

# Root Cellars Rock

## Food Skills Workshops

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A Resource for Community Organizations in  
Newfoundland & Labrador

### Picking: Edible Wild Plants





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# Preface

The 4Ps of local food are planting, picking, preparing, and preserving. Together they encompass how to grow food, harvest it, make healthy meals from it, and preserve it for future use. Based upon the 4Ps, these workshops were created by the Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador (FSN) as part of the Root Cellars Rock project. They are intended to assist community groups across the province in fostering knowledge, capacity, and engagement with healthy, traditional food skills in their communities. The workshop kit outlines what community groups will need to know in order to successfully host their own workshops on the 4Ps.

These workshops have been created in consultation with the Root Cellars Rock Advisory Committee and other local food champions from across the province. The inspiration behind the workshops was the ongoing success and growth of community-based food security initiatives province-wide and a need identified by those groups for Newfoundland and Labrador focused resources. FSN surveyed community-based food security groups to find out what topics were of most interest to them and how they thought the workshops should be designed. The Root Cellars Rock Food Skills Workshops are the result of their input and ideas. Groups surveyed across the province include community gardens, farmers' markets, community kitchens, family resource centres, regional wellness coalitions, environmental organizations, and food security working groups, to name a few.

These workshops are meant to be a living resource. Through ongoing input and evaluation, FSN hopes to update and improve the materials to ensure their continued appropriateness for local groups. For further information on how to provide input and evaluation on the workshops, see page 13.

FSN would like to thank the many individuals, agencies, and community groups that supported the creation of this resource.

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Acknowledgements of photos used in the workshops can be found at the end of each workshop section.

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# Introduction

## Food Security Network NL (FSN)

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The Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador (FSN) is a provincial, membership-based, non-profit organization initially started in 1998 in response to growing levels of hunger and poverty in the province. Since then, FSN has been at the forefront of food security work in the province - fostering awareness, dialogue and action around food security issues.

**FSN's mission** is to actively promote comprehensive, community-based solutions to ensure physical and economic access to adequate and healthy food for all.

Root Cellars Rock is one of several projects that FSN administers in order to advance that mission. For more information, visit [www.foodsecuritynews.com](http://www.foodsecuritynews.com)

## Root Cellars Rock

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The Root Cellars Rock project aims to stimulate healthy local food production and consumption across the province by celebrating Newfoundland and Labrador's agricultural heritage and fostering growth in agriculture and local food self-sufficiency.

**Why Root Cellars?** Root cellars were once an integral part of our provincial food system. Cold storage in root cellars allowed people to preserve harvests and to eat locally grown foods for more of the year. Subsistence living in Newfoundland and Labrador was not easy and many communities added to their imported food supplies by growing gardens, fishing, hunting, and foraging wild foods, all of which would have been preserved to last the winter without refrigeration.

Root cellars are used as a symbol of Newfoundland & Labrador's unique food heritage and potential for increased self-sufficiency. For more information on root cellars, refer to the **Root Cellars** workshop.

These workshops are one aspect of Root Cellars Rock. Other activities include:

- Resource sharing through the Root Cellars Rock blog and social media;
- Building partnerships with and assisting community groups that are fostering Newfoundland and Labrador's local food system; and
- Participating in the development of resources that promote access to healthy local foods in the province.

To learn more about Root Cellars Rock activities, visit [www.rootcellarsrock.ca](http://www.rootcellarsrock.ca).

## The 4Ps of Local Food

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The concept of the 4Ps of Local Food was coined by Neil Tilley, who was a Newfoundland and Labrador community organizer, organic farmer, and advocate for environmental stewardship. FSN respectfully uses the 4Ps of local food in his memory. The 4Ps of local food are: Planting, Picking, Preparing, and Preserving.

### *Planting: How to Grow Food*

Planting includes all aspects of growing healthy food up until the time when plants are ready to be harvested. Planting can refer to household or community gardening, sprouting, and agricultural cultivation of products like vegetables, fruits, and herbs. The two workshops under Planting are:

1. Container Gardening
2. Composting



**A raised bed  
container garden**

### *Picking: How to Harvest Cultivated & Wild Foods*

Picking includes all aspects of harvesting food, both foods that have grown in the wild and those that are cultivated in a garden or on a farm. Picking includes harvesting foods derived from animals as well as plants. Raising backyard chickens and other livestock, beekeeping, hunting, fishing, as well as harvesting vegetables, or gathering wild plants all fall under Picking. The two workshops under Picking are:

3. Seed Saving
4. Edible Wild Plants

### *Preparing: How to Prepare Healthy Meals*

Preparing describes the process of making healthy meals that will be eaten soon after they are prepared. Cooking skills, meal traditions, and information about ingredients are all included under Preparing. The two Preparing workshops are:

5. Preparing Local Vegetables
6. Using Culinary Herbs

## Preserving: How to Store and Preserve Food

Preserving incorporates the various methods for storing and preserving food to keep it for future consumption. Root cellars and cold storage, canning (bottling), pickling, drying, salting, freezing, fermenting, and smoking are all techniques under Preserving. The two workshops for Preserving are:

7. Canning/Bottling
8. Root Cellars



Harvested tomatoes

## The Food Skills Workshops

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### Why Host a Food Skills Workshop?

Hosting a Food Skills Workshop can have several cultural, health, environmental, educational, and financial benefits. Participants will:

- Help to preserve traditional food skills and knowledge;
- Learn practical, hands-on food skills that promote healthy eating and are part of an active lifestyle;
- Meet and connect with other like-minded individuals that care about creating supportive local food communities;
- Gain awareness of ways to live sustainably with minimal impact on the environment;
- Build confidence through recognizing the value of the skills and knowledge that they and other local people already have;
- Connect with organizations and groups in the area that offer valuable services and opportunities;
- Discover affordable ways to enjoy locally produced, healthy foods year-round; and
- Become better connected with their food system and gain a greater understanding of community food security.

### Who Should Host a Food Skills Workshop?

Any individual or community group that is interested in promoting food skills can host a workshop. Throughout the workshops, the term *facilitator* is used to refer to the people organizing and presenting these workshops in communities.

