

SunMt Plant Trials



ALOE VERA

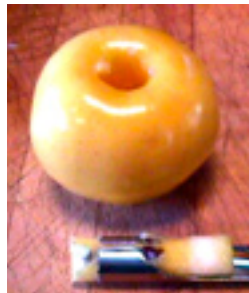
Grown in the greenhouse or as a house plant, these plants from Morro Bay have survived here in greenhouse.

APPLES

Late in 1985 we began planning our apple orchard to bear fruit from June to January. Thinking we could sell apples, cider and vinegar, we bought an apple press and planted 40 trees. Half were standard and half were dwarf with MIII rootstock and M9 interstem. We chose a cold pocket along the stream bed for the main orchard, with the low chill varieties planted higher, along the edge of the main garden. We had taste tested most varieties at EcoFarm conferences and field trips.

Low chill Apples

Anna (Israel): mild yellow
 Early Dawn (S. CA)
 Golden Dorsett (Bahamas): mild yellow



Other Apples

Ashmead's Kernal: old taste champ
 Cox Orange Pippin: firm yellow
 Katherine: CA hybrid
 King Solomon: pineapple flavor
 Liberty: disease resistant
 McIntosh: dwarf - chancy in this climate
 Mutsu: (Japan) a moderately sweet yellowish green /orange blush, creamy white flesh.
 Pink Permain: aromatic pink flesh
 Pioneer Scarlet: heavy lavender bloom / small red fruit
 Prima: new disease resistant
 Priscilla: new disease resistant
 Spitzenberg: old sweet variety
 Yellow Bellflower: weeping from tree/tart yellow fruit
 Wealthy: long bloom / many small apples
 Wickson: 25% sugar, many small, full flavored apples.

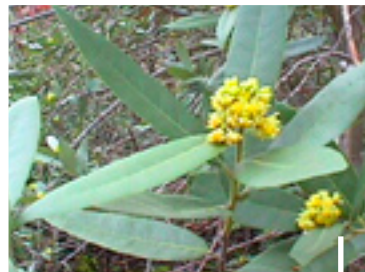
Black locust and Siberian pea bush wer planted among the apples for shade and nitrogen. The reality of water lim-

its hit us during a drought a few years later and we had to take most of the orchard off irrigation. A few trees survived for a couple of years without irrigation, but finally died. The survivors were the irrigated Golden Dorsett, Anna and Wickson apples. The Anna apple is a mild flavored apple, but the little Wicksons are a taste sensation. They are so flavorful that they are totally satisfying despite their snacking size. They are a favorite with children.



BAMBOO

Some varieties of Bamboo have edible shoots. The bamboo whole can be used for garden stakes and trellising. The larger timber bamboo (above right) can be used for construction. Split bamboo can be used for a variety of products from screens and baskets to tea strainers. We took our bamboo off irrigation during a drought, and it never recovered.



BAY TREE, California, *Umbellularia californica*, Laurel Family

The California native Bay tree bears leaves with culinary, aromatic, and medicinal properties, and an edible nut after parching. The tree Blooms from December through May.



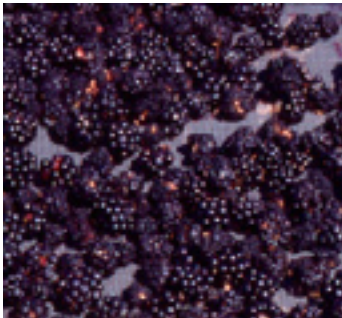
BEANS, Tepary *Phaseolus acutifolius*

Gary Nabhan & Native Seed Search introduced us to these lentil shaped, ochre colored beans that are an ancient crop of the Papago Indians. They can yield 3 crops in a season with light watering. Dry well in gunny sacks hung on a nail. Substitute for any of your favorite bean recipes.

www.nativeseedsearch.org

Seed Source: www.seedsofchange.com

BERRIES



BLACKBERRIES *Rubus Eubatus*

The thorns and tartness of our blackberries were a disincentive for continued growing compared to the ease of harvesting mulberries from a tree.

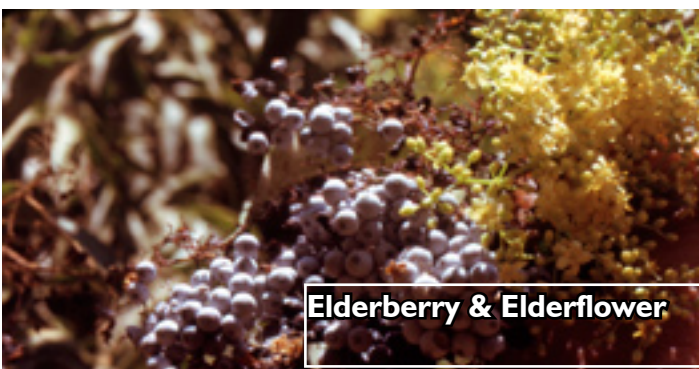
We grew out several varieties of blackberries that were heavy bearing and best for our climate, and also as habitat for predator wasps for the grape pests - grape leaf skeletonizers.

We found that the berries were tart, needed sweetening, and picking was a thorny business.

- Cheyenne*
- Cherokee*
- Shawnee*
- Black satin*

We preferred the Mulberries, and abandoned the blackberries after a few years.

