

EXTRA!

FROM THE OLD FARMER'S ALMANAC

COMMUNITY GARDEN CAMARADERIE

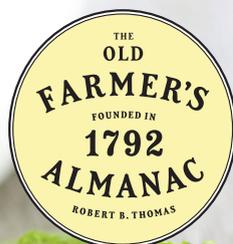
HOW TO USE WOOD ASHES

WEATHER FORECASTS

FIRST DAY OF SPRING RECIPES



MARCH 2017



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FEATURES

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First Day of Spring Recipes

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How to Use Wood Ashes

GARDENING

Community Garden Camaraderie

ANNIVERSARY

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Holidays, History, and Folklore



WEATHER FORECASTS

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WHAT'S NEXT

See what we have in store for our April issue!



THE MONTH OF MARCH

HOLIDAYS, HISTORY, AND FOLKLORE



Moon View

March's full Moon, the **Full Worm Moon**, occurs on the 12th, at 10:54 A.M. EDT.

 TAP FOR MORE MOON PHASES

 TAP FOR MORE ABOUT THE FULL WORM MOON

SEASONAL NOTE

In the Northern Hemisphere, the vernal equinox, marking the beginning of spring, occurs on March 20 at 6:29 A.M. EDT. On this day, the Sun rises due east and sets due west. In the Southern Hemisphere, the autumnal equinox occurs instead.



FOLKLORE FUN

*A wet spring,
a dry harvest.*

ALMANAC 225TH ANNIVERSARY TIME CAPSULE

The following excerpts are from the March Right-Hand Calendar Page of The 1793 [Old] Farmer's Almanac:

*Bleak winds assault us all around;
Dances aloft, or skims the ground:
See the school-boy—his hat in hand,
While on the path he scarce can stand.*

March 30–31: *A storm is near at hand.*

- Now for making maple sugar.
- Put your sleds, sleighs, etc., all carefully by, for another year.



MARCH'S BIRTHSTONE:

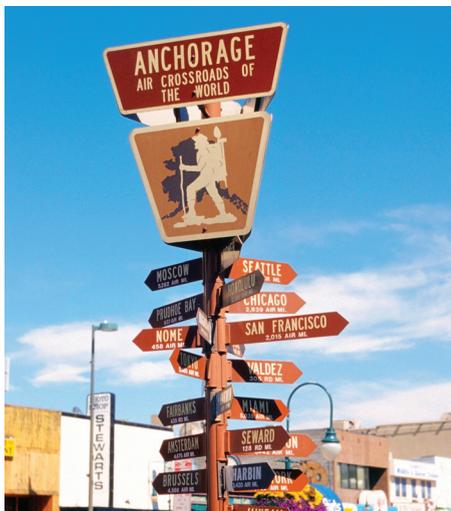
AQUAMARINE



- This gem is a type of beryl; its color can be pale to dark blue, greenish-blue, or blue-green; deep, intense blue versions are more valuable. Aquamarine is one of the hardest gemstones, with a rating of 7.5 to 8.0 on the Mohs scale (a diamond is rated at 10).

- The word “aquamarine” comes from Latin words meaning “water” (*aqua*) and “sea” (*mare*). Early sailors believed that aquamarine talismans, etched with the likeness of the sea god Neptune, protected them against ocean dangers.

- An alternate March birthstone is the bloodstone, a form of chalcedony quartz that is usually dark green speckled with red or brown or sometimes yellow. It was once thought to stop bleeding when held against a wound.



This Month in History

MARCH 30: WISE MOVE

On this day in 1867, thanks to Secretary of State William H. Seward, the United States bought the Alaska territory from Russia. Although it was known at the time as “Seward’s Folly,” the purchase was a true bargain—the entire state of Alaska cost \$7,200,000, or about 2 cents per acre. Seward’s Day commemorates the signing of the treaty and is observed in Alaska on the last Monday in March (March 27 this year).

Folly and learning often dwell together.



TAP TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MARCH'S BIRTHSTONE

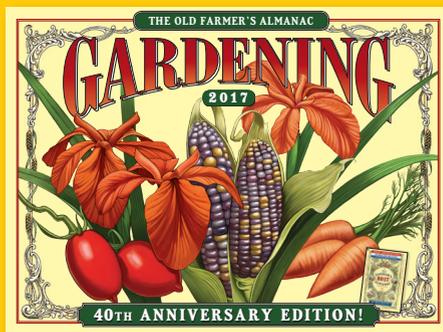
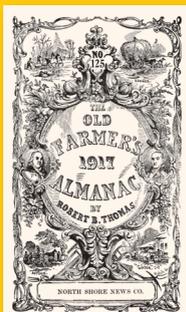
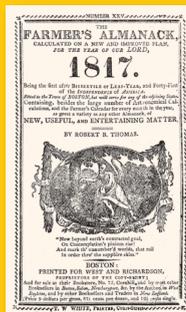
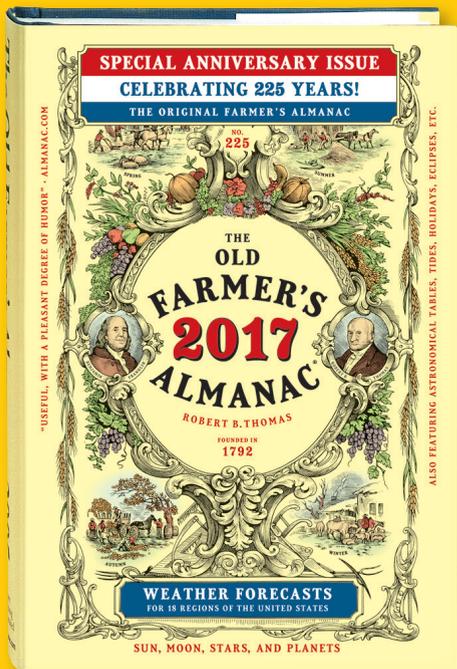


TAP FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ALASKA

DID YOU KNOW?

- Alaska's state flower is the forget-me-not.
- The Kodiak bear, found only on Alaska's Kodiak Archipelago, is the largest subspecies of brown bear. Some males measure 10 feet tall when standing upright.
- Denali (previously named Mt. McKinley) is the highest mountain in North America, rising 20,310 feet above sea level.
- Alaska has more than 3 million lakes. Many can be accessed only by air.
- About one-third of Alaska lies within the Arctic Circle.
- The mainlands of Alaska and Russia lie 55 miles apart, but this narrows to less than 3 miles if Russia's Big Diomedes Island and Alaska's Little Diomedes Island in the Bering Strait are taken into consideration. In winter, the water freezes, so technically it is possible to walk between the two countries. Russia's island is 20 hours ahead of Alaska's, due in part to the International Date Line running between the two; hence, the big island is nicknamed "Tomorrow Island" and the little, "Yesterday Isle." Little Diomedes has one town, called Diomedes, with a population of about 150.

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BEST DAYS TO DO THINGS

These March dates, deemed to be propitious in astrology, are based on the astrological passage of the Moon. However, consider all indicators before making any major decisions. —*Celeste Longacre*

PERSONAL

Begin diet to lose weight: 17, 26
 Begin diet to gain weight: 3, 30
 Cut hair to encourage growth: 2, 3, 29, 30
 Cut hair to discourage growth: 13, 14
 Have dental care: 11, 12
 Quit smoking: 17, 26
 Wean children: 17, 26

AROUND THE HOUSE

Can, pickle, or make sauerkraut: 15–17
 End projects: 27
 Start projects: 29

OUTDOORS

Begin logging: 20–22
 Go camping: 18, 19
 Go fishing: 1–12, 27–31
 Set posts or pour concrete: 20–22

IN THE GARDEN

Destroy pests and weeds: 1, 27, 28
 Graft or pollinate: 6, 7
 Prune to encourage growth: 1, 8–10
 Prune to discourage growth: 18, 19
 Plant aboveground crops: 6, 7
 Plant belowground crops: 15–17, 25
 Harvest aboveground crops: 2, 3, 29, 30
 Harvest belowground crops: 20–22

ON THE FARM

Breed animals: 15–17
 Castrate animals: 23, 24
 Cut hay: 1, 27, 28
 Set eggs: 12–14
 Slaughter livestock: 15–17
 Wean animals: 17, 26



GARDENING BY THE MOON'S SIGN

Use the March dates shown in the Moon's Astrological Place calendar below to find the best days for the following garden tasks:

PLANT, TRANSPLANT, AND GRAFT: Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces, or Taurus.

