

The Great Rutabaga Experiment Isn't Over

BY DR. MIKE ROSMANN

More readers responded to "Gardener's great rutabaga experiment falls flat" than any other Farm and Ranch Life column thus far. The article was published earlier this fall.

For the first time, I grew rutabagas this year and harvested a good bunch. Every way I cooked them, they smelled up the entire house and tasted strong.

Many persons who wrote were replying to my plea, "Readers, please send me better ways I can use rutabagas without having to apologize." I have accumulated enough recipes for a cookbook.

Readers like Shirley of Illinois, offered useful advice and caution. "Years ago I planted rutabagas in our garden and had a fantastic crop. I needed to find as many ways to use them as possible."

"WGN's noon farm show was advertising a free cookbook with a recipe for rutabaga cake. Beet cake, zucchini cake, sweet potato cake, among other vegetable cakes, are delicious-so why not rutabaga? I ordered the cookbook and could hardly wait for it to arrive."

"I scrubbed a big root, peeled it and finely grated the called-for-amount. As the cake baked, the peculiar sewer gas smell coming from the oven was not a good sign."

"After the cake cooled and I had frosted it, my family tackled their supper dessert. There are no words to describe the scene at our country table. The spitting, sputtering and hurried gulps of water were a sight to witness."

"The cake went directly to our compost pile where critters on our farm make nightly raids. The cats, dogs, chickens, ducks, coons, possums, birds ... not one took more than a bite. The wonderful rutabaga cake decomposed into what is now only a memory."

Joel and Tonna of Iowa had more heartening advice. "Don't say 'goodbye' to rutabagas! This year was not a good year for them; dry weather concentrates the flavor so that is likely why you found them bitter."

"Planting later is better. As they say, when you can sit with a bare butt on the ground comfortably, it's time to plant them."

I have heard of keeping one's nose to the grindstone but I have never heard of using one's bare butt to check the soil temperature.

It would be just my luck that somebody would drive by my garden as I was conducting the "test." I would have a lot of explaining to do. Probably nobody would believe me.

Joel and Tonna offered additional constructive advice. "Some

years we have so many rutabagas that we have to leave them in the ground and cover them with big round bales to keep the ground from freezing and dig them as needed."

"We like them raw as a snack. Shredded, they make great hash browns. And you can make a great slaw similar to cabbage slaw."

"We eat them for breakfast: sauté shredded rutabagas with onions and a bit of hot pepper, break an egg on top of them and stir, cover and cook until done (3-5 minutes or so) over medium heat."

Mary from Iowa said her mother would cook rutabagas with ham or bacon and a little onion for flavor. She added, "We grew some in the field this year for

a fall cover crop for the cows; they say they are good to eat!"

I am fairly sure Mary meant cows find rutabagas good to eat. Or maybe Mary meant people say eating rutabagas won't kill you. Either way, it wasn't the convincing evidence I was looking for.

Pat in Indiana said rutabagas are an acquired taste. His mother peels them, slices and cooks them until tender, drains and mashes them, then adds brown sugar, butter and salt.

Pat added "On Thanksgiving Day my mother would make us eat them but now I enjoy them as well. If you have any questions, give 'Ma' a call." He added her phone number, but I am not publishing it because I wouldn't want Pat's 84 year old mother inundated with phone calls.

This Thanksgiving I tried Pat's mother's recipe. Marilyn, and my two children, tasted them when they came home for the holiday, but none of the other guests.

Marilyn proclaimed "We're not serving them!" Shelby and Jon both said, "I would eat them again." However, Shelby wouldn't let her year-old daughter try them, even though Alexandra eats practically everything.

So, the great rutabaga experiment isn't over yet. If little Alex likes rutabagas when her mother allows her to try them, I will grow them again.

Thanks to all who wrote me. Special thanks to all who contributed to this article. I will now retrieve the recently arrived seed catalog from the trash can-the one with a picture of a rutabaga on the front cover.

But we are not having rutabagas for Christmas dinner. Have a blessed Christmas and holiday season.

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Visiting Hours

Eat Healthier Over The Holidays

BY RACHEL PINOS

Dietitian, Avera Sacred Heart Hospital

The season of joy, giving and sharing is upon us. For many, food is deeply intertwined in our gatherings and celebrations with family, friends and neighbors. It always seems to be a struggle to strike the proper balance between enjoying and overindulging.

Here are a few key concepts to keep in mind to make it through the season without feeling the need to jump on a diet bandwagon come Jan. 1.

Remember the essentials of a balanced diet:

- Start each day with a healthy breakfast, including complex carbohydrates and lean protein.
- Stay hydrated throughout the day, sipping water wherever you are.

- Fill up with fiber from whole foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables and whole grains.

In reality, most of our time spent during the season is devoted to work and the hustle and bustle associated with the celebrations. There are likely only specific occasions during which we need to stay on top of our game. When the situation arises, follow these tips:

- Surviving holiday parties
- Don't skip meals to "save up" on calories. It's a poor strategy that leaves you overly hungry and likely to overeat later.
- If you are concerned about their being a healthy option on hand, bring a dish to share, such as raw vegetables and hummus or a Greek-yogurt based dip with whole-grain pita chips.
- Survey the table before making your se-

lections. Keep portions small; one taste might be enough to quench a craving.