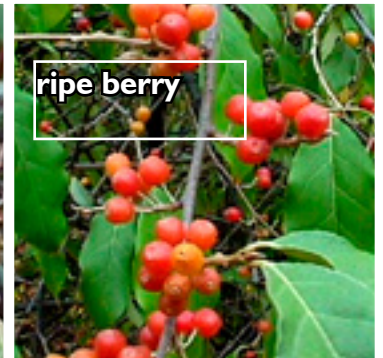
- Black Persian Mulberries*



Elderberry & Elderflower



unripe Goumi berry



ripe berry

ELEAGNUS or GOUMI BERRY

Goumi, *Eleagnus multiflora*, Oleaster Family, related to Autumn Olive or Russian Olive, *E. angustifolia*

Mildly sweet-tart red berries from November to December. The roots of Eleagnus are nitrogen fixing.

Caution: *It may adapt easily and may out compete with native vegetation, but we have seen no sign of this in 20 years.*



Elderflowers

ELDERBERRY *Sambucus canadensis*

The flowers, leaves, berries, bark and roots of this native to N. America have all been used in traditional folk medicine for centuries. The fruits have been used to make elderberry wine, and when cooked, can be used in pies and jams. The berries contain more vitamin C than any other herb except rosehips and black currant. They have recently been discovered to have anti-viral properties.

BERRIES cont.



HAWTHORNE BERRIES *Crataegus*

The tree has huge thorns. Hawthorne Berry and flowers are a culinary medicinal made into tea, jelly, or tincture. Ours is still growing with reduced irrigation.



MANZANITA *Arctostaphylos manzanita species*

The gray-green foliage is reflective at night. The shrubs reach a height of perhaps 8 to 12 feet and have a treelike appearance. The larger branches have a beautiful reddish-brown hue and a smooth texture. The flowers are white to pink. The Fall ripe berry is red, and shaped like a tiny apple with a large seed inside. The berries are nutritious and the leaves have medicinal properties.

We have a number of these beauties scattered over the mountain and they are a favorite. A sculpture in manzanita sits in our office space, and we used the wood for clothing pegs.

JUNIPER BERRIES

Juniperus species

The Juniper berry is not edible without cooking. It has a very strong, clean aroma and a distinctive flavor.



LYCII BERRY

Lycii berry, Chinese Wolfberry, Chinese Boxthorne, Matrimony Vine, *Lycium species (barbarum,)* Nightshade Family

There are about 100 species of the genus *Lycium* found in the western U.S. and South America. Of the 14 species found in the U.S. there is a Wolfberry (*Lycium pallidum*, *L. Fremontii*, & *L. exsertim*,) used by Native Americans among the 10 species found in Arizona alone. The red berries are sacred to the Zuni.



MULBERRY *Morus species*

Black Mulberry: M.nigra. White Mulberry: Morus alba

Black Mulberries have become one of our favorite fruits. Our bland flavored white mulberries did not live long. Picking from the tree is messy but easy - no thorns. You can tell they are ripe when they turn a dull black, and the mildly sweet taste requires no sweetener. The fruit was prolific for 15 years and started slowing in production. We pruned to create a ladder inside the tree for easier harvesting. Do not plant the fruiting mulberry in a driveway or near a structure where the purple stains can be a problem.

CACTUS *Opuntia species*

Nopale or Prickly Pear is one of those wonderful native southwest U.S. crops that require very little irrigation or care until you harvest - with caution. The pads can be used as a vegetable and the fruits (tunas) are edible raw or as jelly. The Robusta is better for its deep red fruits.



Robusta spines close up



Robusta cactus with ripe fruit

Robusta flower



Opuntia monacantha

This is the commonly used Nopale with small spines. The fruit is a yellow-orange. We have tried growing a spineless variety for easier picking, but it was eaten within 2 months of planting. The spines on the pads are there for a reason and they are easy for me to remove.



Cholla Flower & Fruit



Cholla spines

Cholla cactus with ripe and dried fruit



Dried Cholla Bud



CHOLLA CACTUS *Cylindropuntia*

A genus of cacti, containing the chollas, are also treated as a subgenus of *Opuntia* but are distinct. The Cholla bud is an edible.



CORN, TAOS BLUE

Beans and Corn are a traditional food combination of the indigenous Americas. Together they make a higher quality of protein, or Complimentary Protein. The Corn Silk has medicinal benefits.

The Blue Corn we grow came from a few ears grown out at the Taos Pueblo of New Mexico. The grandson of a farmer found a sealed pot of corn, grew it out, and brought it to an ecofarm conference, where we found them. We also grew out Papago White corn, and had eaten it as a substitute for sweet corn when it was fully ripe. But later we found that we used the blue corn more because of its unusual color and rich flavor.

CITRUS

Because we have a south facing slope for the citrus orchard, and put dwarf varieties around the irrigation pond to help moderate the cold, we have been able to grow varieties of citrus since planting in 1984.

Our **Meyer Lemon** tree was transplanted from the Pear Tree Farm in 1984, and still survives. We leave the Grapefruit to ripen on the tree until chance of a hard frost. The Meyer Lemon is half Orange, and less sour than other lemons.

Our **Moro Blood Orange** has the distinctive deep purple flesh and reddish orange rind. It is the most colorful of the three types, with a distinct, sweet flavor with a hint of raspberry particular to blood oranges.

Kumquats They are much hardier than other citrus plants like oranges. Our 'Nagami' kumquat is oval, requires a hot summer, ranging from 77 °F to 100.4 °F but can withstand frost to about 14 °F without injury. They have sweet, edible skins and sour flesh.

