



# The Louise Evans Doole Herb Garden



## About the Garden

Starting in 1972 with sixteen herbs, the Louise Evans Doole Herb Garden at Pioneers Park Nature Center was established in memory of Mrs. Doole. She was an editor of *The Nebraska Farmer*, an experienced herb grower, and the author of several books on herbs. The Junior League of Lincoln provided the funding for herb plants and a split rail fence around the garden.

In 1976, the Nebraska Herbal Society was formed with the purpose of encouraging the study, growth, and use of herbs. The Herbal Society has been financially supportive of herb garden projects over the years. Charter members of the Herbal Society were: Emily Pierson, Louise Damke, Mrs. C.J. Best, Hazel Scheiber, LaVerne Rush, Edna Shields, and Esther Bennett. Louise Damke was instrumental in providing the initial plantings and in maintaining the garden in its infancy.



*Herb Garden, 1972*

In 1981, the Youth Conservation Corps undertook the project of constructing a raised bed for herb plantings and installing a brick walkway adjacent to the raised bed. The garden was enlarged to reflect the increased interest in herbs and the growing number of available varieties.

With this increasing popularity of herbs have come bequests to the Louise Evans Doole Herb Garden. One resulting benefit was the installation of an underground sprinkler system in 1990. Another was the bench along the west boundary of the garden, arbors over the garden's three entrances have been erected, a fountain in the garden, and a kiosk.



*Herb Garden, 1972*

Presently maintained by the staff and volunteers of the Pioneers Park Nature Center, the herb garden contains over 120 herb varieties. It has grown in many ways since its early beginnings, thanks to the contributions of many interested individuals and groups.

Because of its quality, the herb garden attracts hundreds of visitors each year. The teacher-naturalists of the Nature Center use the garden during both their hikes with school children and special programs. Each year the Nature Center sponsors an Herbal Class or Festival with exhibits, workshops, and herbal foods.

This brochure presents information on some of the major herbs in the Louise Evans Doole Herb Garden. The text was written by Irene Alexander, Pama Heikes, Janet Salvati, Mary Sawicki, and Becky Smith, teacher-naturalists and members of the herb garden committee, Pioneers Park Nature Center.

## About Louise Evans Doole

Louise Evans Doole, a long-time resident of Lincoln, promoted interest in the growing and use of herbs in Nebraska, even before herbs were a popular subject.

Louise (1903-1966) was born in Henderson, Kentucky. She and her husband, Howard, a mathematics professor at the University of Nebraska, moved to Lincoln in 1927. Louise was on the editorial staff of the *Nebraska Farmer* for which she wrote numerous articles about life on Nebraska farms. With Howard, she had a long-standing interest in herbs, which were always growing in their backyard or in pots in their house. Her friends enjoyed gifts of herb vinegar, dried herbs, and many other good things made with herbs. Louise Evans Doole wrote two books, *Herbs, How to Grow and Use Them*, and *Herb and Garden Ideas*, versions of both were in print for almost 35 years. When the books were first published, Louise gave a number of talks throughout the state, and many Nebraskans developed an interest in herbs because of her enthusiasm.

After Louise passed away her husband, Howard, along with Lincoln Parks and Recreation worked to establish an herb garden. The initial plantings for the garden were from Louise and Howard's garden. The plants were cared for by staff and volunteers at Pioneers Park Nature Center and in 1972 the Herb Garden was created.

The Doole family continues to support the herb garden and educational programs such as the Herb Festival through The Doole Family Charitable Foundation. They see the Louise Evans Doole Herb Garden as a real benefit for the people of Lincoln. Through visits to the garden visitors learn how herbs can add beauty, flavor, and a sense of well being to their lives.



### **Anise Hyssop (Licorice Mint, Anise Mint)**

*Agastache foeniculum*

Mint family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

The dried leaves, with their delicious anise scent, are used for tea and potpourri. Steeped in liquid they can replace anise seed in cakes and cookies.

This lovely garden plant produces long-lasting purple flower spikes in late summer. Beekeepers like to plant it around their hives because it yields nectar all day long.