HARVEST: Aries, Leo, Sagittarius, Gemini, or Aquarius

BUILD/FIX FENCES OR GARDEN BEDS: Capricorn

CONTROL INSECT PESTS, PLOW, AND WEED: Aries, Gemini, Leo, Sagittarius, or Aquarius

PRUNE: Aries, Leo, or Sagittarius. During a waxing Moon, pruning encourages growth; during a waning Moon, it discourages growth.

THE MOON'S ASTROLOGICAL PLACE IN MARCH

1 Aries	9 Leo	17 Scorpio	25 Pisces
2 Taurus	10 Leo	18 Sagittarius	26 Pisces
3 Taurus	11 Virgo	19 Sagittarius	27 Aries
4 Gemini	12 Virgo	20 Capricorn	28 Aries
5 Gemini	13 Libra	21 Capricorn	29 Taurus
6 Cancer	14 Libra	22 Capricorn	30 Taurus
7 Cancer	15 Scorpio	23 Aquarius	31 Gemini
8 Leo	16 Scorpio	24 Aquarius	



TAP FOR
MERCURY IN
RETROGRADE
DATES



APP EXTRA!
TAP FOR
MARCH MOON
PHASES

MERCURY IN RETROGRADE

Sometimes the other planets appear to be traveling backward through the zodiac; this is an illusion. We call this illusion retrograde motion.

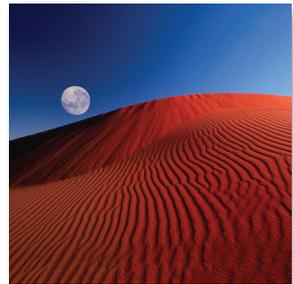
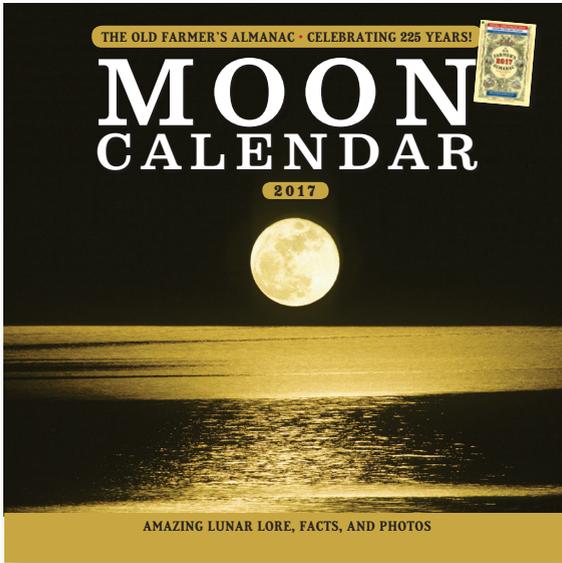
Mercury's retrograde periods can cause our plans to go awry. However, this is an excellent time to reflect on the past. Intuition is high during these periods, and coincidences can be extraordinary.

When Mercury is retrograde, remain flexible, allow extra time for travel, and avoid signing contracts. Review projects and plans at these times, but wait until Mercury is direct again to make any final decisions.

**Mercury will be retrograde
from April 9–May 3, August 13–
September 5, and December 3–23.**

–Celeste Longacre

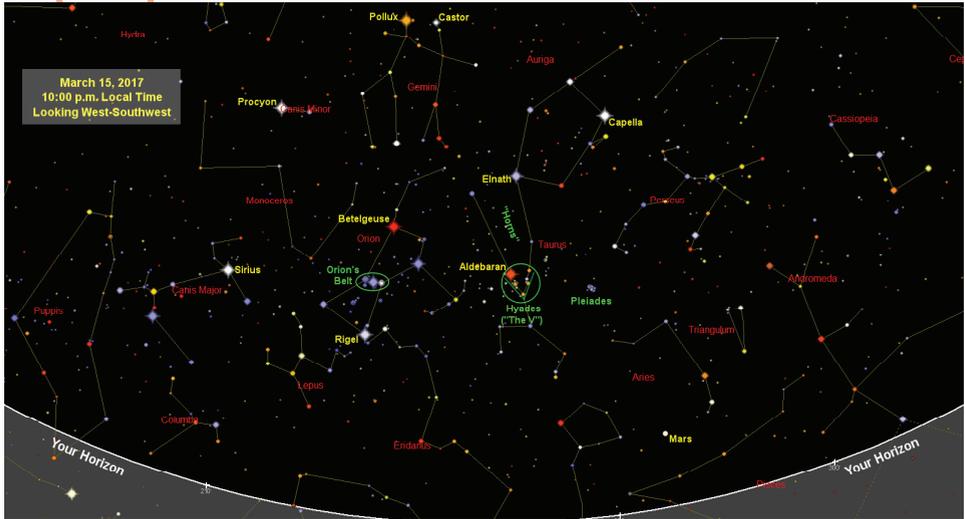
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GOOD-BYE, WINTER—HELLO, SPRING!

March is a turning point. The weather is warming and spring arrives in the Northern Hemisphere on March 20. In the evening sky of March, we enjoy our last good look at the brilliant constellations of winter before they slip below the horizon until their return later in the year.

Orion, the Hunter, brightest of all constellations, is well placed for viewing in mid-March. The three stars of Orion's belt form a straight horizontal line, with ruddy star Betelgeuse above them and blue-white Rigel below. An imaginary line from Betelgeuse to Rigel passes right through the Belt. Take the opportunity to compare the colors of Betelgeuse and Rigel. Star colors are notoriously subtle, but the contrast between these two is readily apparent.

To the right of Orion is another reddish star, Aldebaran, in Taurus, the Bull. Aldebaran marks one end of a V-shape pattern of stars forming the face of Taurus. The Bull's horns jut upward from the V. The dense group of stars at the apex of the V are members of a famous star cluster called the

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TAP TO GET
A PRINTABLE
MARCH
SKY MAP

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FOLLOW
OHIOAN JEFF
DETRAY'S SKY
ADVENTURES



Hyades (HIGH-uh-deez). It's the closest open (loose) star cluster to Earth and thus is of great interest to astronomers. The surprise is that Aldebaran is not a member of the cluster. Despite appearances, Aldebaran is much closer to us than the Hyades; it's merely a chance alignment that places it at one end of the V.

To the right of Taurus is another well-known star cluster, the Pleiades (PLEE-uh-deez). Sharp-eyed observers will see several individual stars when looking at this cluster. Those with less keen vision will see nothing but a hazy blob of light.

The right-hand horn of Taurus reaches upward, all the way to the star Elnath, which appears to belong both to Taurus and to five-sided Auriga, the Charioteer. Ancient astronomers considered Elnath to be shared between the two constellations, but the modern interpretation places it in Taurus.

Taurus's other horn points to Gemini, the Twins. In Greek mythology, Castor and Pollux were born of the same mother but had different fathers. Pollux's father was the god Zeus, making Pollux immortal. Castor's father was mortal, so Castor, too, was mortal. When Castor was killed in the Trojan War, Pollux was so distraught that Zeus made Castor immortal so that the half-brothers could be forever together in the sky. At this time of year, the stick figures of the Twins are easy to spot, standing upright and holding hands.