Losses:

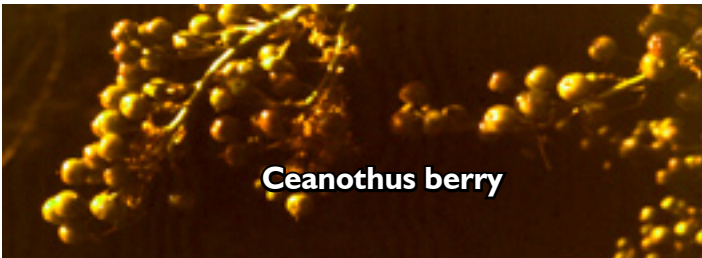
- 1 Limequat died in a heavy snow.
- 1 Kinnow mandarin when it snapped off at the graft during a windstorm
- 2 Miewa Kumquats and an Orangequat that in the dry heat
- 2 Honey Mandarins in a freeze, after a few years of harvests

Citrus Survivors in 2008

In the open on a southern slope::

- Grapefruit,
- Meyer Lemon,
- Dwarf Moro Blood Orange
- Nagami Kumquats
- Clementine mandarins
- Kinnow mandarins





Ceanothus berry



Ceanothus

CEANOTHUS species, Red Root

Known as California Lilac, this native rivals garden flowering bushes. The flower colors range from white to an intense blue. The very hard, reddish root of the Ceanothus makes an antiinflammatory tea. The berries and flowers make a very mild soap.

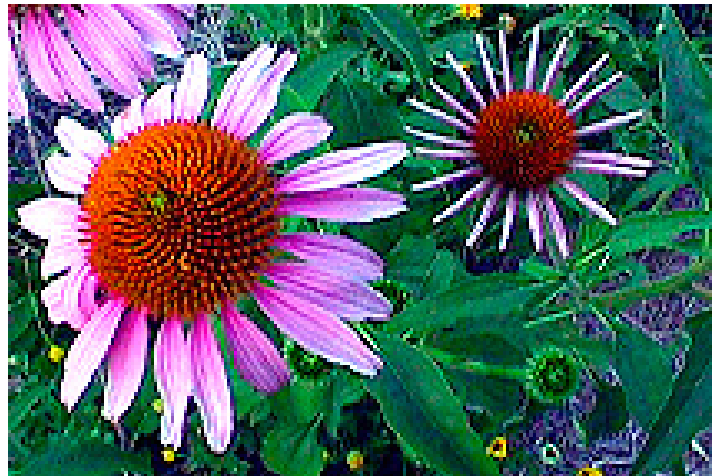


Ceanothus root / Red Root



DOCK, Yellow Dock *Rumex crispus*

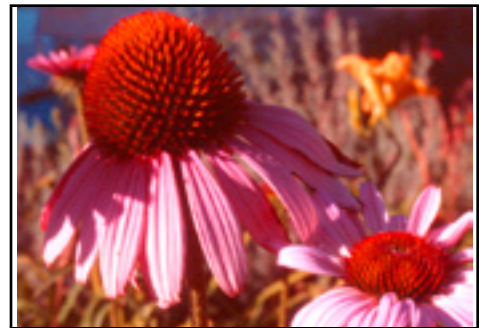
This naturalized plant is considered a weed, but has edible leaf, seeds, and a medicinal root. If it grows, it has good water or indicates a perched water table.



ECHINACEA *E. Purpurea, E. Angustifolia, E. Pallida*
Echinacea Purpurea

Purpurea is the easier variety to grow, and can be garden grown sown from seed. *Echinacea Angustifolia* has higher medicinal properties. Dried roots are available commercially. They are all beautiful garden flowers. The root & seeds have the strongest flavor, but leaves are also used medicinally.

Chew the seed, and the distinctive flavor of the medicinal properties is sharp followed by a mild and then more intense numbing sensation on your tongue.



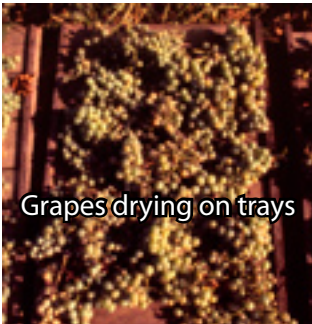
FREMONTIA, Flannel Bush *Fremontidendron californica*

This foothill shrub bears beautiful yellow flowers in spring. *Flannel Bush* indicates the hairy leaves and twigs. They are the long lived and related to medicinal Slippery Elm Bark.



JUJUBES *Zizyphus jujube*

This Asian native does well in our climate. The fruits ripen in early October. The large oval fruit has more flesh, but the smaller variety is the best for Chinese traditional medicinal uses. When they are fresh, in the early, **Apple Date stage**, they taste like a sweet Apple. When they dry to the **Red Date stage**, the skin toughens and should be cooked, soaked or chewed well to prevent sticking in throat.



Grapes drying on trays



Raisins

Apple Date stage Red Date stage



GRAPES

Half the Raisins in the world are grown in Fresno County. At SunMt we planted many varieties of grapes on the south facing slope behind the house, and on arbors around the house and deck. We use the young smooth leaved varieties for a vegetable and dry our excess fruit for raisins.

We had to take many off irrigation, but still grow several varieties chosen because they were close to the house. See all the enticing varieties we started with in the plant list.

- Alden
- Flame
- Lady Finger
- Manuka
- Perlite
- Thompson

GRAPE TOWERS

Efie designed a tree-like support he called the Grape Tower. The 4"x4" posts stood 6 1/2 feet high, topped by 2"x2" cross pieces. The grapes were cane pruned so the fruit hangs from the arms and can be harvested standing up. This method also allows good air circulation for the grape clusters, and provides good light exposure. Towers outlasted some of the varieties they supported, which were taken off water a few years later.



LEMONGRASS *Cymbopogon citratus*

Root & grass are used for the lovely lemon scent. The tropical plant grows best at 64° - 84° with high humidity: likes 80-100%. We have grown it outdoors as an annual in the Valley, but find the greenhouse works best here.