Facilitators do not need to be experts in these topics. The workshops are meant to be introductory learning experiences, both for participants attending the workshops and facilitators preparing them.

Included in each workshop is background information on the topic, supplementary resources, and detailed activity plans. After carefully reading through these materials, facilitators will hopefully feel confident hosting their own workshop. For additional information contact [info@rootcellarsrock.ca](mailto:info@rootcellarsrock.ca)

## How to Use the Workshops

The eight workshops can be hosted individually or also work well when offered as part of a series. For example, a farmers' market might host a few workshops from each of the 4Ps over the course of the market season, to showcase the products that farmers are selling.

A community garden may choose to host two workshops from Planting and Picking, to inspire gardeners at the start of the growing season and to bring their group together during harvest.

A community kitchen may find the Preparing and Preserving workshops useful for introducing participants to new ingredients and techniques and building confidence with those.

There is no set rule on how to use these workshops; they are intended to be flexible and applicable for a variety of different purposes. Connect with local people to find out what workshops will be most valuable to community members and host a workshop in a location appropriate for the local community.

All eight workshops follow the same user-friendly format and include the following sections:

- Preparation
- Introduction
- Roots of our Local Food
- Digging In
- Activities
- Conclusion
- Supplementary Materials



The workshops begin with a section titled '**Preparation**' which introduces facilitators to important details to consider before hosting the workshop, such as gathering materials, finding a location, recruiting participants, setting a timeline, and workshop safety.

The **'Introduction'** section provides instructions for facilitators to introduce themselves, any hosting organizations, and share important information that will make the workshop experience comfortable for all participants.

The next section, **'Roots of our Local Food'**, provides an icebreaker activity. An aspect of Newfoundland and Labrador's food heritage is highlighted to give participants an idea of how food skills and knowledge have been established in the province. There are suggested questions for facilitators to ask participants in order to start a discussion, put participants at ease, and connect the workshop topic back to people's personal lives and the province's food roots.

The section titled **'Digging In'** provides the information that facilitators will use to introduce participants to the topics. This information was collected by FSN through literature reviews and interviews with local food champions. It is up to facilitators to decide how much and what parts of the information are relevant to their group. Facilitators may find some aspects especially useful and decide to leave others out, or may decide to use the extra resources provided to delve a bit deeper into particular concepts of interest to their group. It is recommended that facilitators try to find interesting ways to present the Digging In information besides giving a presentation. Displays, games, discussions, small group interactions, brainstorming lists, slideshows, and videos are all good ideas for relaying information.

The fun really begins with the **'Activities'** section of each workshop. A variety of options are presented for facilitators to choose from for hands on, interactive, and enjoyable activities that they can lead their group through. Depending on the amount of time that is available for the workshop, participants may enjoy doing more than one of the suggested activities. Facilitators decide where to fit the activities in the agenda they create.

Each workshop is then wrapped up in a **'Conclusion'** section where facilitators check back with participants to ensure that their questions have been answered and provide participants with further resources to take home for continued learning.

Included with each workshop are also **'Supplementary Materials'** which facilitators will share with participants. At each workshop all participants should fill in an evaluation form and be encouraged to add their name to the FSN E-News sign-up sheet. As well, a resources page is included with each workshop that provides sources for further learning. The resources page also lists possible videos that could be used by facilitators during the workshop.

### Quick Tip

When possible, it is a good idea to present the activity options to participants before the workshop, and have them choose which they would find most interesting.

# Evaluation and Follow-up

FSN plans to adapt, improve, and expand these workshops over time to ensure that they are kept as up-to-date and user-friendly as possible. Community groups, facilitators, and participants are asked to please provide input about their experience using these resources by filling in and returning to FSN the evaluation form which is included in the supplementary materials of each workshop. Groups that plan to host more than one of the workshops may find it useful to keep photocopies of the evaluation forms so that feedback can also be used to improve future workshops.

**Evaluation forms should be sent back to FSN by email, fax or mail:**

Email: [info@rootcellarsrock.ca](mailto:info@rootcellarsrock.ca)

Fax: (709) 237-4231

Mail:

Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador  
44 Torbay Rd., Suite 110  
St. John's, NL  
A1A 2G4

Consider documenting your workshop experiences with photos or videos. Those photos and videos can be very useful to community groups for supporting future funding requests, promoting upcoming events, and showcasing the successes of a workshop or project. FSN greatly appreciates receiving copies of photos and videos to use for promotion of the workshop kit and to publicly highlight the food security initiatives happening across the province. **Appendix E: Sample Registration Form** (page 31) includes a question requesting consent from participants to photograph or film workshops.



Container gardening workshop

# Things to Keep in Mind

## Get to Know Participants

Getting to know workshop participants and understanding their expectations before the start of a workshop can go a long way towards ensuring that everyone has a positive experience. The questions in the '**Roots of Our Local Food**' section are meant to help facilitators gauge where participants' interests lie and how familiar participants are with the topic. Organizers may also choose to ask a few questions during registration to get more familiar with participants. Refer to **Appendix E: Sample Registration Form** (page 31).

Depending on your location and resources, consider whether you may need to put a limit on the number of participants that can attend a workshop. These workshops are recommended for a maximum of fifteen participants. However, with adjustments to the agenda and content, they could accommodate larger numbers. Using your budget, planned activities, and venue as guides, decide what participant numbers will work best at your workshop.



Introducing a workshop

These workshops are designed for adult participants. While many of the activities could be enjoyed by younger participants, the content of the workshops, safety recommendations, and other planning measures have not been written for children or youth. For alternate resources to connect children and youth with healthy local food skills, refer to the Children & Youth section on the Root Cellars Rock blog ([www.rootcellarsrock.ca/children-youth](http://www.rootcellarsrock.ca/children-youth)).

## Build a Welcoming Space for Adult Learners

The following are principles for adult learning to keep in mind when facilitating workshops in order to create a comfortable environment for adults to learn in (adapted from the Community Kitchen Best Practice Toolkit - [www.foodsecuritynews.com/resources](http://www.foodsecuritynews.com/resources)):

**Draw upon learners' experiences as a resource.** Adults have a wide experience base. Facilitators can help participants share their own experiences and create an environment where participants are encouraged to learn from one another. By focusing on the strengths learners bring to the workshop, learners are able to connect new learning with prior knowledge.