From Gemini, we move left and downward to the tiny constellation Canis Minor, the Lesser Dog. Only the presence of the bright star Procyon makes Canis Minor noteworthy. Beneath the Lesser Dog is Monoceros, the Unicorn, which contains no bright stars at all. In fact, if your sky is light-polluted, Monoceros's patch of sky may look completely empty.

In any case, your eyes will most likely be drawn to the bright star Sirius in Canis Major, the Greater Dog. Sirius is more than just an ordinary bright star; it is the brightest star in the night sky. If you are a fan of the Harry Potter stories, you will no doubt agree that author J. K. Rowling got it just right when she chose Sirius as the name for one of the brightest and most heroic characters in the Potter series.

—Jeff DeTray



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First Day of Spring Recipes

The first day of spring arrives on Monday, March 20! Celebrate with seasonal ingredients, such as fiddleheads, asparagus, peas, and even dandelion blossoms, showing up in your local market or garden. Make these recipes to welcome spring in a delightful and delicious way.

FOOD

Cream of Fiddleheads Soup



 TAP FOR RECIPE

CREAM OF FIDDLEHEADS SOUP

- 1-1/2 cups cleaned fiddleheads, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 cubes chicken bouillon or 2 teaspoons chicken bouillon granules
- 1 small onion, minced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 cups milk
- 2 cups heavy cream
- salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Steam fiddleheads for 10 to 12 minutes, or until tender. Set aside.

In a saucepan over medium heat, melt butter and bouillon cubes. Add fiddleheads, onions, and garlic and cook for 10 minutes. Add milk, stir frequently, and heat thoroughly. Add cream, stir to incorporate, and season with salt and pepper. Serve hot.

Makes 6 servings.



SHARE
THIS
RECIPE

FOOD

Asparagus Hummus

[+](#) TAP FOR RECIPE

ASPARAGUS HUMMUS

2 cups cut-up fresh asparagus
1 can (15.5 ounces) chickpeas, drained and rinsed
2 tablespoons tahini
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon lemon zest
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
kosher or sea salt and freshly ground white pepper, to taste

Prepare an ice-water bath and set aside.

In a saucepan, bring 4 cups salted water to a boil. Add asparagus and return water to boil. Cook for 4 minutes, or until asparagus is cooked through and bright green. Drain asparagus and refresh in ice-water bath. After 5 minutes, drain and set aside.

In a food processor or blender, combine chickpeas, tahini, and garlic, and purée. Add lemon juice, zest, and asparagus, and process until smooth. With machine running, pour in olive oil and process until well combined. Season with salt and pepper.

Makes about 2-1/2 cups.