LEGUMINOUS Edibel Pods



Carob Pods

Carob Drink

CAROB *Ceratonia siliqua*,

The carob tree is a perennial leguminous tree, and the female produces a long brown pod with hard little seeds. Their endosperm is extracted to produce a galactomannan, which forms locust bean gum. Carob pod is known as St John's Bread and eaten by Humans and cattle in small quantities due to high tannins. It has a mild sweet flavor, used as a chocolate substitute and carob powder is available commercially.

The evergreen tree has been used as a landscape shade tree in Fresno. The pods are a nuisance to people who do not realize that they are edible. They get left on the streets and ground to rot.



MESQUITE *Prosopis species*

Mesquite is native to the Southwest U.S. The bean pod inner fiber has a mildly sweet, beany-maple or caramel taste. The ground meal can be used in baking, and is available on the internet. Mesquite has a carbohydrate that does not spike blood sugar.

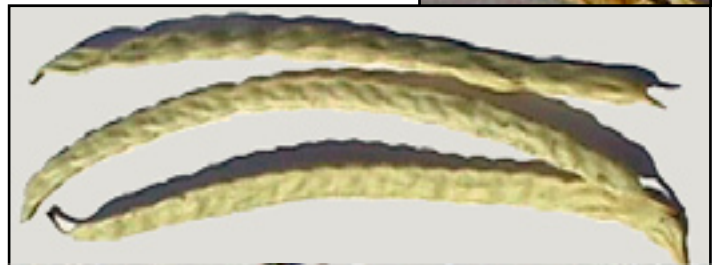
We collect our Honey Mesquite pods when they start to drop from the tree in summer. They are full of seeds, and can be chewed or eaten raw, but they are legumes and may be gassy this way.



Mesquite is a drought tolerant native Southwest plant. The indigenous people of the Sonoran Desert used it as a major source of food, drink, alcohol, fuel, fertilizer & medicine. The seeds get very hard when well dried and can be ground by hand. The hardy tree has few pests. For Bruchid Beetle problems, freeze the pods.

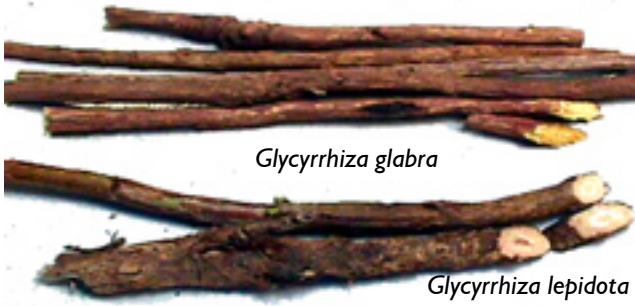


Below are the straight Honey Mesquite beans,





Native Licorice Root



Glycyrrhiza glabra

Glycyrrhiza lepidota

LICORICE ROOT

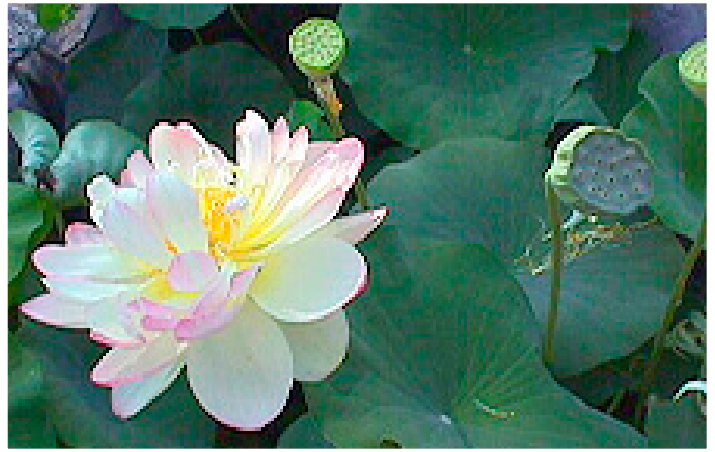
Native Licorice root, *Glycyrrhiza lepidota*, is said to be a substitute for the Old World variety, *Glycyrrhiza glabra*, used in the original licorice candy and Chinese traditional medicine. Licorice is found in patches in moist meadows and valleys throughout the Western U.S.

But our plants do not have the characteristic sweetness of the commercially available Licorice root; though they do have a little of the same general flavor. Either we have the wrong plant or lack something environmental that will produce the sweetness. These leguminous plants have naturalized in our garden, so we let them grow for the nitrogenous benefits.



LOQUAT *Eriobotrya japonica*

An evergreen large shrub or small tree, with oval fruits, growing in clusters, with a smooth or downy, yellow orange skin. There is a thin layer of succulent, yellow-orange flesh that covers large brown seeds, and is mildly sweet when ripe. Thinned for large size, these are our first fruits to ripen in May and June.



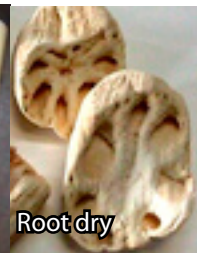
Pod



Dried Pod



Rootlet



Root dry



Seed dry



Seed cooked

LOTUS *Nellumbium lutea*, American Lotus & *N.nucifera*

American Lotus is a stunning water plant with many useful parts. flower petals, root & seeds. The root is long and potato like white with a dark, thin skin. Holes run the length of the root, giving it a distinctive pattern cut. We had a special pond section to contain the roots, and provide a deeper water area that we could control to protect them from winter cold. We get a few inches of snow at our elevation, but the roots survived until a drought dried out the pond.