**Foster a spirit of collaboration.** Collaborative learning focuses on the interdependence of each member. Learners collaborate with facilitators and with each other by working together to answer questions and perform activities.

**Involve learners in the planning and implementation of learning activities.** Adults are interested in things that are relevant to their lives. Adults' past experiences, their current learning goals, and their sense of self will influence what they want to learn and how they learn it. The facilitator can create a situation in which participants can share in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of workshops.

**Create a climate that encourages and supports learning.** Adults have a sense of personal dignity. They must be treated with respect at all times and never feel humiliated or laughed at before others. A safe atmosphere where learners can admit confusion and express different opinions is one that enhances learner self-esteem and reduces fear.

**Cultivate self-direction in learners.** In a supportive and safe learning environment, the facilitator can become a mentor to adult learners. They can help learners to develop skills that lead to self-direction, independent learning, and empowerment. Facilitators can encourage learners to continue to seek out knowledge and experiences related to the topic beyond the workshop.



Outdoor workshop

## Location

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Workshop location

There are several things to keep in mind when choosing a workshop location:

**Availability:** Be sure to book the space well in advance to ensure that it will be available at the time of the workshop. Check back with the venue in the days leading up to the workshop to confirm the booking.

**Traveling distance:** Choose a location that is within easy travel distance for participants. Keep in mind whether they are likely to be walking, driving (and require parking), or taking public transit. If many participants will be walking or taking public transit, consider concluding workshops before dark or offering carpools.

**Affordability:** Choose a venue that is within budget for the workshop, keeping in mind other expenses like materials. Consider approaching venue operators to see if they are willing to donate the space for free or search out spaces that are always free such as community rooms at local recreation centres or libraries.

**Accessibility:** Consider the mobility of participants. Where possible choose venues that have few stairs or provide wheelchair access. Arrange work spaces and choose equipment that will be comfortable for all participants.

**Equipment & resources:** Be sure that any necessary equipment or resources are available on-site such as a kitchen, audio or video equipment, internet access, appliances, kitchen tools, and running water. Some of the workshop activities are messy so cleaning equipment should also be available.

**Seating:** Think about how the participants will be organized in the space. Will everyone be around a table or in a circle? Or will the facilitator be in the front facing seated participants? However you envision the lay-out, ensure that there are adequate chairs, tables, and workspaces.

## Agenda & Timing

Each workshop in its entirety is set up to last about two hours depending on the activities that are chosen. It is recommended that the workshops be done in their entirety with all the associated sections. However, if you do not have that much time with participants, consider adapting the workshops to fit your timeline. For example, you could use the **'Roots of Our Local Food'** and **'Digging In'** sections together and provide a shorter presentation and discussion. Or use the **'Activities'** section alone for a quick hands-on session and then send resource materials home with participants for further learning.



Community garden

Each workshop comes with a recommended agenda. Facilitators can adapt the agenda to make it appropriate for their workshop and should display it at the workshop or hand out copies for participants to follow along with. The agendas do not include break periods; however facilitators can ask participants if they would appreciate a break. If the workshops are scheduled to go beyond two hours then it is recommended that breaks be added to the agenda.

Activities will often take longer than expected, especially when participants are enjoying themselves. Keep this in mind when planning your schedule. One of the best outcomes of hosting community workshops is the networking and socializing that result, so allow time for this to happen.

Schedule workshops for times when participants are most likely to attend. Find out if the intended participants prefer days, evenings, or weekends. Many people are unavailable in the summer, so higher turnout might be likely during other times of the year. If you plan to host an internal workshop for your community group perhaps host it after or in lieu of a regular meeting at a time that participants are already comfortable with.

For workshops directed at parents or caregivers, keep in mind possible child care commitments or restricted evening schedules. Consider offering child care at workshops in exchange for a donation or running supervised children's events at the same time as the adult workshop.

Schedule workshops with adequate time to complete planned agenda items. The '**Activities**' generally take place at the end of the workshop and they are extremely important for providing hands-on and interactive learning experiences. Be sure that your timeline leaves enough room that activities are not cut short.

If a workshop is going to take place during a meal time, consider providing food or hosting a potluck. Providing food is an effective way to increase attendance for a workshop or event. If you will be providing food, include that in your budget and adjust your agenda to allow time for participants to eat.

**Appendix E: Sample Registration Form** (page 31) and the evaluation forms included in the supplementary materials of each workshop can be used as resources to find out the best times for hosting workshops.

## Materials & Budget

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These Food Skills Workshops have been designed to keep expenses low by recommending affordable and reused materials for workshop activities where possible. That being said, it is easy to spend more than anticipated to host a successful workshop. Consider making a budget at the start of the planning process to help monitor expenses. Refer to **Appendix B: Budget Template** (page 27) as a resource.

Once you have an idea of expenses, cost out the price per participant for the workshop and decide whether that amount is manageable within the resources of the group. If not, refer to **Funds to Host a Workshop** (page 19) for ideas to cover the costs of hosting a workshop.



Workshop materials

## Funds to Host a Workshop

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These workshops are meant to be inexpensive for facilitators to host but will still require some funds for materials, venue, and printing. Consider the following options for ways to finance workshops in your community:

### Fees

Charging participants a small and accessible fee can help to cover the cost of hosting a workshop. There are different fee types to choose from, including flat rate, sliding scale, suggested donation, and pay-what-you-can.

**Flat rate:** A set fee is required from all participants. It could reflect the cost per participant to cover the workshop expenses or could be set a bit higher to fundraise for the group hosting the workshop.

**Sliding scale:** Participants are categorized in some way and are required to pay a fee that reflects their income level, involvement in the hosting group, or role at the workshop. This type of fee structure can create incentive for participants to join a group's membership or volunteer so that they are able to pay a discounted fee. Some examples of sliding scale categories are:

- employed individuals, unwaged individuals
- adults, students, seniors
- non-members, members
- regular participants, participants who volunteer

**Suggested donation:** A donation amount is suggested and participants decide what they can reasonably afford to donate based on that amount. For example, suggested donation may be \$5 but some individuals will choose to donate \$10 and others may donate \$2.