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RECIPE

FOOD

Dandelion Pesto

 TAP FOR RECIPE

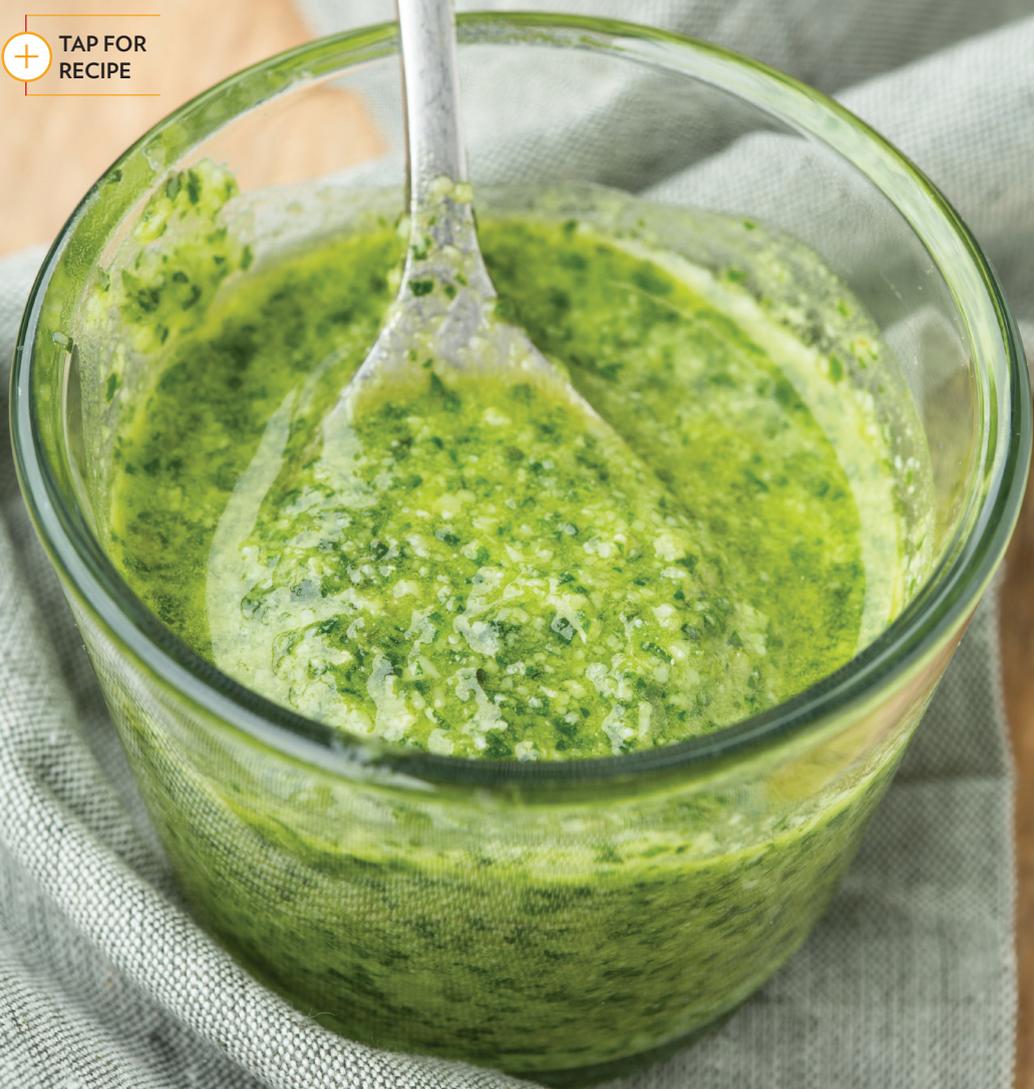


PHOTO: QUANTHEM/SHUTTERSTOCK



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THIS
RECIPE

DANDELION PESTO

2 cups tightly packed dandelion leaves, well-rinsed and dried

1 cup lightly toasted hazelnuts, almonds, pine nuts, or walnuts

12 large basil leaves

2 cloves garlic

1/2 cup olive oil

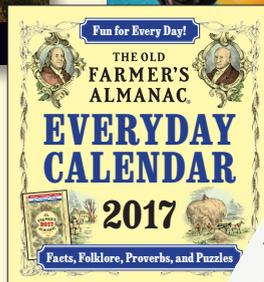
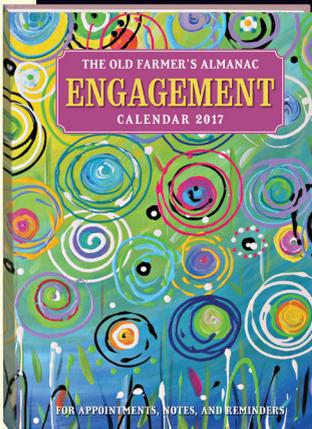
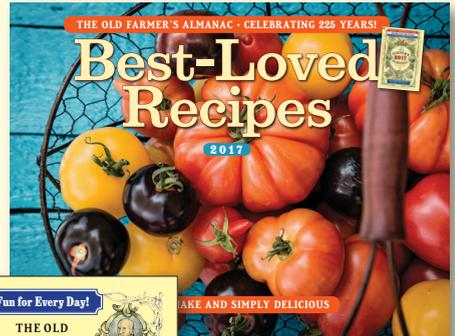
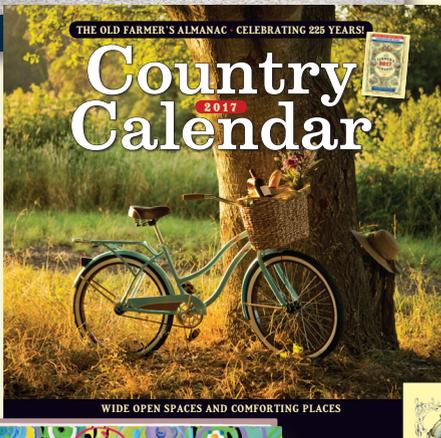
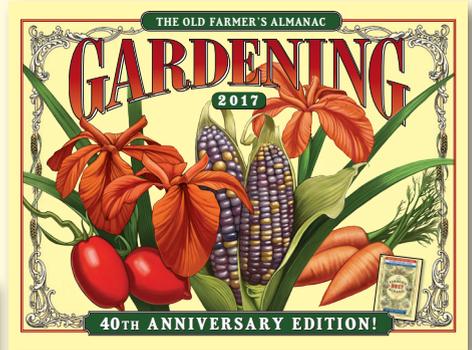
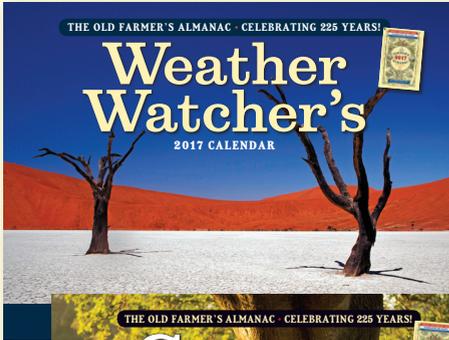
1/2 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (optional)

kosher or sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

In a food processor or blender, pulse together dandelion leaves, nuts, basil, and garlic. Scrape down sides of bowl. With machine running, add olive oil and process until smooth. Pulse in cheese (if using). Season with salt and pepper.

Makes 3-1/2 cups.

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LIVING NATURALLY

HOW TO USE WOOD ASHES

If you live in one of the nation's cold regions and burn wood for some or all of your winter heat, you've got wood ashes.

Each cord of firewood that you burn leaves you with 20 pounds of ashes or more, depending on your fuel source, heating appliance, and wood-burning skill.

LIVING NATURALLY

SAFETY FIRST

As with all aspects of wood heating, use vigilance and common sense in handling and managing your ashes. Store them in a covered metal container set on dirt or concrete a few feet in all directions from any combustible surface.

Even though the ashes may appear cold, buried embers may remain live for days, even weeks.

USING YOUR ASHES

Our ancestors learned to make lye, a caustic cleaning agent, at least 5,000 years ago by running water through wood ashes, eventually learning to combine it with animal fats and water to make soap. Some hardy folks still do.

Early Americans used ashes or homemade lye water for scrubbing wood floors, laundering clothes and bed linens, and soaking fresh-killed hogs to help remove the hair. For centuries, potters and ceramicists have used wood ashes to create beautiful glazes.

Instead of putting them out with the trash, put your ashes to use in and around your home. A few suggestions for modern use:

AMEND LAWN AND GARDEN SOIL. Wood ashes contain calcium, potassium, and a variety of trace minerals important for plant health. They also work well as a lime substitute to raise the pH of acid soils. However, unlike limestone, which can take 6 months or more to change soil pH, wood ash is water-soluble and changes the soil pH rapidly.

Don't apply wood ashes to your garden, lawn, or ornamental plantings without having had a soil test. Apply roughly twice as much ash by weight as the recommendation for limestone. Don't apply ashes around acid-loving plants such as blueberries, rhododendrons, azaleas, and hollies. Soils already

LIVING NATURALLY

in the pH range of 6.0 to 6.5 (optimum for most lawns and garden plants) can handle 20 pounds, or one 5-gallon pail of hardwood ashes per 1,000 square feet annually without raising the pH unduly.

Wear eye protection, gloves, and a dust mask and broadcast the ashes evenly on a dry, windless day. Mix them into the soil thoroughly before planting. Hose off any ashes that settle on actively growing plants to prevent burning the foliage.

REPEL SLUGS. Sprinkled lightly around susceptible plants, wood ashes will irritate slugs' moist bodies and repel them. The repellent effect will disappear after rain or irrigation dissolves the ashes.

MELT ICE AND PROVIDE WINTER TRACTION. Spread on walks and driveways, wood ashes will melt ice and provide traction. They don't work quite as well as salt, and they can be messy if you don't take steps to prevent the ashes from getting tracked into the house. But they're free, and they won't damage animal paws or paved surfaces.

CLEAN GLASS AND METAL. Hard to believe, but hardwood ashes make fast work of grease, grime, and tarnish on glass, silverware, ovenware, grills, and glass stovetops, as well as gummy residues left by stickers and labels.

Dip a damp cloth in wood ashes or make a thick paste of ashes and a little water, scrub lightly with a cotton cloth, and rinse away with plain water and another cloth. Wear gloves for these scrubbing tasks to avoid caustic burns.

REDUCE OR REMOVE OIL STAINS ON ASPHALT, STONE, AND CEMENT. Sprinkle ashes on oil or grease spills, rub in with a cloth, and sweep up. Repeat if necessary.

—Margaret Boyles

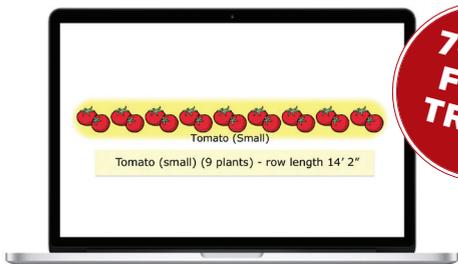


TAP TO READ MORE OF MARGARET BOYLES'S POSTS IN HER "LIVING NATURALLY" BLOG

Plan Your BEST Garden

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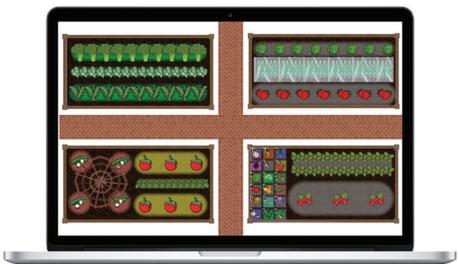


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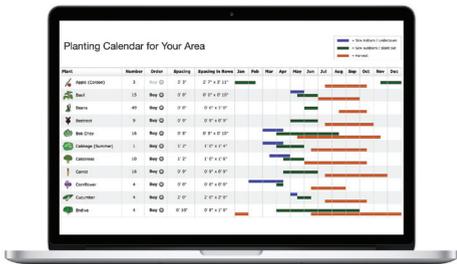


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GARDENING

Community Garden Camaraderie

**GARDENING ALONGSIDE NEIGHBORS
OPENS A WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES.**

GARDENING



Just about every gardener enjoys picking the season's first pepper, watching a young tomato ripen, and plucking potatoes from the ground. When you are surrounded by like-minded green thumbs who share this satisfaction, it's all the more pleasurable—and fruitful. This helps explain the lasting popularity of the community garden.

PLANTING THE SEEDS

Community gardens have been around for centuries. In the late

1800s, they were used to provide land and technical assistance to unemployed workers in large cities and to teach young people the value of a good work ethic.

