

## Reader Recipes

### Popcorn Cake

4 qts. popped popcorn  
1 lb. small gum drops  
1 lb. M&M's  
1/2 lb. salted peanuts  
1/2 cup margarine  
1/2 cup oil  
1 lb. large marshmallows  
Grease a tube (angel food cake) pan. Mix corn, candy and nuts. Melt margarine, oil and marshmallows. Pour over popcorn mixture and press into greased pan.

### Corncob Syrup

12 large clean corncobs  
2 lbs. brown sugar  
In large pot, cover corncobs with water. Boil for 1 to 2 hrs. Drain off water and strain. There should be at least 1 pint of liquid. Return liquid to pot and add brown sugar, boiling to desired thickness. Use on pancakes and waffles in place of maple syrup.

### Radish Sandwich

1 cup minced red radish  
1 tsp poppy seeds  
1 cup soft cream cheese  
1/2 tsp salt  
Fresh ground black pepper  
8 slices dark rye bread  
1/2 cucumber, sliced thinly

Combine radishes, poppy seeds, cream cheese, salt and pepper. Blend well. Lightly butter bread. Spread radish filling on bread and top with cucumber slices and another slice of bread. Radish filling is also good as a topping for new potatoes or as a stuffing for celery.

### Ramen Corn Chowder

1 package Ramen noodles (any flavor)  
2 cups water  
16 oz. can creamed corn  
1 cup frozen corn  
1/4 tsp ginger  
1/2 tsp curry powder  
1/2 cup milk  
1/2 cup grated Colby cheese

In a large saucepan, bring 2 cups of water to a boil. Add Ramen noodles and the flavor packet and cook for 5 min. Add creamed corn, frozen corn, ginger, curry powder, and milk. Heat over medium heat to a gentle simmer and cook for 2 to 4 min. Do not let the soup boil. Add grated cheese and stir until melted and the soup is blended.

## Outdoor Sweet Corn Processing

At 95, FARM SHOW reader Herman Larson has grown and helped process many bushels of sweet corn over the years. But he says his favorite method is a common sense outdoors system his son-in-law, Don Sandell, came up with.



Garden hose hooks up to fittings at bottom of bucket to cool off cooked corn.

"It all started because my wife didn't like the mess in the kitchen," Sandell says.

He and his wife, Joan, set up a corn processing area outside, and invited relatives from 3 or 4 other families to help.

Sandell uses two cookers — filling big blue porcelain pots with water and heating them on fast-heating propane stoves like those used for turkey fryers. He blanches the husked corn for about 3 min., and then removes the ears with tongs. He usually blanches 3 batches of corn in the same water before changing it.

Sandell drops the hot corn on the cob into one of the two 5-gal. plastic buckets, which he modified with sprayer tank fittings in the bottom. With the fitting straddled between 4-in. high blocking and connected to a garden hose, he fills the bucket with water.

"Pushing the cold water up from the bottom cools the ears right down. It pushes the heat up and out," Sandell says.

He reduces the stream of water as the corn cools, then shuts the water off and pours the cooled corn in containers.

Joan covers an 8-ft. table with plastic, and she and other helpers armed with their favorite corn cutters, cut the corn off the cob onto baking sheets and then seal the corn in pint and quart bags for the freezer.

When done, they roll up the plastic, throw it away and rinse out the kettles and containers outdoors.

"The mess is all outside, and we can go into a clean kitchen," Joan says. With everyone working together, processing corn is a good family activity, and the corn is divided up to be enjoyed all winter long.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Don Sandell, 2222 310<sup>th</sup> St., Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501 (ph 515 547-2379).

## Great Gardening Book

By Dee George, Contributing Editor

I was excited to discover the book, "Decoding Gardening Advice: The Science Behind the Most Common Recommendations," written by master gardener Meleah Maynard and horticultural scientist Jeff Gillman.

The authors accomplish what the book title promises by breaking topics down under 3 headings: "Good Advice", "Advice That's Debatable", and "Advice That's Just Wrong", and then concluding with "The Real Dirt."

Here are some of the things I learned:

- **Good Advice:** Incorporate eggshells into the soil to control rot in tomatoes. The mushy spots on the bottom of tomatoes are a sign that plants aren't taking up enough calcium from the soil. To make more calcium available, crush 4 eggshells and drop them in the hole before planting each tomato plant. Some gardeners add more eggshells every couple of weeks through the summer.