**Pay-what-you-can:** Participants are asked to pay some money towards the workshop but there is no limit or suggestion on what that amount should be so participants decide what is reasonable for them.

### Fundraising

A fundraiser could be held to raise money for hosting workshops. The fundraising process is also a good opportunity for promoting the upcoming workshop in the community. Keep in mind that sometimes fundraisers can take up more volunteer time than is reasonable considering the amount of money they raise. Try to come up with fundraising ideas that are easy to organize and will not require too many resources to succeed. Consider the following fundraising options and be creative when brainstorming other ideas:

- host a bake sale or sell beverages at a community event like a farmers' market or fall fair
- sell raffle tickets for donated prizes
- host a garage sale or plant sale



## Donations

The costs associated with hosting a workshop can be greatly lessened if your group seeks out donations of materials or in-kind donations like free access to a venue or equipment. Consider approaching the following local businesses and groups for assistance:

- gardening and landscaping businesses
- grocery stores
- town councils
- service and church groups
- community centres
- farmers
- hardware and home stores
- restaurants
- local businesses
- libraries

## Grants

Grants are funds distributed by an organization (like a government department, business, or foundation) to assist in the creation of community projects that fit within the funding organization's mandate. Grants usually involve an application process and follow-up reporting and may take several months to process. Most grants require that applicant groups be either registered not-for-profits or charities in order to apply. Usually individuals cannot apply to grants.

For information on becoming incorporated as a not-for-profit or gaining charitable status visit the Community Sector Council Newfoundland and Labrador website: <http://communitysector.nl.ca/voluntary-sector-resources/starting-nonprofit-or-charity>. Refer to **Appendix J: Grant Opportunities** (page 38) for a list of grants and grant databases.

## Safety

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Safety is very important when hosting a workshop. Keep in mind the wellbeing of everyone in attendance when planning out venues, materials, food, activities and other considerations. Hosting activities outdoors and at gardens creates safety considerations that are unique from indoor workshops. Refer to **Appendix G: Garden Safety** (page 33) for things to keep in mind for garden workshops.

Serving and/or preparing food at a workshop can really improve the experience for participants, but it means that food safety precautions need to be taken. Refer to **Appendix H: Food Safety** (page 35) for provincial food safety guidelines to follow when hosting a workshop.



Be safe while using tools

## Promotion

Try to promote workshops as much as possible in your community well in advance. Use **Appendix E: Sample Registration Form** (page 31) and **Appendix F: Registration Tracking Template** (page 32) as resources to keep track of how many people will be attending and to decide how much more promotion should be done to fill up available spaces as the workshop date gets closer.

The following are a few tips for successfully promoting an upcoming workshop:

- **Use the FSN E-News:** Send your event listing to FSN for inclusion in the monthly E-News. The E-News is an email newsletter packed full of events, opportunities and resources and it goes out to individuals and groups across the province. Email your event to [e-news@foodsecuritynews.com](mailto:e-news@foodsecuritynews.com) before the first Monday of the month to be included in that month's e-news. Sign-up to receive the E-news at [www.foodsecuritynews.com](http://www.foodsecuritynews.com)
- **Promote the event through Root Cellars Rock:** Email [info@rootcellarsrock.ca](mailto:info@rootcellarsrock.ca) to find out about putting notices up on the Root Cellars Rock blog, Facebook, and twitter.
- **Spread the word:** Everywhere you go, tell people about the great workshop you are hosting and ask them to pass the word on. It's helpful to have a handout with the workshop information or a website address that you can direct people to so they will not forget the details later.
- **Share with your network:** Send emails out over listservs, put a blurb in newsletters, post notices on community boards, make a Facebook event, promote the workshop on twitter, and post the details on group websites.
- **Use free local media:** Make a radio public service announcement (PSA) or create a press release and distribute that to local media to generate interest for articles and news stories.
- **Connect with local groups:** Brainstorm about other local groups that have members that may be interested in attending and then ask if you can promote the workshop through them. For example, if you are doing a workshop on container gardening then perhaps local community gardens, horticulture clubs, community centres, seniors groups, or schools would be interested in promoting the event.



Leading a workshop

- **Use local events calendars:** Often your municipality, local newspaper, or tourism centre will have online or on-location community calendars that you can post events on for free.
- **Promote the activities:** Activities are the hands-on part of the workshops and they are a great draw for attracting interest. For example, advertise that you are hosting a composting workshop, but be sure to mention that you will be making a vermicompost bin as a group.
- **Promote the event through the venue:** If you are hosting at a community centre, library, farmers' market, or other public space then put up posters, use on-site calendars and newsletters, and ask venue operators to spread the word.
- **Make a poster:** Making posters and handouts can be time consuming, but are great when used effectively. Rather than putting up posters everywhere, think about who you are trying to reach and poster where those people go. Use **Appendix D: Sample Poster** (page 30) as a template.
- **Promote the workshop at other events:** Ask to attend the events and meetings of related groups to tell people about the workshop.
- **Start early and finish late:** Give people lots of notice when workshops are being hosted and then send out reminders right before the workshop. Often those last minute reminders convince people to attend.



Having fun at a workshop

## Preparedness

Before planning a workshop, carefully review the materials in this kit. Thoughtful review of the materials and adequate preparation will ensure that you organize the right venue, materials, content, promotions, and activities and host a highly successful workshop. Use **Appendix A: Are You Ready? Checklist** (page 26) as a planning resource.

# FSN Resources

When organizing workshops, feel free to contact FSN with any questions or feedback. FSN can also put you in contact with other groups across the province that have done the same workshops already and can share resources and lessons, which may be helpful in organizing your workshop.

FSN has many resources in addition to these workshops. Explore the links below and print or forward any resources that could benefit workshop participants. For more information visit [www.foodsecuritynews.com](http://www.foodsecuritynews.com) or contact FSN at [info@foodsecuritynews.com](mailto:info@foodsecuritynews.com) and (709) 237-4026.

