

## JOHN'S CORNER:

### NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS

*by John Ferguson*

The results of a 25-year experiment in Kansas was performed on prairie soil using sprinklers to simulate rain. A team from Rutgers University found that, contrary to our intuition, a 35% increase in rainfall led to a 21-33% reduction in water infiltration into the soil and a very little increase in water retention. Science Daily, September 2019

Over watering our lawns is one of the most common issues people have, resulting in many problems from disease to increased insects and weeds. I was at a farm near La Grange this past weekend and noticed that St. Augustine turf grass had escaped and was growing wild in several areas on sandy soils to heavy clay. It was thriving in spite of not having a drop of rain for over 10 weeks and zero fertilizer. It had heavy competition from native grasses, shrubs and trees yet it had no disease or pests.

Another great reason to be a gardener has been discovered. A recent article in the journal Science Translational Medicine, July 2019 was on the link between our gut microbes and muscle growth. They found that certain microbes strengthened our muscles which is extremely important as we age. These good microbes come from healthy soil that we are exposed to when we garden organically and get our hands dirty or eat food grown in healthy soil. Every day the link between healthy soil and healthy people continues to increase. As Mike Serant of Microlife TM fertilizer fame likes to say: **“Healthy Soil = Healthy Plants = Healthy People.”**



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**A** new study published in the journal Nature Microbiology (2019), has found that 90% of the serotonin in our bodies is produced by microbes in our gut, where it influences gut immunity. It turns out that the gut microbes tell our gut cells to produce serotonin which the microbes import into their cells. Serotonin helps us feel good, it is believed to be part of our immune system, and helps us deal with stress. The researchers found that the antidepressant drugs fluoxetine or Prozac reduced the amount of serotonin transported into the microbial cells and reduced the number of these microbes. Another reason to be a gardener and immerse our hands in healthy soil so we can keep a supply of this good microbes in our bodies.

**We** often talk about the poor quality and low nutrient density of our food. Here is the link to another organization trying to teach folks about this issue. [The Bionutrient Food Association.](#)

**A** common weed in North America is the Dandelion ( *Taraxacum officinale* ) , an herbaceous perennial that belongs to the Asteraceae family of plants, along with daises and sunflowers. Native to Europe, dandelion seeds were brought by European colonists coming to America, where they were initially planted for culinary and therapeutic use and they have spread across America.

One of the roles of this plant in nature is to correct soil problems. It likes compacted soil and soil low in available calcium. Being an annual, as the plant dies, the deep taproot decomposes allowing air and water to enter the soil breaking up the compaction. The deep taproot also collects or recycles calcium (Ca) from the sub-soil and returns it to the surface in its leaves. When it dies the leaves decompose releasing the calcium.



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The Dr, Mercola newsletter has a nice article on the culinary and health benefits of this plant.

[16 Health Benefits of Dandelion](#)

One of our native plants, the common Elderberry ( *Sambucus nigra* ssp. *Canadensis*) is famous for its health benefits (just search on-line for health benefits and elderberry). One of the mechanisms has now been explained as the elderberry flower contains Quercetin. This compound has a wide range of benefits including antioxidant, anti-viral, helps circulatory issues, fights chronic inflammation, helps with hay fever, mood disorders and much more. The berries are used to make wine, jelly and even cobbles.

The large clusters of white flowers are not only beautiful in our gardens they are delicious (think elderberry fritters) or garnishment for a salad. Pollinators from bees to butterflies love the pollen and nectar from the flowers and birds love the berries. For the gardener it is also drought tolerant even though it can grow in standing water. It has few if any disease or pest problems, grows in any soil from sand to heavy clay. It is a perennial that gets more beautiful over time and blooms for over 6 months of the year.

There is a new documentary that illustrates the corruption in the USDA, EPA and many of our agricultural universities that have pushed toxic chemicals on the people of the world. It is titled "A New Resistance" and features Round-Up as it explains how glyphosate causes many of our health problems. The trailer is less than 3 minutes in length and can be seen at the link below.

[ANR Final Trailer](#)



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To give an example of the corruption our regulatory agencies the “Food Babe” a food blogger reveals the shocking differences between U.S. and U.K. ingredients lists - accusing American brands of trying to “poison consumers” with high numbers of additives and chemicals. The article can be found at

[dailymail.co.uk](http://dailymail.co.uk)

**We** have talked about the dangers of fluoride many times from how it hurts plants in our landscape to our pets and our health. Below are links to several recent articles by environmental groups on the dangers of fluoride.

Natural News has an internationally certified testing lab where they test the safety of products the USDA, EPA and FDA will not, exposing the lies we have been fed and they have a few articles on this issue:

[The mass dumbing down of humanity is now confirmed by scientists](#)

[Fluoride chemicals added to U.S. drinking water are unprocessed TOXIC WASTE; water fluoridation needs to end](#)

Dr. Mercola is an MD that has been writing about how to prevent health problems for years:

[Harmful Effects of Fluoride Continue to Mount](#)

[Updates on the Lawsuit Against the EPA to Stop Water Fluoridation](#)