Perennial. Height: 3-4ft. Square, branching stems. Leaves opposite, ovate, scalloped.

Full sun to partial shade. Rich soil. Grow from seed. Readily self-sows.

---

### **Artemesia, Ornamental**

*Artemesia spp.*

Sunflower family: Asteraceae (Compositae)

The ornamental artemesias are silvery plants useful for color contrast in gardens. Dried, they make beautiful additions to wreaths. They have a distinct aroma.

*Artemesia ludoviciana* is a native plant in Nebraska and is sometimes called prairie sage. A cultivar of this species is 'Silver King', prized for its use in wreaths. Branches should be cut for drying just as plants begin to bloom. Other popular artemesia varieties include 'Silver Mound', 'Powis Castle', and 'Seafoam'.

Perennial. Height: 6 in-3 ft. Leaf shape varies from lobed to lacy, all with silvery-white hairs. Flowers yellow to white, small, not showy.

Full sun to partial shade. Dry soil. Grow by division.

---

### **Basil, Sweet (Common Basil)**

*Ocimum basilicum*

Mint family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

This spicy herb is used in tomato dishes and salads, and to make pesto. Harvest leaves to use fresh, dried or frozen. Pinch off developing flowerheads to lengthen season of harvest.

Basil is one of the most popular herbs for culinary use. There are over 50 varieties differing in size, shape, aroma, and color of leaves: opal, Thai, lemon, sacred, licorice, globe, Genovese, etc.

Bushy annual. Height: 2-3 ft. Square stems. Leaves opposite, shiny, ovate, toothed.

Full sun. Well-drained, fairly rich soil. Easily grown from seed. Good container plant.

### **Bay, Sweet (Laurel)**

*Laurus nobilis*

Laurel family: Lauraceae

Sweet Bay is used to flavor soups, stews, and sauces. The leaves are added whole and removed before serving. Leaves may be placed with flour or cereals to prevent insect infestation.

Ancient Greeks and Romans crowned poets, scholars and athletes with wreaths of sweet bay (laurel). In warm climates it is grown as an ornamental.

Tender perennial. Height: up to 10 ft. (5 ft in a pot). Leaves dark green, shiny, thick, leathery.

Full sun to partial shade. Moderately rich, well-drained soil. Grow from cuttings.

---

### **Bee Balm (Bergamot, Oswego Tea, Horsemint)**

*Monarda didyma*

Mint family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

The dried leaves and flowers are used in potpourri. The leaves may be used either fresh or dried for tea. The fresh florets are attractive and flavorful scattered over a green salad. Hang the long stems upside down to dry.

The colorful, long-lasting blooms are useful in attracting bees to the garden. Other varieties have pink, maroon, or purple blossoms.

Perennial. Height: 3 ft. Square stems. Leaves opposite, oval, pointed. Spreads by stolons.

Full sun to partial shade. Moist, light soil. Grows from seed but plant division recommended.

---

### **Chamomile, Annual (German Chamomile)**

*Matricaria recutitia*

Sunflower family: Asteraceae (Compositae)

Chamomile should be a staple in any collection of herbs. It has culinary, medicinal, and cosmetic uses. Its most popular use is for a soothing tea. Use both flowers and leaves, either fresh or dried. If the leaves are cut, the flower will not develop. Use the fresh plant or an infusion to wipe on the skin as an insect repellent.

This demure herb has achieved charming notoriety through the tale of Peter Rabbit's being given chamomile tea after a close encounter in Mr. McGregor's garden.

Hardy annual. Height of flower heads: 2-2 ½ ft. Slim, erect with feathery leaves, daisy-like flowers.

Full sun. Poor soil, dry conditions. Grow from seed. Self-sows. Transplant only when about four true leaves on seedlings.

## Chives, Onion

*Allium schoenoprasum*

Onion family: Alliaceae

This popular culinary herb provides a mild onion flavor. Leaves are used fresh or frozen. The flowers can be used in salads and vinegars, or as garnish. They can also be dried for wreaths and bouquets.