Don't let one slip-up get you down. If you overindulge at a party one evening, get right back on track the next day. The true pitfalls occur when slip-ups become routine.

Wise food choices are definitely essential during the holidays but remaining active is another important piece of the weight maintenance puzzle. Try not to steer too far from your normal eating and exercise routine. Keep all things in perspective and recognize the truth to the quote, "People are so worried about what they eat between Christmas and the New Year, but they really should be worried about what they eat between the New Year and Christmas."

Take a step back and enjoy the reason for the season.

Nebraska Couple Wins Appeal To File Their Own Lawsuit

BY JOSH FUNK

Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — An Omaha couple who was unhappy with their bankruptcy attorney will have a chance to sue him and represent themselves.

Back in January, Russell and Judy Lenz were told they couldn't sue David Hicks because their handwritten lawsuit didn't state a proper claim.

The Nebraska Court of Appeals ruled Tuesday the Lenzes should have a chance to argue their case in court, so a Douglas County District judge will take another look at the case.

The appellate court said the lawsuit filed by the Lenzes, if liberally interpreted, appears to be a malpractice claim against Hicks. In their filing, the Lenzes said they wanted \$100 million in damages because Hicks had failed to defend their rights in Russell Lenz's bankruptcy case.

The Lenzes do not have a listed phone number.

Hicks declined to comment because he hadn't seen the ruling, and his attorney did not immediately respond to a message Tuesday.

In recent years, courts have been dealing with an increasing number of people who want to serve as their own lawyers. The mistakes amateurs make when filing court documents can slow down the system or derail a case, like it nearly did for the Lenzes.

Courts have set up self-help websites and made available standardized forms to help people file their own cases.

The state Court of Appeals said Tuesday that cases where individuals are representing themselves — which the courts call proceeding in forma pauperis — should be given additional leeway to ensure that a legitimate complaint isn't dismissed simply because of a procedural problem.

"The U.S. Supreme Court ultimately held that a complaint filed in forma pauperis is not automatically frivolous simply because it fails to state a claim," the court wrote.

Mental Health Practitioner Loses Licenses

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — State regulators have revoked the licenses of a Nebraska mental health practitioner who collected nearly \$66,000 in Medicaid payments for work performed by an unlicensed intern.

The Department of Health and Human Services revoked licenses held by Justin Mickles Sr. in November, according to papers filed this week.

Mickles, the owner of Homebase Counseling and Consulting, submitted 991 claims for work that was performed by an intern in 2006 and 2007, according to an order signed by Nebraska chief medical officer Joann Schaefer. Medicaid rules forbid providers from billing for interns' work.

The intern, identified by initials G.H., admitted to investigations that he had provided counseling and mental health services without supervision, even though he was not licensed in Nebraska. The Nebraska attorney general's office filed a lawsuit.

Neb. Awarded Money In Tobacco Settlement

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska has been awarded settlement money in a multi-state agreement with four major tobacco companies involving a 10-year dispute over payments.

Attorney General Jon Bruning says Monday's settlement will give Nebraska \$18 million in 2013 and will ensure future payments.

The companies agreed in 1998 to pay states more than \$200 billion over 25 years to settle lawsuits on health care costs related to smoking. More than a dozen states including Nebraska have been in dispute with the companies on payments over the past ten years.

Nebraska has received \$300 million from the companies since 2003. Bruning says \$40 million in annual payments were at risk with a continued legal fight.

Gov.'s Task Force Makes Recommendations

PIERRE (AP) — A task force created to train more primary health care providers for rural areas of South Dakota says health professions' education programs should work more closely together and that training opportunities in rural areas should be expanded.

Those are the recommendations that the Governor's Primary Care Task Force presented to Gov. Dennis Daugaard.

The group was created in May to figure out how to train more health care providers for rural areas of the state.

The 25-member task force has also recommended that Daugaard appoint an oversight committee to monitor progress and report to him, the Board of Regents and the Legislature.

Avera Health Adds Pierre Hospital To Network

SIoux FALLS (AP) — Avera Health is buying St. Mary's Healthcare Center in Pierre in a merger that will give the Sioux Falls-based health network a stronger foothold in central South Dakota.

The deal takes effect with the new year and includes St. Mary's 60-bed hospital in Pierre and a 10-bed affiliate hospital in nearby Gettysburg. Avera will have 31 hospitals in five states.

Terms of the sale were not disclosed. Both St. Mary's and Avera are affiliated with the Catholic church, and Avera vice president Daryl Thuringer says the acquisition technically is a transfer of sponsorship within the church.

St. Mary's has 425 employees in Pierre and 100 in Gettysburg. They will become part of the Avera network that includes 14,000 employees in about 100 communities.

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Marshall Corson Fort Wayne, IN \$1,500 25th Anniversary	Harold Nyhaug Sioux Falls \$600 Mega Millions Megaplier	Carolyn McDowell Sioux Falls \$500 A Christmas Story
Bill Jensen Yankton \$1,000 Plants vs Zombies	Lori Williams Flandreau \$500 Money Hog	Jacob Warembourg Yankton \$500 Casino Royale
Ashley Valdez-Collins Sioux Falls \$1,000 3x Cashword	Carol Wagner Elk Point \$500 Wild Card 2	Scott Johnson Sioux Falls \$500 Jingle Jumbo Bucks
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