Mallow Root

MALLOW *Malvacea species*

Wild Mallow is a common plant found in rich soils. The leaf is a mild, demulcent cooked green with medicinal benefits. The little green fruits of *M. parviflora* have been used to curdle milk in cheese making. The Root is dark outside and white inside, and is harvested as a medicinal.

MILK THISTLE *Silybum marianum*

It is an annual in its native Mediterranean region of Europe, and here at SunMt. The overall plant size can range from two to six feet tall. A distinguishing characteristic of milk thistle is the white patches, or marbling found along the veins of the dark green leaves.

The seeds are an edible medicinal that has become a major liver protector, The seeds contain the highest amount of silymarin, but the whole plant is used medicinally. Silybin is an antioxidant, it also alters the membrane structure of the liver cell, blocking the absorption of penetrating toxins into the cell, as with mushroom poisoning. Silybin stimulates the production of new liver cells to replace damaged cells. However, Milk Thistle is a nitrate accumulator, and can be lethal when livestock ingest the plant. It faces eradication because of this.



NIGELLA Black Cumin, Love-in-a-Mist, *Nigella damascena*

Dried Flower: The stems with the closed red seed pods can be harvested Spring to Fall, depending on the variety. The pale blue or white petals fall, leaving a red seed pod to be used as dry arrangements.

Seed: Dry up-side-down in a paper bag to collect the edible seeds that fall.



Nigella Seed



Milk Thistle, young leaves



Milk Thistle, seedhead



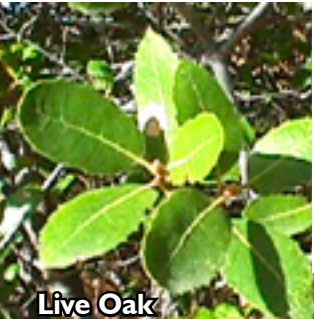
ripe seeds



Cleaned Milk Thistle Seeds



Valley Oak



Live Oak



Acorns

OAK TREE, *Quercus species*

Acorns from larger trees are larger, but all are edible. Acornmeal formed a major food for Native American Indians. The native oak trees are a defining characteristic of our area and a beloved tree at SunMt.



Fresh ripe Olives



Dried Olives

OLIVES

Olive fruits are an ancient crop that requires little water. The fruit indisputably makes the best culinary oil. It takes about 1 tree of Olives for 1 gallon of oil. The Leaf is a medicinal. California Black Olives were developed as a crop by the University of California. The mild flavored, pitted fruits are popular, but have caused environmental problems in Lindsay, the olive capital of the Central Valley. We now air dry like the ancients Greeks. This is a crop that is safe from critters as it needs drying or processing to be edible.



PEACH, INDIAN or BURGUNDY *Prunus persica*

We anticipate the mildly sweet-acid fruit of these true from seed Indian Peach trees which we call Burgundy Peach. They are ripe in September. The red flesh makes a striking color in fruit salads and keeps its color when dried, and rehydrated. To remove the stone, slice the fruit and twist to separate from this and other stone fruit.



PASSION FRUIT *Passiflora incarnata*

Passionfruits have sweet, heavily seeded flesh with a mild lime flavor. They grow scattered on a long vine, and are best in the summer heat. The sweetest are the ones that turn yellow green, a little soft and are beginning to pucker. We do not eat the seeds. The late fruit will not ripen, so I save these flowers for teas. Incarnata is an exception to the other 400 species of the genus *Passiflora* in that it is deciduous, can survive winter freezes. It is commonly called Maypop as well as Passion Flower.



Hachiya persimmon

Fuyu persimmon

PERSIMMON *Diospyros*

We still grow the two common persimmons shown above - Hachiya and Fuyu. The heart-shaped Hachiya which has the higher sugar level must be very soft to avoid astringency. The squat, pippin apple shaped and non-astringent, Fuyu, which can be eaten firm. We have also grown Cinnamon and Chocolate persimmons, which have not been as hardy. The astringency of tannins is removed through ripening by exposure to light over several days, or freezing.



PINEAPPLE GUAVA

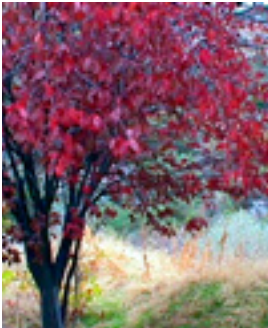
Feijoa sellowiana

The Pineapple Guava is the most tropical flavored fruit we can grow. We harvest the sweet white petals of the flowers in summer, which thins the fruit for better size at the same time. Late November, the fruit begins to drop, the sign that it is ripe. The skin has a tart lime flavor that some people like to eat., but most prefer the sweet inner flesh alone.



PLUM, JAPANESE FLOWERING *Prunus* species

The small red-purple fruit of these trees vary in edibility, and are not commercially used. Elfie finds the tart fruit quite edible right off the tree. They were a childhood pleasure in the family orchard. . The leaves make a stunning garden show as they are red.



PINE Bull Pine , Gray Pine *Pinus sabiniana*

Pine Nuts from this native pine at our elevation is prized for its beauty and its tasty nutritious nuts. Harvest these pine cones in winter, when they are still tightly closed. They have fierce points, so use caution in collecting. Leave half the cones for regeneration and critters.

