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JOHN'S CORNER:

NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS

by John Ferguson

Honey has been used for thousands of years to treat colds and coughs. Researchers at Oxford University has found that honey is a better treatment for upper respiratory tract infections than conventional remedies. It also reduced the duration of the infection by two days as it speeds up healing.

Since honey kills bacteria it is also useful for a topical treatment for cuts and scrapes. British Medical Journal Evidence Based Medicine (2020).

Note: Best to purchase raw unfiltered honey from a local farmers market or vendor. A lot of the grocery store brands are from China and watered down and cut with corn syrup and are worthless.

We have often talked about the importance of nutrients especially the minor and trace elements. A study in the journal Nutrients (2020) by researchers at Oregon State University, have found people whom take multi-vitamins and mineral supplements (iron, selenium, zinc, magnesium, copper, etc.) had less illness and the illness were less severe, and they went away faster than those not taking them.

These is especially important as we grow older as our immune system declines. Remember, if one eats foods with the herbicide glyphosate on or in them, especially GMO's the body cannot absorb these essential nutrients required for good health. See the link to the animated spoof at the end of the column.



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Note: The large majority of rice, corn, wheat, and soy products are full of glyphosate. Remember study by a researcher at MIT found that when one is exposed to glyphosate their chances of having a severe Covid-19 infection increases dramatically.

The best way to protect one's family is to buy and eat organic products or look for the glyphosate free label.

Researchers at the Max Planck Institute for Chemical Ecology has discovered that *strigolactones* a class of plant hormones that affect growth, also help with a plants immune system defense chemicals. Tobacco plants with these hormones were able to tolerate stem boring weevils better. PLOS Biology (2020)

A recent article by the Organic Consumers Association stated the chronic disease in America is the biggest threat to global economic development. "Life-style caused diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer now kill 50 million people per year". This twice as many than from infectious diseases.

This is a direct function of our industrialized food production system that promotes low quality processed food. This low-quality, mass-produced, fake food, is causing trillions of dollars of health care costs to society.

The best way to protect your families is to raise one's own fruits and vegetables organically or at least but produce directly at farmers markets that was grown organically.

I have often reviewed books by doctors on health and our food supply. There is a new one just released called "Food Fix: How to Save our Health, Our Economy, Our



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Communities, and Our Planet—One Bite at a Time” by a functional medical doctor Dr. Mark Hyman that I just ordered. He has authored several books related to using food as a medicine to prevent health problems.

There was an interesting article a few days ago in the newspaper The Epoch Times on research at Emory and Notre Dame universities on one of our native plants. The study was published in the journal of the American Chemical Society Infectious Diseases.

They found that the Beauty Berry (Bayberry, French Mulberry, Spanish Mulberry and other common names) but is botanically known as *Callicarpa americana*. This plant has been used for hundreds of years to treat many health problems.

They found this plant has potent abilities to fight antibiotic resistant infections. The leaves by themselves have little effect, however when extracts from the leaves were used in combination, it made common antibiotics far more effective against antibiotic resistant bacterial infections like staph (MRSA).

Native Americans used the roots, leaves and bark for centuries treating a range of concerns including malaria, rheumatism, dizziness, stomach aches, and dysentery amongst other issues.

Beautyberry a deciduous shrub found naturally in Texas and the southeastern United States. It grows between 3 and 6 feet tall and wide on average, though it's been known to reach 9 feet tall. It has a moderate to fast growth rate, gaining around 1 to 2 feet per year until it is mature. The shrub can be planted in the fall or spring and is very drought tolerant once established.

The plant has distinctive medium green foliage that is unspectacular and its pink or light purple flowers are fairly insignificant. However, this plant is known for one

remarkable feature: its bright purple berries that grow around the plant's stems in lump clusters.

The berries appear in the late summer or early fall and can persist into winter, providing visual interest for the landscape and food for wildlife. The berries are nontoxic to people and animals, and some people even use them to make jelly and other foods (even wine). In the fall, beautyberry foliage turns yellow, though frost can cause the leaf color to pass directly from green to brown before the leaves drop for winter. (Photo from the Internet)



Another study from Europe published in the journal PLOS Medicine (2020) has found that regular exposure to greenspace by children living in urban areas increased their IQ's by 2.6 points and reduced their bad behavioral score by 2 points.

The journal Nature (2020) has a paper on a new discovery on how a plants immune system works. They found that the plants stomata have two guard cells around it. These guard cells respond to calcium (Ca) signals that tells them to expand or contract closing the stomata and triggering the plants immune system to respond. Calcium normally cannot pass through the guard cells membrane; however, an immune system protein triggers the process.



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Numerous antidotal studies have shown that applying products like seaweed or fish emulsion to the leaves, helps plants be more disease resistant. Perhaps it is the water-soluble calcium in these products that help promote disease resistance in addition to feeding the good microbes living on the leaf's surface.

It is now well known that the microbiota in our guts play a large role in the human immune system. A paper in the European journal of Cardiology (2020) found that microbes (bad) are also linked with dozens of health conditions including high blood pressure, high body lipids, and body mass index.

By ensuring we have a large diversity of good microbes we help protect our health. When one gardens using organic methods in rich topsoil or with a good compost or mulch, they are exposed to billions of good microbes that enter our bodies by our nose or mouths.

When we eat organic food, avoid toxic chemicals and avoid highly processed food, we ensure our guts have the good microbes and not the bad ones that may cause health problems.

A study from Europe by the European Association for the Study of Obesity by researchers from several universities found that Ultra-processed food consumption is associated with chromosomal changes linked to biological aging. This means our bodies wear out quicker and it leads to more diseases and health problems.

This morning I read some scary statistics:



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- 11 million people/year die from a bad diet
- 50 million people/year die from lifestyle diseases (heart, diabetes, cancer, etc.)
- 2 billion people are over weight and at the same time 800 million people go to bed hungry every night
- Health costs, direct and indirect due to the poor quality of our food supply are \$3.7 Trillion/year in USA!

It amazes me that our politicians (both democrat and republican) all talk about treating the symptoms (insurance, health care, etc.) but none of them want to address the root cause, our extremely poor-quality food supply that is contaminated with toxic chemicals.

God's word tells us that he gave us everything we need. The reason to grow one's own fruit and vegetables organically continue to increase daily.

[The E-The Environmental Magazine](#) had a few tips on in-home pest control.

[The Alliance for Natural Health](#) has a spoof on the EPA (Enhanced Profit Agency) and glyphosate.