A related species is garlic chives (*A. tuberosum*), an attractive plant with dark green, straplike leaves and clusters of white star-shaped flowers. It is invasive, especially if allowed to go to seed.

Hardy perennial. Height: to 18 in. Leaves tubular and spearlike, Small purple flowers borne in a dense, round umbel.

Full sun. Rich soil. Grow from seed or division. Good container plant.

---

## Coriander (Chinese Parsley, Cilantro)

*Coriandrum sativum*

Parsley family: Apiaceae (Umbelliferae)

This sweet, spicy herb is used in curries, meat dishes, salads, soups, breads, and cakes. The leaves are used fresh. They can be picked at any time. Harvest seeds at summer's end.

The disagreeable odor of this plant repels insects. As it matures this odor is replaced by a pleasant citrus scent which becomes more fragrant with age. Dried, it can be used in in potpourris.

Hardy annual. Height: 2-3 ft. Lower leaves roundish and lobed, upper ones finely divided.

Full sun to partial shade. Rich soil. Grow from seed.

---

## Costmary (Alecost, Bible leaf)

*Chrysanthemum balsamita*

Sunflower family: Asteraceae (Compositae)

Add fresh costmary leaves, in small amounts, to soups, salads, meat dishes, and stuffings. The fresh leaves are also used to rub on insect bites. This sweet-smelling herb may be dried and used in sachets and potpourris, and added to a bath for a relaxing soak.

Costmary was used at one time to ease the pain of childbirth. Its leaves were also used as a bookmark in prayer books, its scent rejuvenating sleepy worshippers.

Perennial. Height: 3 ft. Leaves gray-green, oblong with serrated margins.

Sun to partial shade. Invasive. Grow by division.

## Dill

*Anethum graveolens*

Parsley family: Apiaceae (Umbelliferae)

Dill leaves and seed are used in cooking, especially with fish, beans, and cucumbers. Fresh leaves may be harvested any time.

Dill has been used as a soothing medicinal herb since Egyptian times, 5000 years ago. During the Middle Ages it was used as a protection against witchcraft.

Annual. Height: 2-5 ft. Leaves fine and feathery. Flowers yellow-green in a flat-topped cluster.

Full sun. Rich, moist soil. Grow from seed. Self sows.

---

## Fennel (Sweet Fennel, Finocchio)

*Foeniculum vulgare dulce*

Parsley family: Apiaceae (Umbelliferae)

This culinary herb has a strong licorice taste. The leaves flavor salads, the stems are eaten like celery, and the seeds are used in baked goods and teas. The bulbs can be roasted, or minced for soups, stews and salads. A related variety, wild fennel (*F. vulgare*), has a much weaker flavor. Bronze fennel is especially attractive in the garden.

In the Middle Ages people nibbled fennel seeds during church services or during Lent since they were thought to suppress appetite.

Semi-hardy perennial, grown as an annual. Height: 4 ft. Leaves deep green and feathery.

Full sun. Well-drained soil. Grow from seed. Self-sows.

---

## Feverfew

*Chrysanthemum parthenium*

Sunflower family: Asteraceae (Compositae)

Feverfew is a lovely herb grown mostly for its ornamental value. The leaves and flowers can be harvested and dried in small bunches for use in sachets as a moth repellent. Fresh leaves are sometimes added to salads but can be bitter.

Feverfew has been used medicinally for centuries, most commonly for "pains in the head" and colds.

Perennial. Height: 2-3 ft. Leaves deeply lobed. Flowers small and daisy-like.

Full sun to partial shade. Average soil. Grows easily from seed. Self-sows abundantly.

## Foxglove

*Digitalis purpurea*

Snapdragon family: Scrophulariaceae

Historically, foxglove has been an important herb for the treatment of heart disease. It is the source of the drug, digitalis. Foxglove has been cultivated for medicines since about 1000 AD.

This is an extremely toxic herb that is unsafe to eat or use in any form. Grow it as an ornamental only. Its beautiful flowers add early color to tall plantings.

Biennial. Height: 4-8 ft. Leaves 8-12 in. long, wrinkled, hairy, conspicuously veined. Flowers bell-shaped, hanging on one side of a spike, lavender outside with red spots inside.