## Root Cellars Rock online:

- The Root Cellars Rock blog ([rootcellarsrock.ca](http://rootcellarsrock.ca)) is an interactive online space for learning about the 4 P's of local food. It includes posts from across the province, recipes, links, resources, event listings and a forum to share tips and ask questions.
- The Root Cellars Rock YouTube channel features a collection of linked videos to help build food skills. ([www.youtube.com/user/RootCellarsRock](http://www.youtube.com/user/RootCellarsRock))
- For daily local food tips, resources, and opportunities visit the Root Cellars Rock Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/rootcellarsrock](http://www.facebook.com/rootcellarsrock)) and Twitter ([twitter.com/#!/rootcellarsrock](http://twitter.com/#!/rootcellarsrock))

**E-News:** FSN distributes a monthly e-newsletter featuring funding and volunteer opportunities, news, events, and resources. Sign up at [www.foodsecuritynews.com](http://www.foodsecuritynews.com) or use the sign-up sheet found in the supplementary materials of each workshop. To advertise your project or events, email [e-news@foodsecuritynews.com](mailto:e-news@foodsecuritynews.com) before the first Monday of the month.

## Food Security Pamphlets and Fact Sheets:

FSN created a series of fact sheets filled with easy to understand information about food security. You can find these online at [www.foodsecuritynews.com/resources](http://www.foodsecuritynews.com/resources)



**Best Practices Toolkits:** FSN developed four Best Practices Toolkits for community organizations which feature step-by-step guides and resources for starting and maintaining community gardens, farmers' markets, community kitchens, and bulk buying clubs. Contact FSN to get copies or find them online at [www.foodsecuritynews.com/resources](http://www.foodsecuritynews.com/resources).



**Food Security Initiative Inventory:** FSN maintains an online directory of Food Security Initiatives in Newfoundland and Labrador, including: food banks, shelters, meal programs, community gardens, community kitchens, bulk buying clubs, farmers' markets, local farms, local food retailers, and more. It is available on FSN's website at [www.foodsecuritynews.com/resources](http://www.foodsecuritynews.com/resources).

**Teleconference Series:** FSN holds regular teleconferences on topics related to food security, such as community gardening, nutrition, farm direct marketing, farmers' markets, land use, and food policy. Previous teleconferences are archived as power point presentations, audio recordings, and written summaries on FSN's website at [www.foodsecuritynews.com/teleconferences.html](http://www.foodsecuritynews.com/teleconferences.html). Sign up to the E-News to hear about future teleconferences.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Are You Ready? Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure that you are ready to host a Root Cellars Rock Food Skills Workshop. As you complete each task, check it off.

- Carefully read through the introductory materials to get familiar with how to host any of the Root Cellars Rock Food Skills Workshops.
- Decide which workshop you would like to host.
- Keep accessibility in mind throughout all planning.
- Read through the workshop of your choice carefully.
- Identify who will facilitate the workshop.
- Decide what information you want to present from Digging In.
- Decide what Activities you want to do.
- Develop your agenda for the workshop.
- Create a budget for your workshop.
- Organize funds to cover workshop costs.
- Choose a date and time.
- Book an appropriate venue.
- Promote the workshop to the community.
- Create a materials list.
- Gather donated, reused, and purchased materials.
- Register participants.
- Print the following:
  - 1 copy of the FSN E-News Sign-Up Sheet
  - Evaluation Forms for each participant, volunteer and facilitator
  - Resource sheets for each participant
- Check to make sure all the equipment you will use works.
- Remind participants of the workshop by email or phone.
- Have fun at your food skills workshop!** Take photos and videos to share.
- Return the completed FSN E-News Sign-Up Sheet and Evaluation Forms to FSN immediately following the workshop.

### Quick Tip

Involve potential participants in planning and decision-making so that you host a workshop that is well-attended, fun for everyone, and best reflects the interests in your community.

# Appendix B: Budget Template

Workshop Title:

Date of Workshop:

Organizers:

## Estimated Expenses

Description	Amount	Notes
Venue		
Activity materials (Refer to Appendix C, page 29, for more details)		
Refreshments & food		
Photocopying		
Other*:		
<b>Total Estimated Expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>	

\*'Other' might include things like transportation, child care, honourariums, thank you gifts, etc.

Estimated expenses ÷ estimated # of participants = cost per participant  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ÷ \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

### Estimated Funds Available

Description	Amount	Notes
Fees from participants		
Donations		
Grants		
Group's workshop funds		
Other:		
<b>Total Estimated Funds</b>	<b>\$</b>	

Estimated funds - Estimated expenses = Estimated surplus or deficit

\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix C: Supplies & Costing Template

Workshop Title:

Date of Workshop:

Organizers:

Fill in the details for each of the materials that will be needed to run the workshop.

Item Description	Quantity	Cost	Pick-up Location	Person Responsible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> when item is acquired	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> when setting up workshop

## Appendix D: Sample Poster



**JOIN US FOR A  
FOOD SKILLS  
WORKSHOP  
ABOUT:**

**DATE:**

**TIME:**

**LOCATION:**

**CONTACT:**

**DETAILS:**



**[WWW.ROOTCELLARSROCK.CA](http://WWW.ROOTCELLARSROCK.CA)**

Share ideas,  
experiences, interests,  
and learn new skills!

# Appendix E: Sample Registration Form



Return completed forms to:

## Food Skills Workshop Registration Form

Please fill in this registration form to the best of your ability. It will be kept private and used only to ensure your spot in the upcoming workshop.

Name:

Phone

Number:

---

Email:

---

1. Do you have any food restrictions that organizers should be aware of, including allergies?

2. Photos and videos may be taken at the workshop. Do you consent to being photographed and/or filmed?

Yes     No

3. Please rank and circle your prior understanding of the workshop topic, where 1= little understanding and 5= very knowledgeable:

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

3. What do you hope to learn or gain by attending this workshop?

4. Please share any additional comments or suggestions that would assist in making this a positive workshop experience for you:

# Appendix F: Registration Tracking Template

Workshop Title:

Date of Workshop:

<b>Participant Name</b>	<b>Phone #</b>	<b>Email</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Fee Paid</b>	<b>Notes (Including Food Restrictions)</b>

# Appendix G: Garden Safety

The following is a list of safety tips to keep in mind when gardening or using garden tools at a workshop. Share this information with participants as needed.

