



Ingredient of the Month Wellness is Balance

Larry Plesent

Wellness is about balance. Work and play. Action and rest. Tension and relaxation. To and fro goes the way.

Eating and exercise fads come and go with the decades. Eggs were out. Now they're a superfood. Saturated fats supposedly made us sick and led to an early death. Now they are once again considered essential nutrients. We were told not to eat beef. Now its OK. Nobody likes to be made the fool. What is real? What is BS? Here is my take on it.

Our ancestors ate the planet. Anything that walked, crawled, swam or reproduces was fair game. Leaves, roots, bark, fruit and seeds, fungi, insects and their larvae, slugs, bugs and animals large and small were consumed. Each had a season and a time for harvest. Presumably even cannibalism was ritually condoned at some time in nearly every culture on the planet.

Our ancestors were not typically wanderers eternally moving on to new pastures. They were more likely to make seasonal camps to vary their diet and to let the land recover from their presence on it. They often brought back fruits

and berries to share with their loved ones. There they would be, your ancestors and mine, swinging in their hammocks in the shade. Eating fruit and berries and spitting out the sides. Soon food plants appear as if by magic right where they live and eat and hang out.

At the same time, poisonous plants, anything with thorns or prickles were dug up and moved to the perimeter to form a dense fence of thickets and poisonous plants. The tribe knew the way through. Invaders did not.

More than just opportunist, our hunter, gatherer, wild cultivating ancestors ate and altered the world. They obtained the nutrition they needed through variety and seasonality.

How different this is from the easy calorie diet most of us enjoy today! Beef, pork or chicken? An occasional meal of fish or shellfish? Corn, wheat, rice or barley (beer)? How many varieties of vegetables and fungi do you



Stay healthy by eating a variety of foods. (Australian Nutrition Foundation)

Fake colors, fake scents and flavors (they are basically the same thing), herbicides and pesticides and off-gassing hormone mimicking plastic. Will this mad rush to live in an artificial and virtual world ever end?

We did not descend from mono diet ancestors. We descended from people that ate a diet that varied daily, weekly, and seasonally. We would be wiser and healthier if we were to move closer to our roots and ate a wider range of animal, vegetable, fungal and insect foodstuffs (there are over 500 species of edible insects in Africa alone), all fresh and in season. OK, so maybe we could go easy on the insects.

Larry Plesent is a writer and a mostly retired natural-products formulator living and working in the Green Mountains of Vermont. ♻️

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THE WOODCHUCK TRAVELS THROUGH THE GARDEN SEASONS

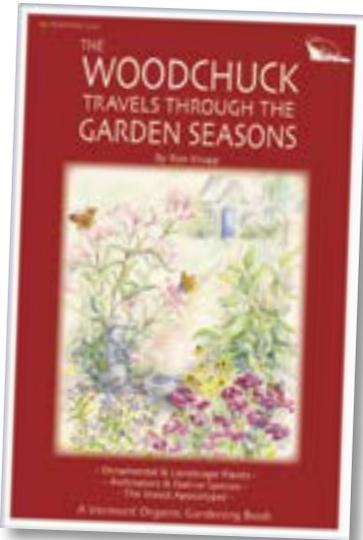
By Ron Krupp, Onion River Press, 2021, 186 pages, \$20

Book review by N. R. Mallery

If you are a gardener in Vermont, you have likely heard of or read at least one of the Woodchuck Gardening books. The author, Ron Krupp has years of experience with gardening which started in Kentucky and his many years in Vermont. Krupp was a commentator on VPR for twenty years and also published *The Green Mountain Farmer* newspaper during that time period.

The latest edition of this book was in 2022 and holds exceptional information that gardeners everywhere in the northeast will learn from and be able to use. Krupp is a storyteller as well as a master gardener.

The inclusion of climate change notes and concerns about global warming make it especially valuable as we deal with many issues including pests and how to control them, composting and attracting pollinators. For instance, the introduction notes the impacts from extreme heat on birds, stating "Birds are telling us in the clearest way possible that we must act urgently to address climate change." He points out that "fossil fuel usage is driving this climate chaos and that we need to cut off the money to Big Oil, who knew the dangers of climate change for decades and chose not to act, valuing profits over the future of life on Earth." Page ten discusses the U.S. Climate Report for 2020-2021 for Vermont.



The book is a seasonal journal which travels back to 2013 continuing through to 2021. It has a clear focus on flowers and native plants portraying his passion for environmentally safe gardening practices. The "Fall Garden Chores" section has a thorough description about soil, composting and its many benefits and how he creates the compost for his own gardening needs.

Medicinal healing plants are included with detailed information on them, interspersed throughout the book. I found the need to dog-page so many of these tips that I plan to refer to in my own gardening adventures. There are tips for native plants that support wildlife, examples of native plants, what to do about the heat and heavy rains or lack of, weeds and invasive, insects, watering, rain barrels, toxicity in hoses, and much more. You should read the book. It is one you will keep as a reference book for each season.

I personally enjoyed the pictures and mention of the Newfoundland dog, Herk, because I am also a Newfie enthusiast, having one sitting right next to me as I write this review.

A copy of the book can be ordered by contacting Ron Krupp at woodchuck37@hotmail.com or 802-658-9974.

N. R. Mallery is the editor of G.E.T. ♻️

eat in a year? A dozen? Half a dozen? How much of your family's diet is little more than sugars, colors, flavors and preservatives in liquid, solid and gelled mediums?

These questions inevitably lead us to conclude that whatever diet of our ancestors had at any given time, eating petrochemicals was not a normal part of the program. After eating from the earth for millions of years we now eat from our oil wells and coal slag piles.

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