Newman, late father of our plantsman extraordinaire, Robert Newman, L.Ac., M.S.T.C.M., the first Student Gardener and Johnny Appleseed of Chinese medicinal herbs in the U.S. Cuttings of *Lycium chinense* cv. 'David Newman' are being distributed to student gardeners, researchers and growers working with the Medicinal Herb Consortium.



Lycium chinense cv. 'David Newman'

Robert says his dad (and mom) deserve that recognition. "If it weren't for their emotional AND financial support, I would never have been able to develop the vast collection I did at ACTCM...It was really their money that allowed me to spend the many thousands of dollars to buy all the plants and seeds and planting materials and equipment for the project at ACTCM. And they helped support me in numerous ways when I needed some things while living in China....they've put up with me developing another huge collection of plants over the past nine years.... up to 800 or so, in their backyard and along the sides of their house, essentially taking over those spaces for my own Chinese-herb-plant-obsessed interests."

**** **Medicinal Herb Consortium at AAAOM Meeting October 16-21** ****

The MHC's Local Herbs will be on display in a trade show booth at the Westin Northshore Chicago in October, for the American Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine's Expo 2008. Glorious, Qi-full Asian herbs from all over the U.S. will be available to taste, smell and purchase. Stop by our table and get free samples, literature and updates on Local Herbs (<http://www.LocalHerbs.org>). If you haven't seen the MHC Sample Pack, you have a pleasant surprise in store. ☒