- **Advice That's Debatable:** Though it's not ideal, it can be OK to water from an overhead source like a sprinkler. Drip irrigation is the best option, but not one every gardener has. The risk is that wet leaves provide the ideal environment for spreading disease pathogens.

- **Advice That's Just Wrong:** Don't mess with compost tea. Though there are many proponents of the "soil building" method, scientifically it can be difficult to prevent bad bacteria (such as E.coli) from growing. Why not just use the compost?

Other things that made the "That's Just Wrong" list include: Don't add sand to clay; you'll get concrete. Don't use gravel or rocks at the bottom of containers; water doesn't travel well between different textures. Don't use synthetic fertilizers and herbicides to get a lush lawn. Natural fertilizers like alfalfa and soybean meal can provide the nutrients lawns need. Corn gluten meal, while not as thorough or fast as herbicides, can be used for weed control.

On the "Good Advice" list, the authors agree that compost and vermicompost (worm castings) build soil, that you should stop fertilizing during hot weather to reduce plant stress, and that grass should never be cut more than one-third of its length at a time.

"Decoding Gardening Advice" is published by Timber Press and can be ordered through Maynard's blog, [www.everydaygardener.com](http://www.everydaygardener.com) and on Amazon.com.

## "Bent" Grave Marker Stays Out Of The Way

"Our American Legion supplies grave markers with a plaque on top of a metal rod to families of those who have served in the military," says Donald Perrion, Ipswich, S. Dak. "A lot of the old stakes get bent and broken from being hit by riding mowers."

"To solve the problem, I rework the stakes by making a 4-in. bend about halfway down, which sets the plaque back out of the way. It allows workers to mow grass right up to the tombstone without hitting the marker."

He cuts the stake off 1 ft. down from the plaque, makes a 4-in. bend in it at the bottom, and then welds a new 8-in. long rod onto the bend. A welded-on washer at the bottom serves as an anchor.

He sells the stake markers for \$5 plus S&H.  
Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Donald Perrion, P.O. Box 457, Ipswich, S. Dak. 57451 (ph 605 426-6276 or cell 605 216-5763; [pgisi@abe.midco.net](mailto:pgisi@abe.midco.net)).



A 4-in. bend in stake sets grave marker plaque back out of the way of mowers.

# FARM SHOW

## New Products For The Farm, Ranch Home

### Countertop Coconut Splitter

If you bring home coconuts from vacations or buy them regularly at the store, you know a coconut is a tough nut to crack. Instead of taking a hammer and screwdriver to it in the backyard, David Wolfe suggests you check out his coconut splitter.

Place the coconut on a metal ring and locate the "eyes" — three dark circles at the top. Puncture them with a punch and hammer. Pour out the liquid.

Place the metal ring and coconut inside the splitter stand. Line up the blade and turn the handle until the entire shell is removed.

"It doesn't take a lot of strength," says Wolfe. "The blade is a light blade, engineered to be strong without a lot of mass."

He notes coconut has become more popular as a health food, and he built the splitter at a customer's request.

The design is a scaled down version of a wood splitter he used to make and sell. Now he sells the coconut splitter for \$80 at his website.

"It works great. There is no spilled milk or pieces shattering everywhere. It's neat and safe," Wolfe says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Coconut Splitter, 475 College Blvd. #6-161, Oceanside, Calif. 92057 (ph 760 717-2365; [jdeflow@yahoo.com](mailto:jdeflow@yahoo.com); [www.coconutsplitter.com](http://www.coconutsplitter.com)).



Place coconut on metal ring inside stand, then turn handle fitted with blade to remove shell.

### "Sew-On" Deep Shirt Pocket

You can sew a shirt pocket on your T-shirt, sweatshirt or jacket using a pattern from Robert Wallrath of Houston, Texas.

"The pocket I use is deeper and wider than the pockets found on most shirts," says Wallrath. "It measures 5 in. deep and 4 3/4 in. wide and has a 3/4-in. wide top overlay."

"The pocket is deep enough to hold pencils, markers and eyeglasses. My wife made the pocket shown in the photo from an old T-shirt."

Wallrath makes the pattern available for a fee of \$3.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Robert O. Wallrath, 7244 Nodding Pines Ln., Houston, Texas 77044 (ph 713 614-5538).



Sew-on pocket is deep enough to hold pencils, markers and eyeglasses.