Full sun to partial shade. Moist, rich soil with good drainage. Grow from seed.

---

## Garlic

*Allium sativum*

Onion family: Alliceae

Garlic is one of the oldest and most beloved of all plants. It is an important culinary and medicinal herb. The bulb is used. Usually a few cloves are broken off and the papery skin is removed.

Historically, garlic was thought to impart speed, strength, and endurance. The slaves building the pyramids and Roman soldiers were given garlic to eat daily to keep up their strength. In the Middle Ages it was eaten as a vegetable!

Perennial, grown as an annual. Height: 16-24 in.

Full sun to partial shade. Rich, moist soil. Grow from seed or clove.

---

## Hyssop

*Hyssopus officinalis*

Mint family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

When crushed, the fresh leaves of this culinary herb have a minty. It can be used to flavor soups, salads, and fruit. Dried, the flowers and leaves can be made into tea. The extracted oils are used in herbal baths and cosmetics.

Hyssop will attract bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds to a garden. It has a strong camphor-like odor.

Compact perennial. Height: 2-3 ft. Leaves 1-1 ½ in., opposite, linear. Blue or violet flowers June to August.

Full sun to partial shade. Well-drained soil. Grow from seed, cuttings or division.

## Lamb's Ears (Woundwort)

*Stachys byzantina*

Mint family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

Lamb's ears are most frequently grown for their beautiful, soft, silver-gray foliage. For use in dried arrangements, harvest flower spikes or leaves as needed. Be careful not to dry too many leaves at once.

The name "Woundwort" refers to the historical use of the leaves to stop the bleeding of minor wounds. Children and adults love to touch this velvety plant.

Hardy perennial. Height: 2-3 ft. Leaves oval and densely hairy. Small pink flowers in whorls on spikes.

Full sun to partial shade. Well-drained soil. Grow from divisions.

---

## Lavender

*Lavandula spp.*

Mint family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

Lavender is an aromatic herb used in perfumes, potpourris, sachets and cosmetics. Harvest flowers just as they are opening for strongest scent. Dried flowers are a lovely and fragrant addition to wreaths and arrangements.

There are over 28 species of lavenders. *L. angustifolia* is often called "English Lavender" and is hardier than *L. dentata* or French Lavender.

Perennial. Height: to ft. Bushy, branching shrub. Flowers small, purple, borne 6-10 to a spike.

Full sun. Light, well-drained soil. Grow from cuttings.

---

## Lemon Verbena

*Aloysia triphylla*

Verbena family: Verbenaceae

This ornamental shrub has a light, lemony smell and taste. The fresh or dried leaves can be made into tea or used to flavor salads, vegetables, poultry, or fish. Harvest all season. The distinct lemon fragrance makes wonderful potpourris and sachets. The extracted oils can be used in the bath or as cologne.

Tender perennial. Height: 5 ft. in container, 10-15 ft grown outdoors. Leaves in whorls of 2-3, light green, lanceolate.

Full sun. Moist, rich soil. In cold temperatures, often grown in container. Natural leaf drop in fall. Do not overwater when leaves are few. Grow from cuttings.

## Marjoram, Sweet

*Origanum majorana*

Mint family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

Primarily used as a culinary herb, marjoram has a flavor similar to its relative, oregano. The fresh or dried leaves are used in many meat, poultry, fish, and vegetable dishes.

Wild marjoram, pot marjoram, and winter marjoram are similar species, but sweet marjoram is the variety most often grown for cooking use.

Tender perennial, grown as an annual. Height: 1 ft. Stems are branched and square. Leaves opposite, ovate, fuzzy, aromatic.

Full sun. Light, well-drained soil. Grow from seed.

---

## Mint

*Mentha spp.*

Mint family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

The leaves of mint are useful in cooking and as an addition to vinegars, jellies, tea and potpourri. Use leaves fresh, dried, or frozen, but harvest before flowering.

There are numerous species and varieties of mint. Some of the most popular are spearmint, peppermint, and apple mint. Mint has been used medicinally since ancient times. It has been found in Egyptian tombs dating back to 1000 B.C.