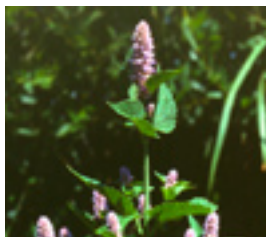


POMEGRANATES *Punica granatum*

The ancient, tart-sweet fruit resembles an outcropping of garnets. It can be harvested in October and added to fruit dishes, or juiced. For easy juicing we use a grapfruit press. You can open the fruit in a bowl of water to reduce mess. and scoop out the skin to more quickly clean the seeds. Or consider this a patience meditation and slowly release the seeds from the segmented skin by hand. We grow the *Wonderful* shown above, and “*Thompson Sweet*“ or *Ruby-Pink*.



The flowers we grow and eat at SunMt are free of chemicals. Nurseries and Florists use chemicals. Buying culinary flowers from reliable sources or growing your own is the safest way. After years of trials, these are the flowers I use most often, and not a complete list of edibles. There are other flowers I have listed as edibles in the past that I now consider survival or novelty foods. There are the tiny flowers of herbs like Oregano, Basil & Mint that are edible, but I found I did not use because cleaning the petals was too much work. The whole flowering tops can be used as decorative garnishes.



ANISE HYSSOP *Monarda didyma*
The florets have an anise flavor that goes well with apples as a garnish for salad, baked apples or applesauce. Add anise Seed &/or Licorice to enhance the flavor. Combine with the leaves for a refreshing tea.



CALENDULA *Calendula officinalis*
The intense yellow to orange petals have a mildly bitter flavor. They are healing for tissue internally & externally and are a common addition to salads from Spring to Fall. They are also a beneficial Flower Tea ingredient.



BEE BALM, Red *Monarda didyma*
The red blossoms have a warm, spicy floral-Mint/Oregano flavor that makes plum salad & preserves unique tasting. Combined with the leaves, it adds a floral hint to the oregano like tea.



CARNATION *Dianthus species*
The fragrant, floral **Clove Pink** (*Dianthus caryophyllus*) or the **Cottage Pinks** (*Dianthus plumarius*) have been used historically as a flavoring agent for beverages, syrups, floral honey & vinegar; and the crystallized petals as dessert decoration.



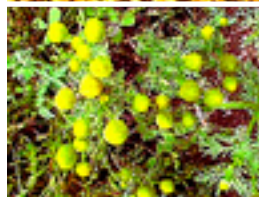
BEE BALM, Pink
Monarda didyma var. 'Claire Grace'
The purple blossoms of this native plant have a spicy floral-Mint/Oregano flavor that adds heat and color to Salsa.



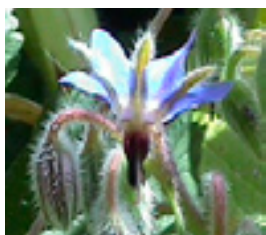
CHAMOMILE *Matricaria recutita*
The bright yellow flowers of the annual *German Chamomile* have a mildly bitter flavor, but the well known nerve calming, stomach settling aroma and effect. This is the tea of choice for bedtime. The perennial *Roman Chamomile* is more bitter and used more for cosmetics.



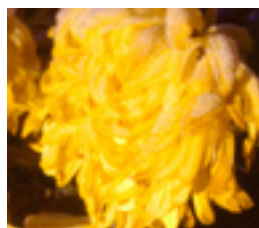
BEE BALM, Violet *Monarda fistulosa*
The pale lavender blossoms of this native plant have a hot floral-Mint/Oregano flavor that adds heat and color to Salsa. Try combining the leaves and flowers for a spicy tea with the milder Basil leaf.



PINEAPPLE WEED, Manzanilla
Matricaria matricarioides
is the tiny native, has the same azulene aroma, and is used the same way by Mexicans.



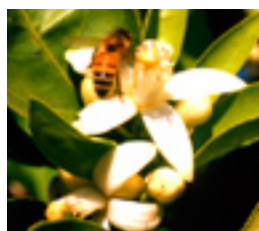
BORAGE *Borago officinalis*
These intense blue florets have a delicate texture and a light cucumber taste fresh. They are collected by grabbing the pointed center part to remove it from the hairy/prickly parts. We add them fresh to salads or frozen in tiny ice cubes for beverage accents.



CHRYSANTHEMUM
Chrysanthemum species
The flowers are bitter, but have been used medicinally in China for centuries. *Chrysanthemum coronarium*: or Garland Chrysanthemum, an annual & *Chrysanthemum sinensis*: ta perennial, are both eaten cooked as a vegetable & dried for tea.



BRASSICA FLOWERS *Brassica scies*
These include **Broccoli, Cabbage, Mustard & Kohlrabi**. All these flowers taste like a mild form of the vegetable. They are a nice garnish for cole slaw, or soups with any of the cole crops.



CITRUS *Citrus species*
The highly aromatic cream colored bud and flowers can be infused in honey. The dried flowers have an ambrosial aroma alone or mixed with



CLOVER *Trifolium species*
 The purple, red or white flowering tops are a blood purifying tea. It is high in protein and fat, and can be cooked for food; but should be used with other food to prevent bloating.
Red Clover *T. pratense* seed is used for sprouts.



HOLLYHOCK *Alcea rosea*
 These members of the mallow family have a wide range of colors. Use the mild flavored petals in salads and spreads for a soothing effect on the digestion.



DAY LILY *Hemerocallis species*
 These lovely lilies are edible whole: fresh in salads, or dried. The more orange flowers are more likely to be gassy than the yellow ones. All are high in vitamins A, B & C. The dried buds are called *Golden Threads* and used in traditional Chinese cooking.



HONEYSUCKLE *Lonicera japonica*
 The little white or yellow flower is sweetly floral at the nectar filled tip. As a child I bit the tip and sucked the nectar. Now I dry the flower for a cooling tea ingredient.