The idea persisted: During World War I, the government promoted community gardens to expand the domestic food supply; during the Great Depression, community gardens provided a way for families to put food on the table; and the Victory Garden campaign during World War II encouraged people to grow food to improve morale. By

the 1970s, community gardens had become a response to rising inflation, environmental concerns, and a desire to build neighborly connections.

WHY SHOULD I DO THIS?

Today, such gardens are found nationwide—in both urban and rural settings. What makes people decide to join (or start) a community garden? Often it's for the simple reason that they don't have space for growing at home. But there are many reasons to belong to

GARDENING

a community garden. Of course, having fresh produce is high on the list. “Homegrown” food also saves money, and you can grow crops that may not otherwise be available locally.

Then there are the less tangible reasons. Gardening alongside other enthusiasts offers learning opportunities—whether it’s being introduced to an unfamiliar veggie or an alternative staking

technique, exchanging tips and tricks in the garden enhances the growing experience. Toiling in garden plots together also increases a sense of ownership and stewardship, while fostering community identity and spirit. Bonding over a season’s bounty can be very socially gratifying.

Working in a community garden is also likely to expose you to a diverse group of

people and possibly new customs and recipes—and for the gardener-chef, this can be great fun! The formation of a neighborhood garden can even lead to substantial contributions to the community at large. There are examples across the country demonstrating the kind of ripple effect that shared gardens can have. The development of school gardens and subsequent health and





wellness programs for children, for example, and grassroots neighborhood improvement projects have been known to result from the gathering of gardeners.

MORE THAN A HARVEST

Belonging to a community garden offers myriad opportunities to contribute to your neighborhood. You can

help to . . .

- develop “Seed to Table” or “Garden and Grow” types of programs, which emphasize hands-on experiences, community interaction, and the sharing of healthy meals.
- bring together various age groups, perhaps for work projects or community suppers.
- organize outreach efforts, such as donating food from the garden to

local nursing homes or food pantries.

- share surplus seeds and plants with area residents who are keen to expand their own gardens.

The truth is that growing side by side with the people in your community opens a world of possibilities beyond that prize tomato!



TAP TO LEARN HOW TO START A COMMUNITY GARDEN

TO LAUNCH A SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY GARDEN:

1. Organize a meeting of interested people. Start a conversation about what you want your garden to be, how it will function, who will be involved and how, etc.

2. Form a planning committee. Decide who will be responsible for which aspect of the garden's development.

3. Identify resources. Contact municipal planners, garden clubs, and other sources of information and assistance.

4. Consider a sponsor. Churches, schools, private businesses, and parks and recreation departments are possible sources for capital and in-kind donations.

5. Choose a site. Consider sun exposure, water availability, soil quality, etc. Look into leasing land, if necessary.

6. Prepare and develop the site. This will require many hands! Organize volunteer work crews to demolish (if necessary), prep, gather materials, and determine the design.

7. Organize the garden. Decide on the number of plots and how they will be organized and assigned. Remember to set aside space for storage and compost bins or piles.

8. Plan for children. Designate an area for kids where they can participate and explore at their own speed.

9. Determine the rules and put them in writing. Ground rules help gardeners to know what is expected of them to keep things running smoothly.

10. Help members keep in touch. Foster communication by creating an email list, installing a rainproof bulletin board in the garden, and/or organizing activities and celebrations.

—American Community Garden Association

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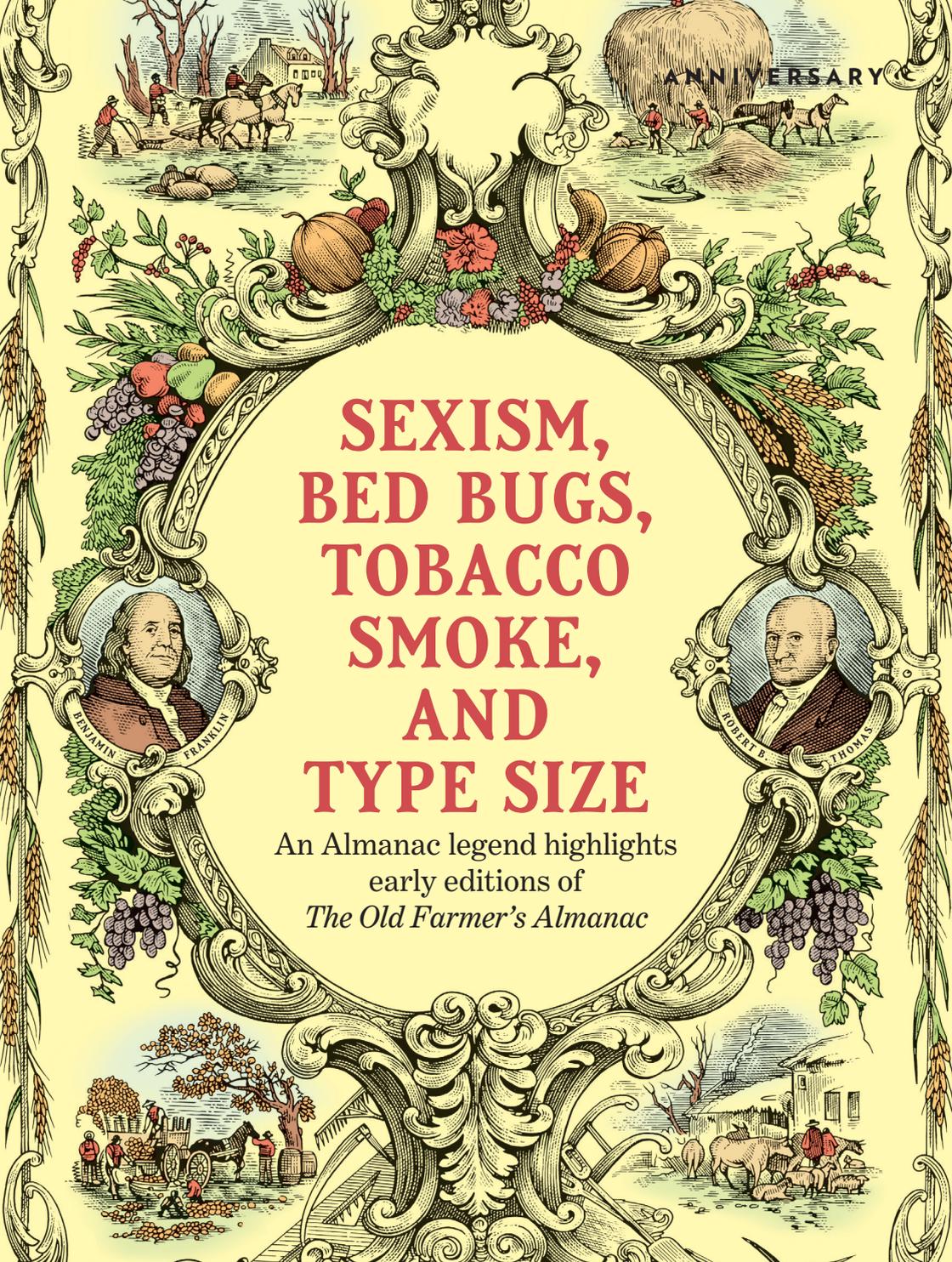


LEARN MORE

ANNIVERSARY

SEXISM, BED BUGS, TOBACCO SMOKE, AND TYPE SIZE

An Almanac legend highlights
early editions of
The Old Farmer's Almanac



Founder Robert B. Thomas and other almanac editors of his day designed their material for men. It was a male-dominated society, and although New Englanders were generally more literate than most Americans, American women everywhere lagged behind American men in literacy. Girls were often kept from school, while boys were generally taught the rudiments of reading, writing, and “calculating.” So, early Almanac jokes are based on all the old stereotypes, especially that of the talkative woman. The theme appears in numerous editions, starting with that very first edition in 1793:

Question: Will you instruct your daughter in the different languages?