Hardy perennial. Height: 18-24 in. Square stem. Leaves opposite, toothed, fragrant.

Full sun to partial shade. Rich, well-drained soil. Grow from cuttings or division. Invasive. May be best to grow in containers, or use underground barriers.

---

## Nasturium

*Tropaelum majus*

Tropaelum family: Tropaeolaceae

Fresh nasturtium leaves and flowers are edible. They are a beautiful and peppery addition to a salad. The flowers also make an attractive garnish.

This plant is also known as Indian cress. Native to Peru, it was brought to Spain by the conquistadors. Its use rapidly spread to the rest of Europe and to England.

Half-hardy annual. Height: 8-12 in. Leaves rounded, medium green. Flowers funnel-shaped, yellow, orange, or red.

Full sun. Well-drained soil. Grow from seed. Excellent container plant.

## Oregano

*Origanum spp.*

Mint family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

Oregano is an important culinary herb, most often used in tomato dishes, but tasty in a wide range of other foods. The leaves can be used fresh or dried. As with most herbs, it is best to harvest before it flowers.

There are many species of oregano. The most popular for cooking is "Greek" (*O. vulgare* subsp. *hirtum*). The name "oregano" comes from the Greek *oros* meaning mountain and *ganos* meaning joy. In Greece, cuttings are woven into the crown worn by bridal couples.

Hardy perennial. Height: 1-2 ft. Leaves opposite, gray-green, oval, very aromatic.

Full sun. Well –drained soil. Grow from a cutting of a flavorful plant. Good container plant.

---

## Orris Root

*Iris germanica var. florentina*

Iris family: Iridaceae

Although this herb has a beautiful white flower, it is the root or rhizome that is used as a fixative in potpourri. Ancient Egyptians and Greeks learned that the bland-smelling rhizome would take on a lovely violet fragrance if dried for at least two years. It must be washed, dried, and chopped before being used.

Perennial. Height: 2-3 ft. Leaves bright green, sword-shaped.

Full sun. Well-drained, fertile soil. Grow from rhizomes divided in the fall.

---

## Pale Purple Coneflower (Echinacea)

*Echinacea angustifolia*

Sunflower family: Asteraceae (Compositae)

Historically, this plant has been prized for the medicinal value of its dried roots. Native Americans of the Great Plains used it to treat a variety of ailments from snake-bite to burns. Echinacea tea has become popular for reportedly boosting the immune system.

Pale purple coneflower is a desirable addition to many gardens since it is easy to grow and has a lovely flower. *E. angustifolia* is the species of purple coneflower native to Nebraska.

Perennial. Height: 1-2 ft. Lower leaves ovate, pointed, toothed. Upper leaves shorter. Flower head with domelike dark center and drooping, pale purple ray flowers.

Full sun to light shade. Fertile, well-drained soil. Grow from seed.

## Parsley

*Petroselinum crispum*

Parsley family: Apiaceae (Umbelliferae)

Parsley is best known as a garnish but should also be used in cooking as it adds delightful flavor to many dishes, and is very nutritious as well. Use the leaves fresh or frozen. Drying is not recommended.

The flat-leaved or “Italian” parsley is usually favored for cooking. It was once believed that only witches and pregnant women could grow parsley.

Biennial. Height: 12-24 in. Leaves deeply divided, laying flat or curled into frills, depending on the variety.

Full sun to partial shade. Well-drained soil. Grow from seed. Good container plant.

---

## Pennyroyal

*Mentha pulegium*

Mint family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

Pennyroyal is most noted for its use as an insect repellent. Growing it outside your kitchen door is said to discourage ants from entering your home. Pick fresh for rubbing on skin to repel insects or for relief from insect bites.

The species name, pulegium, comes from the Latin word pulex, meaning “flea,” since both the plant, and smoke from burning it, kill fleas. In Elizabethan times it was thought that pennyroyal would purify water on sea voyages.

Perennial. Height: 6 in. (creeping variety) to 12 in. (upright variety). Leaves small, oval, bright green.

