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## **JOHN'S CORNER:**

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

*by John Ferguson*

A fruit tree that grows well along the Gulf Coast is the Loquat ( *Eriobotrya japonica* ). With the mild winter this past season I have noticed the fruits getting ripe all over town. Their yellowish color against the dark green leaves are very attractive.

It grows in full sun to part shade and in any well drained soil. The tree is hardy into the low teens but the fruit and flowers are not and may be lost in a hard freeze. It grows 15-25 feet tall and wide in most cases and produces a yellowish to orange fruit in the spring.

The fruit are particularly rich in the health promoting chemicals that are called carotenoids, that have been found to help protect against heart disease and some forms of cancer.

The fruits are small 1.5-2 inch-long by slightly over an inch in diameter. They are sweet when ripe with a slight citrusy flavor and can be eaten raw or incorporated into various dishes.

As a boy my parents had one next to their house. I would climb up on the roof and eat dozens of the fruits and see how far I could spit the large seeds. Our next-door neighbor also made a delicious marmalade from the fruit. As you probably already guessed, my job was to pick the fruit.



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The link below is a nice introduction to how microbes in the soil work to make plants healthy. [Read More...](#)

Over the last few weeks, the number of questions about food safety and food plants from herbs to fruit trees, from folks coming into the nursery has skyrocketed. Many folks have been asking “where can I learn more?” Hence below are some links to additional information for those whom are interested in protecting their families.

This season more and more people are putting in food gardens as part of the landscape. Healthy food is one of the best ways to strengthen our immune system. Several studies have now linked the severity of this pandemic to the type food ones eats. Folks whom eat lots of fast foods (junk foods) are more likely to have a severe disease problem. The link to the article below is a nice summary of some of the issues we face.

The coronavirus pandemic is focusing global attention on the hazards inherent to our industrial food system. Kristin Lawless writes in Heated about two major problems of our industrial food system: it is harming our environment and our bodies. “What we do to our environment, we do to ourselves,” Lawless writes.

"This pandemic has the potential to illuminate the connections between the way we grow and produce our food, the environment, and our health. Both Big Ag and Big Food have worked hard to hide these connections from us, but now the truth is laid bare." [Read more...](#)



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The following link is to an organization (U.S. Right To Know) that provides information about food safety that our media will not tell you as they want the advertising dollars from the big agricultural and food product manufacturing companies. [Read More...](#)

**With** the current pandemic a lot of interest has been on eating things that strengthen our immune systems and avoiding things that weaken our immune system. I have been saying this for a couple months now as glyphosate (Round Up) prevents the absorption of elements that our immune system needs to fight viruses like selenium, zinc, iodine, magnesium, etc.

A new study by Stephanie Seneff, Ph.D., who's spent 12 years studying glyphosate's and other toxic chemicals' effects on human health at the university MIT, believes the clustering of COVID-19 deaths around river tributaries in both China and the U.S. points to glyphosate contamination in our food and the environment.

Using detailed examples to back her hypothesis, Seneff connects the dots between chemical pollution, locations of where COVID-19 has hit hardest and numerous studies showing the connection between glyphosate and lung infections and diseases. Source: Stephanie Seneff, Ph.D., April 8, 2020

Genetically modified foods have the highest levels of glyphosate in and on them and should be avoided. Information on the dangers of GMO foods can be found on the website <https://gmwatch.org/en/>.

The best way to get healthy and safe foods is to grow one's own food, next is to shop at farmers markets. The educational organization called Urban Harvest sponsors several farmers markets in our area.

After that purchase only organically certified food at the grocery store. As this dangerous chemical is not allowed to be used in organic food production.

Note: Genetically Modified Food (GMO's) are not easily identified since President Obama signed legislation into law nick named the DARK act (Deny Americans the Right to Know) even though over 90% of Americans wanted labeling to make it easy to avoid this issue.

The 4th Edition of a book on this issue has just been released:

**GMO Myths and Truths: A Citizen's Guide to the Evidence on the Safety and Efficacy of Genetically Modified Crops and Foods, 3rd Edition 4th Edition**, by Claire Robinson Mphil, Michael Antoniou PhD, and John Fagan PhD, ISBN-13: 978-0993436703