DILL *Anthemus graveolens*
 The yellow flowering tops of Dill make an edible garnish for salads where dill is used or an attractive, flavor enhancing addition to pickles.



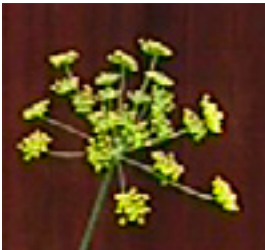
HOPS *Humulus lupulus L.*
 This perennial vine dies back in the winter, and yields a yellow-green cone form female flower with a bitter, flavor used in beer brewing. In Belgium male flowers and young shoots are eaten as a vegetable.



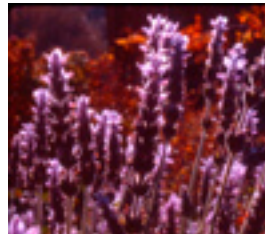
ELDER FLOWER *Sambucus canadensis*
 The tiny yellow flowering tops of Elder, or *Elderblow* are a classic cooling herb. Use as a tea with equal parts Peppermint to bring down a fever. They can be fried as fritters in a sweet batter.



JASMINE *Jasminium species*
 The aromatic little white or yellow flower is sweetly floral at the nectar filled tip. They are used to enhance Black Tea and floral infused Honey.
Do not confuse with the poisonous Carolina Jasmine, *Gelsemium seempervirens*.



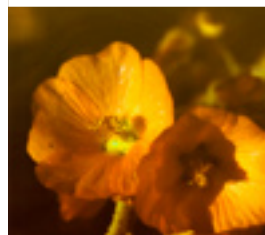
FENNEL FLOWER *Foeniculum vulgare*
 The flowers are tiny and golden yellow with a milder licorice flavor than the herb. They can be added to fennel salad, infused in Honey, mixed in sauce with green Melons, or made into tea.



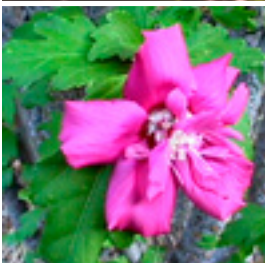
LAVENDER *Lavendula*
 These wonderfully aromatic flowers are anti-viral, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal nervines. Their aroma and beneficial properties can be infused into honey, sauces and teas.



HIBISCUS FLOWER *Hibiscus species*
 These stunning flower petals are mild flavored, demulcents, and can be added to sweet cream cheese spreads and frostings. The darker calyx of the *H. sabdariffa*, or **Jamaican sorrel**, are the commonly used **herbal Hibiscus Tea** found in dried form. They make a deep red, cooling astringent tea. Mexicans serve this as a summer cooler called **Jamaica** (*hamy-ka*).



MALLOW, Desert *Sphaeralcea ambigua*
 Also known as Desert Hollyhock, this pale orange flower is a demulcent with a mild flavor. Use the petals as edible decorations or chopped in floral spreads.



HIBISCUS /Rose of Sharon *H. Syriacus*
 The shrub can be trained into a tree, and the flowers come in many colors. Use this mild demulcent flower petal fresh



NASTURTITIUM *Tropaeolum majus*
 These bright orange to red flowers and their leaves are spicy hot They can be used fresh a salad garnish, stuffed with fillings or dried and used broken as a spice.



CHIVES & GARLIC CHIVES

Allium species
These onion or garlic flavored florets can be used as milder versions of their leaves. Chive leaves are round and Garlic Chive leaves are flat. Both are tasty garnishes.



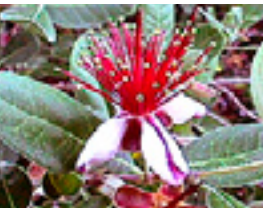
SOCIETY GARLIC *Allium tuberosum*
The pungent garlic flavored purple florets can be used in salads for a small but pungent taste and striking color.



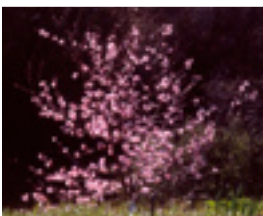
ONION, Wild *Allium schoenprasum*
The pungent onion flavored purple florets can be used in salads for a visual and taste hit. They are found in moist places in the spring.



PASSION FLOWER *Passiflora species*
The complex design of these musky scented flowers is exotic. The flower is combined with the oval fruit in syrup for a tropical Nervine dish. The dried flower is also used in Nervine teas.



PINEAPPLE GUAVA *Feijoa Sellowiana*
Harvest only the puffy white petals which taste and feel like marshmallow bits. Drying makes the sweet more intense. They make a lovely addition to desserts and sweet tea blends where I use the whole dried flower.



RED BUD, Western *Cercis occidentalis*
The dark pink antiscorbutic buds and lighter flowers of this California native bloom in spring. The buds have a sharp acidic flavor, and are good pickled as a tart flavor/color accent.



ROSE *Rosa species*
The most beloved aromatic flower has a mild bitter & astringent properties. The petals have been used for tea and to make Rose Water for centuries. See the Rose Honey recipe page In42 for use in Ice Cream and other desserts.



ROSEMARY *Rosmairnus officinalis*
The Blue or white florets have a milder flavor of the herb, and make a good garnish for herbed spreads, potato, or egg dishes where the herb is used.



SAFFRON CROCUS *Crocus sativa*
The most expensive herb on Earth. The styles of 50,000 flower are collected to make 1 pound. A little bit is used to give a deep yellow color and a distinctive flavor to Paella & rice dishes.



SQUASH FLOWERS *Curcubita species*
The Yellow male flowers and female flowers, *Courgette fleur* In French, alone or attached to young squash, are used stuffed and cooked, chopped and added to soup or chopped in scrambled Eggs.