Full sun. Rich moist soil. Grow from cuttings.

---

## Rosemary

*Rosemarinus officinalis*

Mint family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

Rosemary is an important culinary herb. The leaves can be used fresh or dried to season meat (especially lamb), fish, eggs, vinegars, and oils. This very fragrant herb is also used in skin and hair care products.

There are many species and varieties of rosemary which differ in growth habit (trailing to upright) and flower color (blue, pink, and white).

Tender perennial. Height: 2-6 ft. Leaves opposite, needlelike, thick, leathery.

Full sun. Well-drained soil. Grow from cuttings or layering. Good container plant.

## Rue

*Ruta graveolens*

Citrus or Rue family: Rutaceae

The flowers and foliage of rue are delightful in fresh bouquets and tussie-mussies. Drying is not recommended.

Rue was once known as the “herb of grace” as it was supposed to ward off evil. It was carried in nosegays by the rich to protect them against the plague. For some people, handling the plant can cause allergic reactions.

Perennial. Height: 2-3 ft. Leaves small, lobed and blue-green with a strong pungent odor.

Full Sun. Well-drained soil. Grow from seed, cuttings, or division.

---

## Sage, Garden

*Salvia officinalis*

Mint family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

Sage is a culinary herb often used with poultry and in sausage, but also with vegetables. It dries well, but takes on a stronger taste. Sage has medicinal and ornamental uses.

Several varieties have colorful leaves: golden, purple, and tricolor. Other popular sage species include pineapple sage (*S. elegans*), Mexican bush sage (*S. leucantha*). The popular Russian sage (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*) is not a true sage.

Hardy perennial. Height: 12-30 in. Woody, square stems. Leaves opposite, grayish-green, softly hairy.

Full sun. Well-drained soil. Grow from cuttings.

---

## Santolina, Gray (Lavender Cotton)

*Santolina chamaecyparissus*

Sunflower family: Asteraceae (Compositae)

Santolina is grown for its lovely appearance and is used as a hedge in knot gardens. Sprigs can be dried for use in dried arrangements and in moth-repelling potpourris. The buttonlike yellow flowers that bloom several inches above the leaves also dry well.

Related to this gray species, *S. virens*, is used the same way, except its leaves are green.

Perennial. Height: 18 in. Woody stem. Leaves delicate and pinched.

Full sun. Somewhat acid soil. Good drainage. Prune well in spring to retain shape.

## Savory, Summer

*Satureja hortensis*

Mint family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

Summer savory is historically an important culinary herb, used widely to flavor food in Europe before spices like pepper were brought from the East. In Germany it is called the bean herb because it is used so often with that food. The top should be cut regularly to prevent flowering and lengthen harvest.

Winter savory, *S. montana*, is used like summer savory, but has a stronger taste. It is a short-lived, woody perennial.

Annual. Height: 1-1 ½ ft. Leaves soft, hairless, linear, opposite.

Full sun. Well-drained, rich soil. Grow from seed.

---

## Scented Geranium

*Pelargonium spp.*

Geranium family: Geraniaceae

Scented geraniums are grown for their delightful aromas and varied leaf shapes. Their leaves can be used to flavor beverages, jellies, and desserts. The dried leaves and flowers are used in sachets, potpourris, and herbal facials. Leaves should be harvested early on a dry, sunny day just as the plant begins to flower.

Dozens of varieties are available and include rose, lemon, apple, cinnamon, nutmeg, and peppermint. *P. citrosum* is said to discourage mosquitoes.

Tender perennial. Height: up to 3 ft. Leaves are opposite and vary greatly, from ferny and frilly to large and velvety. Flowers are small, delicate, and of various colors.

Full sun. Well-drained, rich soil. Grow from cuttings.

---

## Sweet Woodruff

*Galium odoratum*

Coffee or Madder family: Rubiaceae

Sweet woodruff is an aromatic herb used in potpourris, perfumes, and wreaths. The leaves develop their scent only as they dry. Historically, it was used to stuff mattresses since it is said to repel insects. In Germany it is used to flavor May (new) wine. It serves as a fragrant groundcover in shade.