Answer: No, sir. One tongue’s enough for a woman.

The 1794 edition sheds light on life in those days. One article presented “A Cheap, Easy, and Clean Mixture for Effectively Destroying Bed Bugs,” which consisted of wine, turpentine, and a half-ounce of camphor. In the next edition appears the “direction for recovering persons apparently dead from drowning as recommended by the Humane Society.” Specifically, one is to “blow tobacco smoke into the fundament with a fumigator.” Difficult to imagine how blowing tobacco up there would bring anyone around, but . . .

The arrival of the new century isn’t mentioned in the 1800 edition, and the Almanac went to

press prior to George Washington’s death in December 1799, so there’s no mention of that either. But you can learn that the Salem, Massachusetts, mail stage “starts from Major King’s tavern every day in the week (Sundays excepted) at 3 o’clock in the afternoon and arrives in Boston every day at 11 o’clock in the morning.” For those who prefer to travel on their own, there’s a strong warning not to “suffer your horses to be frequently harnessed in a pleasure sleigh and be careful when they are, not to suffer them to be driven by young and inexperienced drivers.”

The 1801 edition announces the “25th year of Independence of America,” but Thomas doesn’t make anything of it. It’s

obvious that he's not one for frivolity and celebrating. "Cut your clover," he grumbles, "and mind your business."

In the 1803 edition, I found the first Almanac joke that made me smile.

When Pat shot at a hawk on the top limb of a tree and it fell to the ground with a thud, Mike said, "Pat, you might have saved your powder and shot, for the fall would have killed it."

(Well, I didn't say that it was hilarious.)

Beginning in 1804, Thomas assigned Bartholomew Brown, a Boston lawyer, musical scholar, and storekeeper (how's that for a combination?) to write the 12 one-column "Farmer's Calendar" essays for each edition.

As with all his contributors, Thomas acknowledged Brown by his initials only, a custom not to be duplicated until my uncle (Robb Sagendorph) took over 140 years later.

Because Brown's well-read columns continued until 3 or 4 years after his death in 1854 (like Thomas, he prepared his copy well ahead of deadlines), his "voice" in the Almanac—concentrating on rural life, nature, and plenty of advice—is an important element of these early editions. Here are a few samples from the "B.B." columns:

● **Bleed working cattle to prevent their heating; give them potatoes and good hay. (1804)**

● **He that gets drunk is first a madman, then an idiot. O, visit not the dram shop. (1806)**

● **It is every man's duty to make himself profitable to mankind; if he can, to many; if not, to fewer; if not so neither, to his neighbors; but always, however, to himself. (1807)**

The type in the 1810 edition turned out to be even smaller and more compact than in the first few editions—about the size of the print at the bottom of today's insurance policies. It's amazing to think that this was once pleasurable reading matter. I can only surmise that our ancestors enjoyed outstanding eyesight.

To be continued . . .

—From *The Best of The Old Farmer's Almanac by Judson D. Hale Sr., the Almanac's editor in chief from 1971 to 2001 and a contributing editor for many years before and after that period.*



IN BEGINNING OR IN END,
MARCH ITS GIFTS WILL SEND.



HOW WE MAKE OUR PREDICTIONS

We derive our weather forecasts from a secret formula that was devised by the founder of this Almanac, Robert B. Thomas, in 1792. Thomas believed that weather on Earth was influenced by sunspots, which are magnetic storms on the surface of the Sun.

Over the years, we have refined and enhanced this formula with state-of-the-art technology and modern scientific calculations. We employ three scientific disciplines to make our long-range predictions: solar science, the study of sunspots and other solar activity; climatology, the study of prevailing weather patterns; and meteorology, the study of the atmosphere. We predict weather trends and events by comparing solar patterns and historical weather conditions with current solar activity.

Our forecasts emphasize temperature and precipitation deviations from averages, or normals. These are based on 30-year statistical averages prepared by government meteorological agencies and updated every 10 years. Most-recent tabulations span the period 1981 through 2010.

We believe that nothing in the universe happens haphazardly, that there is a cause-and-effect pattern to all phenomena. However, although neither we nor any other forecasters have as yet gained sufficient insight into the mysteries of the universe to predict the weather with total accuracy, our results are almost always very close to our traditional claim of 80 percent.

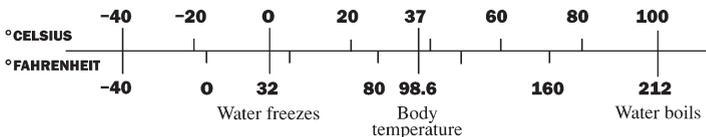


TAP TO FIND OUT THE WEATHER HISTORY OF THE DAY



LOVE ALL THINGS WEATHER? TAP FOR THE WEATHER FOLKLORE OF THE DAY

CELSIUS-FAHRENHEIT TABLE

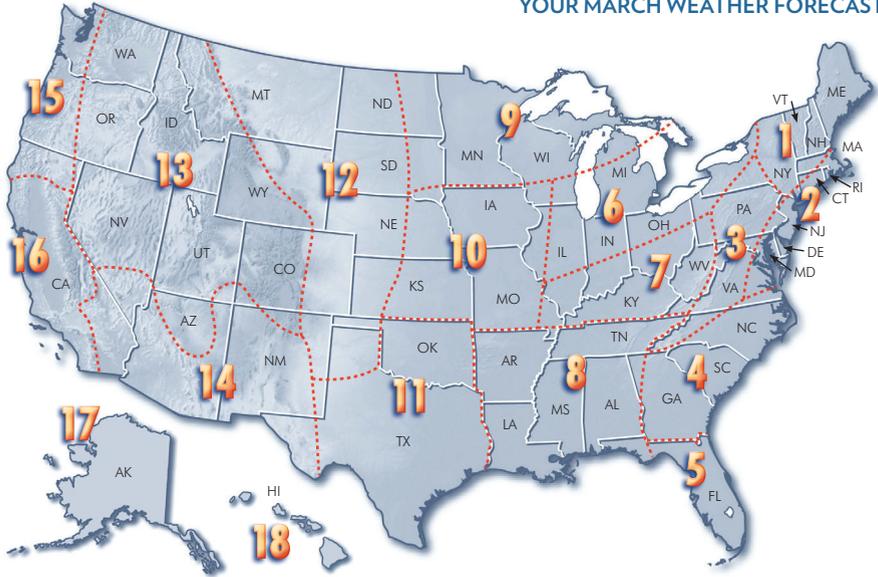




WEATHER FORECASTS

MAP OF U.S. WEATHER REGIONS

CHECK YOUR REGION TO SEE YOUR MARCH WEATHER FORECAST.



MAP OF CANADIAN WEATHER REGIONS





WEATHER FORECASTS

IN BEGINNING OR IN END,
MARCH ITS GIFTS WILL SEND.

U.S. FORECASTS MARCH 2017

REGION 1: **NORTHEAST**

Temp. 31° (3° below avg.); precip. 4" (1" above avg.). 1–6 Sunny, cold. 7–11 Snow, then rain, mild. 12–20 Periods of rain and snow, cold. 21–26 Showers, mild. 27–31 Wet snow, cold.

REGION 2: **ATLANTIC CORRIDOR**

Temp. 42° (2° below avg.); precip. 3" (1" below avg.). 1–4 Rain and snow showers, cold. 5–9 Rain and snow north, showers south. 10–17 A few showers, cool. 18–21 Sunny, cool. 22–28 Rainy periods, cool. 29–31 Rain and wet snow, chilly.