## **1. Protect yourself from sun overexposure, exhaustion and injury:**

- wear a hat and adequate clothing for the weather
- apply sunscreen
- take breaks in the shade
- drink enough water to stay hydrated
- eat enough healthy food to maintain energy
- pace yourself and be aware of your physical limits
- stretch after vigorous activity or keeping to one position for a long time
- avoid straining your back, neck, and knees
- have a first aid kit on site and when possible, someone trained in first aid

## **2. Stay safe when using garden machinery and tools:**

- wear sturdy gardening gloves, footwear and clothing that covers skin
- choose equipment that is the right size and weight for you to handle
- When you are unsure of how to use something, ask for guidance
- keep equipment clean and rust-free
- store equipment in safe, dry places
- maintain a tidy work space
- be aware of possible tripping hazards
- place sharp equipment like rakes sharp-side-down
- do not leave equipment unattended
- keep equipment in good working order with tune-ups and repairs
- read and follow manufacturer's instructions for all equipment
- do not work with electrical equipment in wet or damp conditions
- use extension cords that are rated for outdoor use

### 3. Be cautious when using fertilizers (even organic), pesticides, and chemicals:

- keep skin covered by wearing long clothing and sturdy gloves
- remove garden shoes and brush off clothing before going indoors and consider keeping separate clothing to be worn only during application
- read and follow manufacturer's instructions closely
- store fertilizers, pesticides and chemicals in safe places away from food, children, and pets



Raised bed with bricks

### 4. Ensure food safety in the garden:

(Adapted from the University of Maine Cooperative Extension  
<http://youtu.be/o3z1q9BdoGY>)

- choose a garden site that is away from septic systems, manure piles, and areas where animals frequent
- if using surface water (streams, ponds, etc.) or rain barrels to water your garden, apply water to the base of plants at the soil level
- if using well water, ensure that the water is regularly tested for safety
- use potable water to clean soil and residue from foods
- harvest foods with clean hands/gloves and tools
- harvest foods into clean, food-grade containers
- if putting foods into storage, be sure to handle them gently to avoid creating damage that could eventually rot
- ensure that harvested foods are adequately dry before storing
- be aware of potential soil contamination and consider having your soil tested, refer to St. John's Safer Soil (<http://safersoil.ning.com/>) as a resource
- if growing food in containers, do not use pressure treated wood, painted materials or heat/water sensitive containers that could degrade and leach contaminants into the soil

# Appendix H: Food Safety

For more information on food safety visit:

[www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publichealth/envhealth/foodsafetyinfo.html](http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publichealth/envhealth/foodsafetyinfo.html)

**FOOD SAFETY  
SERVED HERE**

## **FOOD SAFETY DON'T BE THE CAUSE OF FOODBORNE ILLNESS!**

The following information provides an overview of food safety practices which can reduce the risk of food poisoning in your home or business.

### **Handle perishable foods safely**

Perishable foods must be stored at controlled temperatures. In addition, foods must be protected from contamination. Please follow these recommendations:

### **Avoid the temperature danger zone!**

- Cold foods need to be stored below **4°C (40°F)**.
- Hot foods need to be stored above **60°C (140°F)**.
- The only way to know is to use a thermometer!
- Do not store any perishable foods in the **danger zone** between **4°C and 60°C**, where bacteria can grow. (ex. On the kitchen counter)

### **Cross contamination control:**

1. Keep raw meats and poultry away from other foods during storage and preparation.
2. Keep separate cutting boards for raw meats and vegetables to avoid cross-contamination.
3. Keep foods covered.
4. Make sure the refrigerator is set at **4°C (40°F)**, and keep the freezer at **-18°C (0°F)**.
5. Serve foods **right away** so they do not **linger** at room temperatures where bacteria can grow.
6. Remove food from the stove, serve it and put the rest in the fridge immediately.
7. Keep cooked and ready-to-eat foods separate from raw foods, and surfaces that raw meats have contacted. This will prevent the bacteria that live on raw meats from contaminating food which will not be cooked again.

### **Thaw frozen food safely**

- In a refrigerator.
- In a microwave oven.
- Under cold running water.
- In cold water that is changed often enough to keep it cold.
- Never thaw at room temperature.

### **Cooking food thoroughly**

It is necessary to kill harmful bacteria that may be present in or on the food. This is very important for poultry and ground beef.

### **More food safety tips**

- Wash **all produce** thoroughly before cooking or eating.
- Cook **poultry dressing separately**. Never inside the bird.
- Cook **poultry or roasts all at once**. Never cook partially on one day to finish cooking on the next day.
- Use a **thermometer** to find out the internal temperature of cooked items. (See Table for internal temperatures.)
- Place **all hot food items** in **several shallow or smaller pans** in a **refrigerator** for “quick chilling”.
- Avoid the **use of home canned or preserved food** items when serving large numbers of people.

**Food Safety Awareness**

Most foodborne illness can be avoided by following these simple food safety tips:

**CLEAN:**

Wash your hands frequently with soap and water.

- Before handling food or eating.
- After handling raw meats, using the toilet, touching pets/animals and changing diapers.

Wash counters, utensils, cutting boards, and other surfaces after they come into contact with raw meat.

**COOK**

- Cook all meats, poultry, and eggs to a proper internal temperature, as listed in the table.
- Keep all hot foods at 60°C (140°F) or more, to prevent the growth of bacteria.
- Use a kitchen thermometer to check cooking and storage temperatures.

**CHILL**

- Chill all leftovers promptly to keep them out of room temperature.
- Refrigerate all perishable foods at 4°C (40°F) or less, to prevent the growth of bacteria.
- Thaw frozen foods in a refrigerator, cold water, or a microwave oven, not at room temperature.

**SEPARATE**

- Use separate cutting boards for raw meats, and raw fruits and vegetables.
- Store raw meats below ready-to-eat foods, on lower refrigerator shelves, to prevent contamination caused by dripping.