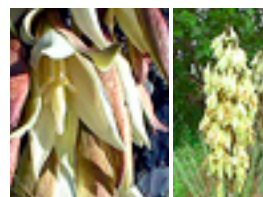
VIOLET *Viola species*
The velvet violet flower is mild flavored and sweetly aromatic with a little aftertaste. Use all viola species infused in Honey or dry face down, dip in egg white then crystallized sugar as a decorative confection.



Pansy *Viola wittrockiana*
These popular garden flowers come in many colors and have a mild flavor, but a little aftertaste that is masked by sugar.



Johnny -Jump-Up *V. tricolor*
is another edible species



YARROW, *Achillia millifolium*
The bitter, white flowering top is used as a medicinal tea. See Properties section, and Winter Brew Tea recipe page In66.



YUCCA *Yucca species*

SunMt FLOWER TEA

The best way I have found to use my edible flowers is in a hot weather tea of sweet, aromatic and cooling flowers. I harvest and individually mix each bag for the gourmet market.



QUINCE *Cydonia oblonga*

We still grow our standard quince, but the Pineapple quince with a mild pineapple hint. It succumbed to fireblight after a few years. Quince requires our summer heat to ripen. The large yellow fruit is mild and tart fresh. This is a benefit for discouraging scavengers. We have found fallen fruit with one bite in it- rarely more. Once baked, the sweetness comes out. A high fiber fruit for chutneys and other cooked fruit dishes.



RAISIN TREE *Hovenia dulcis*

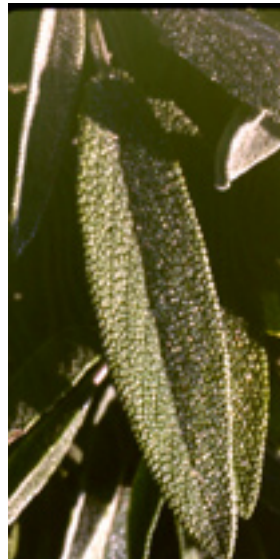
This plant is attractive to bees, butterflies and/or birds. The flowers are fragrant. Drought-tolerant; suitable for xeriscaping. Native to moist areas and mountains of China. It is cold-hardy to about -10° F, with no significant pests and diseases.

The edible “raisins” are not a fruit at all but a short, swollen mature flower stalk or peduncle which supports the inedible seed pod. As the pod matures, the peduncle of stem attaching it to the cluster swells, becomes knobby and turns a translucent reddish brown. A carob-like flavor develops as the sugars increase, and the peduncle is ready to eat when it falls to the ground. The unusual edibles fooled the squirrels for awhile, but they soon discovered the new food. The tree died after about 12 years for unknown reasons.



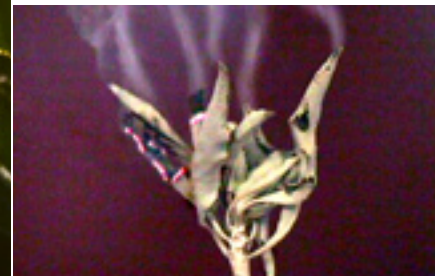
SAGE, *Salvia columbariae*

This native sage is the source of the highly nutritious Chia seeds. It can be found in the Fall on prairies, plains, in open fields and decomposed granite outcroppings in the Western U.S. and we preserve a stand on the cliffs of SunMt.



SAGE, *Salvia apiana*

This native sage is used as a ceremonial purification plant. We grow several other native sages and common garden sage. These aromatic drought tolerant plants are some of our favorites.



STRAWBERRY TREE *Arbutus unedo berries*

This evergreen tree is used as an ornamental, but the mildly sweet fruit can be harvested in Winter and added to fruit dishes. The very rough surface softens when it falls off the tree, and this is the best assurance it is ripe.



Roma tomatoes cut for drying



Roma tomatoes dried 4 days



WILD CUCUMBER - SPONGE *Marah macrocarpus*

This perennial native plant shown below is not edible, but produces a green oval fruit with a skeleton that also makes a sponge like Loofa. Collected after the skin has deteriorated naturally, they are ready to use without more processing.

We used to grow Loofa squash for food, summer shade and sponges, but when we moved to SunMt and found the wild cucumber, we stopped the more labor intensive crop and harvested from the wild. Wild cucumber is a climbing and trailing perennial that grows from a large woody or fleshy underground root weighing as much as 100 lbs. It is because of this root that it is sometimes called manroot.

Sometimes with a sharp beak at the end and containing 4-16 oblong brown to tan seeds. Wild cucumber begins sending up rapidly-growing shoots in February and may begin blooming in March continuing through April. It is a common plant of dry areas of chaparral, washes, roadsides below 3000 feet elevation.



TOMATOES

You can buy tomatoes and dry them yourself. We have used:

- old grape trays outdoors,
- cookie sheets in the solar dryer with a protective cover, and
- baskets indoors in bad weather.

The *Roma* is the firmest flesh, but we have dried all our tomatoes. cutting the large ones in 1/4 in the smaller ones in 1/2. Solar drying is far more economical than using electric powered dehydrators. We have grown a great variety of tomatoes, standard, desert, and heirloom varieties in yellow, orange & red.

The Heirloom *Brandywine* is a favorite for eating fresh. It has a deep blue-red color and rich, mild flavor. The home-grown Sweet 10 Cherry Tomatoes fresh from the vine are amazingly sweet. We used a razor blade to slice them neatly in half for making our dried *Cherry Toms*.



Cherry Tomatoes