REGION 3: **APPALACHIANS**

Temp. 37° (3° below avg.); precip. 3.5" (0.5" above avg.). 1–4 Snow showers north, sunny south. 5–10 Rainy periods, cool. 11–14 Sunny, cool. 15–21 Rain, then flurries, cold. 22–31 Rain and snow showers, cool.

REGION 4: **SOUTHEAST**

Temp. 54° (1° below avg.); precip. 3.5" (1" below avg.). 1–7 Sunny, warm. 8–13 T-storms, then sunny, cool. 14–17 Rain, then sunny, cool. 18–19 Rain coast, wet snow inland. 20–28 Showers, cool. 29–31 Sunny, warm.

REGION 5: **FLORIDA**

Temp. 67° (avg.); precip. 4" (1" above avg.). 1–6 T-storms, then sunny, cool. 7–15 Scattered t-storms, warm. 16–23 Scattered t-storms north, sunny south; cool. 24–28 T-storms, then sunny, cool. 29–31 Showers, warm.



WEATHER FORECASTS

REGION 6: LOWER LAKES

Temp. 35° (3° below avg.); precip. 2.5" (0.5" below avg.). 1–3 Snow showers, cold. 4–5 Sunny, mild. 6–12 Heavy rain and snow, then rain and snow showers. 13–14 Sunny, mild. 15–21 Rain and snow showers, then sunny, cool. 22–31 Snow, then snow showers, cold.

REGION 7: OHIO VALLEY

Temp. 42° (3° below avg.); precip. 4.5" (0.5" above avg.). 1–3 Snow showers, cold. 4–14 Rainy periods, mild. 15–19 Snow showers, cold. 20–31 Rainy periods, occasional wet snow, cool.

REGION 8: DEEP SOUTH

Temp. 56° (avg.); precip. 4" (2" below avg.). 1–5 Sunny, turning warm. 6–11 Showers, seasonable. 12–14 Sunny, warm. 15–17 T-storms, then sunny, cool. 18–22 Rainy, cool. 23–27 Sunny, cool. 28–31 T-storms, then sunny, cool.

REGION 9: UPPER MIDWEST

Temp. 26° (2° below avg.); precip. 1" (0.5" below avg.). 1–7 Sunny, turning mild. 8–13 Snow east, showers west, then sunny, mild. 14–18 Snow, then sunny, cold. 19–31 Snow, then snow showers, cold.

REGION 10: HEARTLAND

Temp. 44° (avg.); precip. 1.5" (1" below avg.). 1–4 Sunny, turning warm. 5–14 Showers, mild. 15–27 Rain and snow showers, cool. 28–31 Sunny, turning warm.

REGION 11: TEXAS-OKLAHOMA

Temp. 63° (4° above avg.); precip. 1.5" (1" below avg.). 1–9 Sunny north, rain and drizzle south; mild. 10–12 Sunny, warm. 13–19 Scattered showers, warm. 20–28 Sunny north, showers south; turning cool. 29–31 Sunny, warm.



WEATHER FORECASTS

REGION 12: HIGH PLAINS

Temp. 44° (5° above avg.); precip. 0.5" (0.5" below avg.). 1–3 Sunny, mild. 4–16 A few showers, mild. 17–23 Rain to snow, then sunny, cold. 24–26 Snow, cold. 27–31 Sunny, warm.

REGION 13: INTERMOUNTAIN

Temp. 47° (4° above avg.); precip. 1" (0.5" below avg.). 1–7 Rainy periods north, sunny south; mild. 8–12 Sunny, warm. 13–15 Showers north, sunny south; mild. 16–22 A few showers and flurries, cold. 23–31 Showers north, sunny south; turning mild.

REGION 14: DESERT SOUTHWEST

Temp. 63° (5° above avg.); precip. 0.2" (0.3" below avg.). 1–14 Sunny, warm. 15–24 Showers, then sunny, cool. 25–31 Sunny, turning warm.

REGION 15: PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Temp. 49° (2° above avg.); precip. 6" (2" above avg.). 1–6 Rainy periods, mild. 7–13 Showers, mild. 14–18 Rain to wet snow, turning cold. 19–23 Sunny, cool. 24–31 Rainy periods, turning mild.

REGION 16: PACIFIC SOUTHWEST

Temp. 59° (2° above avg.); precip. 1.5" (1" below avg.). 1–14 A few sprinkles, cool coast; sunny, warm inland. 15–17 Showers north, sunny south; seasonable. 18–23 Sunny, cool. 24–28 A few sprinkles north, sunny south; turning warm. 29–31 Showers north, sunny south.

REGION 17: ALASKA

Temp. –15° N, 32° S (2° below avg.); precip. 0.5" N, 6" S (avg. north, 1" above south). 1–5 Flurries, mild. 6–11 Flurries, cold N; snowy periods, mild S. 12–16 Flurries, cold. 17–23 Snow showers; cold N, mild S. 24–31 Snow showers, cold.

KEY: Aleutians (A), central (C), elsewhere (EW), north (N), Panhandle (P), south (S), west-central (WC), east-central (EC), south-central (SC),



CANADIAN WEATHER FORECASTS

REGION 18: HAWAII

Temp. 75° (1° above avg.); precip. 0.5" (1.5" below avg.). 1–13 Sunny; cool, then warm. 14–20 Scattered showers; warm E, cool C+W. 21–25 Rainy E, sunny C+W; cool. 26–31 A few showers, seasonable.

KEY: east (E), central (C), west (W)

WHEN MARCH THUNDERS,
TOOLS AND ARMS GET RUSTY.

CANADIAN FORECASTS MARCH 2017

REGION 1: ATLANTIC CANADA

Temp. –3°C (1°C below avg.); precip. 100mm (50mm below avg. north, 70mm above south). 1–2 Flurries. 3–10 Rain and snow showers, turning mild. 11–14 Rainy, mild. 15–18 Flurries, cold north; heavy rain to snow south. 19–25 Showers north, snowy periods south; cool. 26–31 Snowy periods.

REGION 2: SOUTHERN QUEBEC

Temp. –5°C (1°C below avg.); precip. 105mm (80mm above avg. east, 20mm below west). 1–8 Snow, then flurries, cold. 9–15 Rain, then flurries, cold. 16–22 Rain to snow, then flurries, cold. 23–31 Snow showers, cold.

RÉGION 2: QUÉBEC DU SUD

Temp. –5°C (1°C en-dessous de la moy.); précip. 105mm (80mm au-dessus de la moy. à l'est, 20mm en-dessous à l'ouest). 1–8 Neige, puis rafales, froid. 9–15 Pluie, puis rafales, froid. 16–22 Pluie voire neige, puis rafales, froid. 23–31 Chutes de neige, froid.

REGION 3: SOUTHERN ONTARIO

Temp. –5°C (2°C below avg.); precip. 40mm (10mm below avg.). 1–4 Snow showers, cold. 5–6 Sunny, mild. 7–10 Rain and snowstorm east, snow showers west. 11–17 Rain and snow showers, cool. 18–22 Sunny, cool. 23–31 Periods of rain and snow east, snow west; cool.



CANADIAN WEATHER FORECASTS

REGION 4: THE PRAIRIES

Temp. -2°C (avg.); precip. 20mm (avg.). 1–9 Snow showers, then sunny, mild. 10–16 Flurries, mild. 17–23 Rain to snow, then snow showers, cold. 24–31 Flurries, cold east; sunny, turning mild west.