Action	Temperature required
Refrigeration	4 °C (40 °F) or less
Freezing	Minus 18 °C (0 °F) or less
<b>Cooking</b>	
Food Mixtures containing Poultry, Eggs, Meat, Fish or other potentially hazardous foods	Internal Temperature of 74 °C (165 °F) for at least 10 minutes
Pork, Lamb, Veal, Beef (whole cuts)	Internal temperature of 70 °C (158 °F)
Rare Roast Beef	Internal temperature of 63 °C (145 °F) for 3 minutes
Poultry	Internal temperature of 85 °C (185 °F) for 15 seconds
Stuffing in Poultry	74 °C (165 °F)
Ground Meat	71 °C (160 °F)
Eggs	63 °C (145 °F) for 15 seconds
Fish	71 °C (160 °F)
Reheating	74 °C (165 °F)
Holding Hot Foods	60 °C (140 °F)
Cooling	60 °C (140 °F) to 20 °C (68 °F) within 2 hours 20 °C (68 °F) to 4 °C (40 °F) within 4 hours



Department of Health and Community Services  
 Department of Government Services  
 Regional Health Authorities  
 Revised January 2011

**Food Safety Awareness**

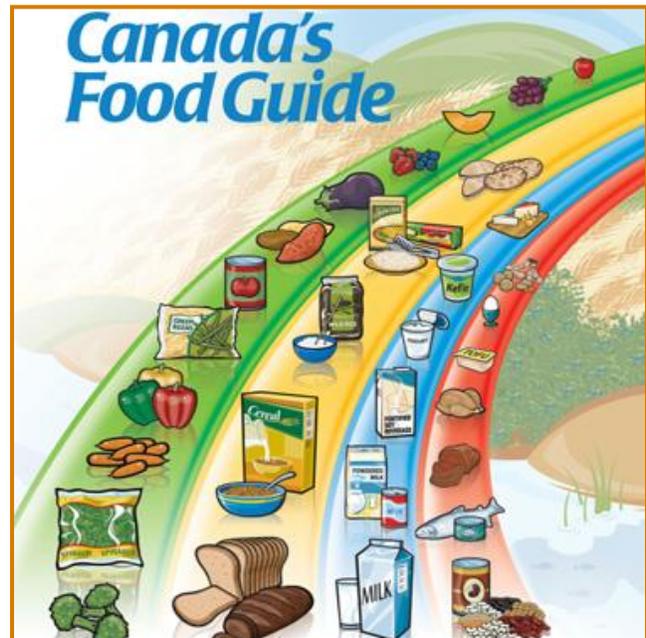
# Appendix I: Nutrition

Canada's Food Guide provides recommendations on daily consumption from each of the four food groups: vegetables and fruit, grain products, milk and alternatives, and meat and alternatives. It can be used as a resource when preparing for workshops or given out to participants to take home for further reference.

Health Canada also produces a complementary food guide tailored to reflect the food traditions and choices of First Nations, Inuit and Métis. To access copies of Canada's Food Guide or Canada's Food Guide for First Nations, Inuit and Métis, visit the Health Canada website ([www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php)) or your local public health office.

## Key messages from Canada's Food Guide:

- Eat at least one dark green and one orange vegetable each day.
- Choose vegetables and fruit prepared with little or no added fat, sugar or salt.
- Have vegetables and fruit more often than juice.
- Make at least half of your grain products whole grain each day.
- Choose grain products that are lower in fat, sugar or salt.
- Select lower fat milk alternatives.
- Have meat alternatives such as beans, lentils and tofu often.
- Eat at least two Food Guide Servings of fish each week.
- Select lean meat and alternatives prepared with little or no added fat or salt.



# Appendix J: Grant Opportunities

## Grant Databases

Search these databases to find many different grants and funding opportunities:

- **Canadian Heritage Funding Programs:** [www.pch.gc.ca/eng/1268917737337/1268917925906](http://www.pch.gc.ca/eng/1268917737337/1268917925906)
- **Charity Village:** <https://charityvillage.com/topics/fundraising/funders.aspx>
- **Farm Grants:** <http://farmgrants.wikispaces.com/>
- **Newfoundland and Labrador Environment Network funding database:** [www.nlen.ca/resources/funds-grants-and-foundations/](http://www.nlen.ca/resources/funds-grants-and-foundations/)

## Grants for Charitable Organizations and Not-for-Profits

These grants support projects addressing a number of different topics. Review the application requirements for each grant to see if your group qualifies.

- **Aviva Community Fund:** [www.avivacommunityfund.org](http://www.avivacommunityfund.org)
- **Carrot Cache:** <http://carrotcache.com/>
- **Community Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador:** [www.cfnl.ca](http://www.cfnl.ca)
- **Community Youth Network, St. John's- Special Project Grant:** [www.thrivecyn.ca/main.php?sid=31](http://www.thrivecyn.ca/main.php?sid=31)
- **Nature's Path Gardens for Good:** [www.facebook.com/naturespath/app\\_401418026549919](https://www.facebook.com/naturespath/app_401418026549919)
- **New Horizons for Seniors Program:** [www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/community\\_partnerships/seniors/index.shtml](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/community_partnerships/seniors/index.shtml)
- **NLEN Member Support Program:** [www.nlen.ca/resources/member-support-program/](http://www.nlen.ca/resources/member-support-program/)
- **Provincial Wellness Grant:** [www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/wellnesshealthyliving/provincialwellness.html](http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/wellnesshealthyliving/provincialwellness.html)
- **Regional Wellness Coalitions:** For more information on funding opportunities contact the Regional Wellness Coalition in your area. [www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/wellnesshealthyliving/wellnesscoalitions.html](http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/wellnesshealthyliving/wellnesscoalitions.html)
- **Shell Fuelling Change:** [www.shell.ca/home/content/can-en/environment\\_society/fuellingchange/](http://www.shell.ca/home/content/can-en/environment_society/fuellingchange/)
- **Small Change Fund:** <http://smallchangefund.org/>

- **TD Friends of the Environment:** [www.fef.td.com](http://www.fef.td.com)
- **VOCM Cares Foundation:** [www.vocmcares.com](http://www.vocmcares.com)
- **Walmart-Evergreen:** [www.evergreen.ca/en/funding/grants/walmart.sn](http://www.evergreen.ca/en/funding/grants/walmart.sn)