Perennial. Height: 6 in. Leaves narrow and rough-edged in whorls of 6-8 around stem.\

Shade. Moist, well-drained soil rich in humus. Grown with difficulty from seed.

## Tansy

*Tanacetum vulgare*

Sunflower family: Asteraceae (Compositae)

Tansy leaves have a strong, peppery taste that can be used sparingly in egg dishes and herb butters. It is traditionally a medicinal herb, but is potentially toxic. The lush foliage is ornamental and aromatic. The flowers can be used in dried arrangements.

Dried tansy foliage is effective as an insect repellent. The fresh leaves can be used to make a green dye for wool.

Invasive perennial. Height: 3-4 ft. Leaves dark green and fernlike. Flowers are yellow heads in loose clusters.

Full sun to partial shade. Average soil. Grow from seed or division.

---

## Tarragon, French

*Artemisia dracunculus var. sativa*

Sunflower family: Asteraceae (Compositae)

Tarragon is a culinary herb best known for use with fish, and to flavor vinegar and sauces. Its taste is aniselike. When chewed, it makes the tongue feel slightly numb.

French tarragon does not flower and is propagated by division or cuttings. There is a tarragon (often called Russian) that sets seed but should be avoided because it has very little flavor.

Perennial. Height: 2 ft. Leaves narrow and glossy, growing singly at the top of the plant and in groups of three below.

Full to partial shade. Rich, sandy soil.

---

## Thyme

*Thymus vulgaris*

Mint family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

Fresh or dried thyme is used to season lamb, poultry, fish, soups, rice, vinegar, and a variety of vegetables. It is a good edging plant. Planted near a garden, thyme repels cabbageworms and white flies, and attracts bees.

There are many species of thyme including lemon (*T. x citriodorus*), creeping (*T. praecox* subsp. *arcticus*), and woolly (*T. pseudolanuginosus*).

Bushy perennial. Height: 6-8 in. Tiny leaves with oil glands above, densely hairy underside.

Full sun to partial shade. Light, dry soil. Grow from seed, cuttings, or division. Good container plant.



### **Witch Hazel (Spotted Alder, Snapping Hazelnut)**

*Hamamelis virginiana*

Witch-hazel family: Hamamelidaceae

An extract of the leaves, twigs, and bark contains tannic acid. The extract is sold as an astringent skin cleanser. It is also used to treat sunburns and insect bites.

The name comes from an Old English word wyche and refers to the flexible nature of the branches. Branches were used to make archery bows and divining rods for finding water.

Deciduous shrub. Height: 8-15 ft. Leaves are elliptical with heart-shaped bases, coarsely toothed.

Full sun to partial shade. Moist, rich soil. Grow from seed, cuttings, or layering.

---

### **Wormwood, Common**

*Artemisia absinthium*

Sunflower family: Asteraceae (Compositae)

Wormwood, when placed among clothes, repels moths. Gather and dry the tops and leaves when plants are flowering in July and August.

The name of this very bitter herb comes from its historical use as a medicine to expel worms. It is now used to flavor vermouth and Compari. Related species include southernwood and mugwort.

Perennial. Height: 4 ft. Leaves divided into finger-like segments, upper ones smaller than lower, gray-green silky hairs. Flowers small, greenish-yellow.

Full sun, heavy soil. Prefers dry weather. Grow from seed or root divisions.

---

### **Yarrow (Milfoil, Nosebleed Weed)**

*Achillea millefolium*

Sunflower family: Asteraceae (Compositae)

Dried yellow blossoms are used in flower arrangements and wreaths. The flower yields a yellow dye. The genus name, Achillae, finds its root in the Greek mythological warrior, Achilles. The plant has been used to stop bleeding and heal wounds.

Among a number of related species grown for their ornamental value is 'Coronation Gold.'

Native perennial. Height: 1-2 ft. Deeply divided, fernlike leaves, 2-6 inches long. Small white flowers in flat-topped clusters, blooming June to September.

Full sun. Dry soil. Grow from seed or by division.