REGION 5: SOUTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

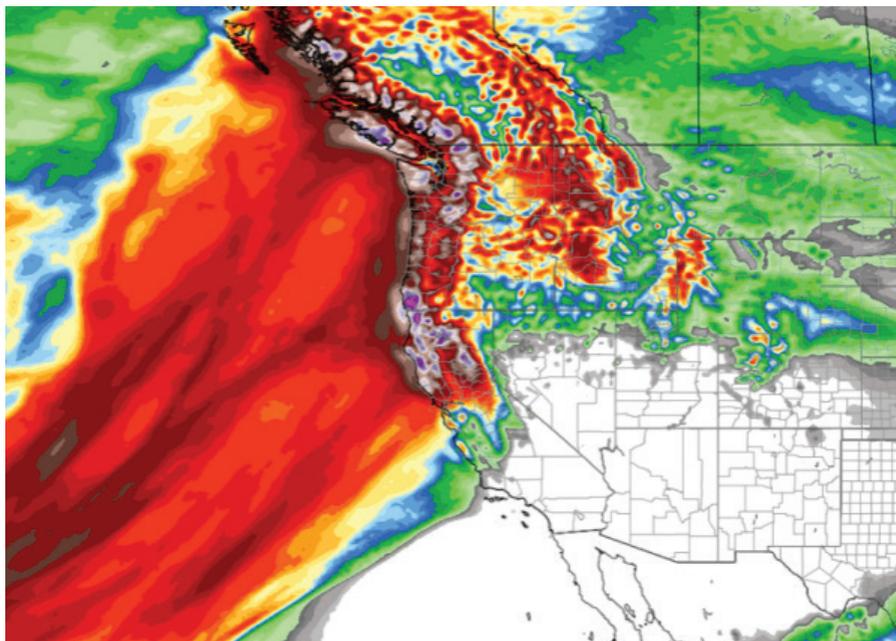
Temp. 6°C (2°C above avg.); precip. 130mm (30mm above avg.). 1–2 Snow north, sunny south; cold. 3–13 Rainy periods, mild. 14–18 Showers, colder. 19–24 Sunny, cool. 25–31 Rainy periods, turning mild.

REGION 6: YUKON

Temp. -11°C (avg.); precip. 20mm (5mm above avg.). 1–4 Clear, very cold north; snowy, turning mild south. 5–13 Snow showers, mild. 14–23 Clear, mild. 24–31 Snow showers, cold.

REGION 7: NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Temp. -20°C (1°C above avg.); precip. 15mm (5mm above avg.). 1–5 Snow showers, cold. 6–8 Clear, mild. 9–13 Snow, then flurries, cold. 14–24 A few snow showers, mild. 25–31 Snow, then flurries, cold.



THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON OUR FORECASTS

As I write this, winter overall has been mild across nearly all of the country, with above-normal temperatures and below-normal snowfall being the rule in most locations.

This is generally in agreement with our forecast for this winter, with the most significant exception being the heavy precipitation that fell across all of California. While we did forecast rainfall to be above normal across northern California, we forecast below-normal rain in the central and southern portions of the state and we did not forecast the above-normal snow that fell in the mountains.

This anomaly required a closer look at the historical correlations on which we base our predictions.

We correctly forecast that a weak La Niña would occur throughout most of this past winter and, based on the historic record, this usually means that



rainfall will be below normal across central and southern California.

You may recall that last winter, 2015–16, we correctly forecast that most of California would have below-normal precipitation, despite the fact that we were incorrect in our forecast that there would not be a strong El Niño.

The historical correlations between the phase of ENSO (El Niño Southern Oscillation) and California weather have been very strong, although not perfect. But since this is the second consecutive winter in which they have not followed this historical correlation, I searched recent research studies on this phenomenon for an answer.

While I found nothing definite, there is speculation that there are distinct types of El Niños and La Niñas that affect the weather differently. There is also concern among some scientists and/or meteorologists that global climate change is altering the relationship between ENSO and weather.

This would seem to be another example of our struggle in recent years to incorporate the effects of global climate change into our forecasting methodology, which has traditionally been based upon the precepts that the Sun controls Earth's weather and that the use of solar cycles as a predictive tool enables us to forecast Earth's weather a year or more in advance.

Once we have determined what the solar activity is likely to be, we find analogues where solar cycles were similar and forecast the future weather to also be similar.

However, two factors have made our forecasts especially difficult to make in recent years: (1) the last time activity in the solar cycle was this low, we did not yet have widespread reliable weather records, so we are forced to extrapolate and speculate on the past weather activity in seeking our analogues; and (2) with the climate changing, the effects that the Sun has on Earth's weather patterns seem to be changing from past patterns.

We will continue to study the changing weather patterns and relationships and what they mean for future weather. Our goal is to bring you the most accurate long-range forecasts possible and to maintain, or even improve upon, our traditional 80 percent accuracy rate.

—Michael Steinberg, *Old Farmer's Almanac meteorologist*



HUMOR ME

GRINS AND GROANS FROM THE ALMANAC

Last Laugh



Some years ago, an article by Richard L. Madden in the *New York Times* recounted how New York Sen. James Buckley's office had once received the

following letter from a former fan in Buffalo:

"Now that my nausea has subsided after accidentally observing your appearance on *Laugh-*

In last evening, I, as one of your constituents and former admirers, am constrained to comment that your silly grin while the inane and vulgar questions were asked and your equally inane replies were less than worthy of a Senator of the United States. The disgusting episode in which you freely participated and that you apparently enjoyed—as an accomplice lending your position to a disgraceful program—is an affront to the dignity of the Senate, to your family, to your church, and to your constituency."



Senator Buckley replied:

“I have forwarded your letter to my brother the columnist—William F. Buckley Jr. It was he, not I, who appeared on *Laugh-In*.”

To “clarify” matters, William F. Buckley followed up with the following letter to the man in Buffalo:

“It is typical of my brother to attempt to deceive his constituents. It was, of course, he, not I, who appeared on *Laugh-In*, just as you suspected. On the other hand, you need not worry about it. His greatest deception is as yet undiscovered. It was I, not he, who was elected to the Senate. So you see, you have nothing to worry about. You are represented in the Senate by a responsible, truthful man.”



He Knew His Father

“Tell me, Johnnie,” said his teacher, “if your father borrowed \$100 and promises to pay \$10 a week, how much will he owe in 7 weeks?”

“One hundred dollars,” said Johnnie.

“I’m afraid you don’t know your lesson very well,” remarked the teacher.

“I may not know my lesson,” said Johnnie, “but I know my father.”

PASSING COMMENTS

Judge: “Now, madam, please tell the court all that passed between you and your husband during this quarrel.”

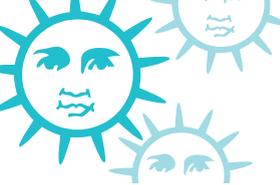
Mrs. Jones: “Your honor, I can not remember everything, but I’m sure there was the rolling pin, three plates, and the stove lifter.”

19TH-CENTURY NONSENSE: CALF TALK

A farm lady was showing her place to her neighbor farmer, who had a bent toward wit and mischief.

She showed him her sheep and other stock, but just as they were entering the house, she exclaimed, “Dear me, you have not seen my calf, sir!”

“No, ma’am,” said the farmer. “I never saw higher than your ankle.”



WHAT'S NEXT



GARDENING

How to grow great green beans



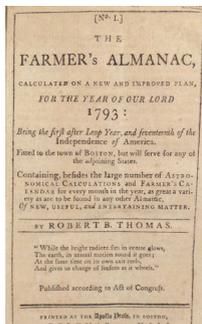
CALENDAR

Full Pink Moon, Paul Revere's ride, diamond birthstone, 1793 Almanac tidbits



LIVING NATURALLY

Detox for your garden tools



ANNIVERSARY

Excerpts from early Almanacs



FOOD

Delicious Easter side dishes



ASTRONOMY

Explore with our Sky Map

PLUS: Weather Update • U.S. and Canadian Weather Forecasts • Best Days to Do Things • Gardening by the Moon's Sign • Humor • and much more in the April *EXTRA!*

CELEBRATING THE ALMANAC'S 225TH YEAR!