## Employment Support Programs

If your group is trying to hire staff or create an internship then these employment programs may be of help:

- **Career Focus:** For more information contact the Service Canada Centre in your area and visit <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/> for a list of Service Canada Centres.
- **Community Enhancement Employment Program:** [www.ma.gov.nl.ca/ma/emp\\_support/ceep.html](http://www.ma.gov.nl.ca/ma/emp_support/ceep.html)
- **Graduate Employment Program:** [www.aes.gov.nl.ca/students/graduate.html](http://www.aes.gov.nl.ca/students/graduate.html)
- **Job Creation Partnership (JCP):** [www.aes.gov.nl.ca/lmda/jcp.html](http://www.aes.gov.nl.ca/lmda/jcp.html)
- **NL Works:** <http://www.aes.gov.nl.ca/findajob/nlworks.html>
- **Student Employment Program (Level I, II, III):** <http://www.aes.gov.nl.ca/students/studentemployment.html>
- **Student Work and Service Program (SWASP):** [www.hrle.gov.nl.ca/hrle/students/swasp.html](http://www.hrle.gov.nl.ca/hrle/students/swasp.html)
- **Targeted Initiative for Older Workers:** [www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/employment/employment\\_measures/older\\_workers/index.shtml](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/employment/employment_measures/older_workers/index.shtml)

# Appendix K: Garden Crops in NL

\* This is only a general guide. Please keep in mind variations across the province and talk to local gardeners for growing and harvesting tips unique to your area. This list also includes some commonly harvested wild plants such as berries and mushrooms that could also be cultivated.

	Harvest Season
	Cold Storage (E.g. Root cellars)
	Preserved (Canned, Dried, Frozen, Fermented, etc.)
	Unavailable, try indoor gardening instead.

Type of Produce	Month											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Anise												
Apples												
Artichokes												
Asparagus												
Bakeapple (Cloudberry)												
Basil												
Bay												
Beans- green												
Beans- shell												
Beets (incl. greens)												
Blackberry												
Blueberries												
Borage												
Broccoli												
Brussel Sprouts												
Cabbage												
Cauliflower												
Carrots												
Celery												
Chamomile												

Type of Produce	Month											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Cherries- Sour												
Chevril												
Chard												
Chives												
Collard Greens												
Coriander (Cilantro)												
Corn												
Cranberries												
Crowberry												
Cucumber												
Currants												
Dandelion Greens												
Dill												
Endive												
Garlic (incl. scapes)												
Gooseberries												
Green Onion												
Honey												
Jerusalem Artichoke												
Kale												
Kohlrabi												
Lavender												
Leeks												
Lettuce												
Mints												
Nasturtiums												
Nettles												
Onions												
Oregano												
Parsley												

Type of Produce	Month											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Parsnips	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Partridgeberries	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Peas	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Peppers	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Plums	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Potatoes	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Radish/ Daikon	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Raspberries	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Rhubarb	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Rose hips	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Rosemary	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Rutabagas	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Sage	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Salad Greens	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Saskatoon Berries	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Savoury	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Sorrel	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Spinach	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Strawberries	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Tarragon	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Thyme	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Tomatoes	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Turnips	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Wild Mushrooms	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Winter Squash	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Yarrow (tea)	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Zucchini- Flowers	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Zucchini	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

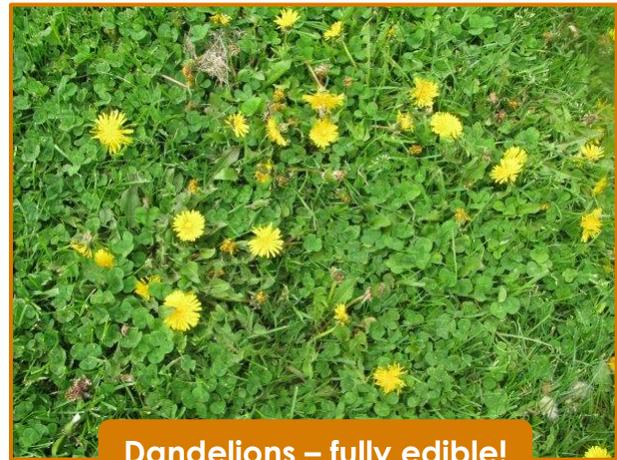
# Picking

## 4. Edible Wild Plants

### 4.1. Preparation

#### Facilitation

It is recommended that there be one facilitator (or assisting volunteer) to every five participants attending this workshop. Multiple facilitators are able to divide the presentation content, which makes the workshop more manageable to host and more interesting for participants. Volunteers and facilitators can organize participants into smaller groups of five or less during the hands-on activity to make facilitation easier and give participants more attention.



Dandelions – fully edible!

#### Materials

- 1 copy of the **FSN E-News Sign-up Sheet** (page 109)
- Evaluation forms photocopied for every participant, volunteer, and facilitator (see **Evaluation Form**, page 100)
- Agenda – either make one large copy on a white board or chart paper to post or have several to hand out to participants (see **Sample Agenda**, page 99)
- Photocopies of the **Resources** sheet (page 102) for each participant
- Pens or pencils
- White board or chart paper (optional)
- Markers (optional)
- Materials for chosen activities (see **Activities**, page 89)
- Name tags for participants and facilitators

## Location

This workshop can be done indoors or outdoors depending on which activities are used. If outdoors, choose a covered area out of the wind and with comfortable seating for all participants.

## Participants

This workshop is recommended for a maximum of 15 participants. Review the **Activities** section (page 89) and choose participant numbers based on availability of materials for everyone to participate in the chosen activities. Keep in mind that a large group of participants leads to a longer workshop so that everyone is allowed time for participation.

## Timeline

This workshop has been created to fill a 2 hour time period, without breaks. A sample agenda is provided in the **Supplementary Materials** section (page 99). Once you begin organizing the content and activities of your choice, you may find that more or less time is needed and the agenda can be altered to suit those needs.

## Safety

Refer to **Appendix H: Food Safety** (page 35) and **Appendix G: Garden Safety** (page 33) for guidance. **Foraging Safety** (page 55) also provides important information to keep in mind when gathering and eating edible wild plants.

## Content

Carefully review all materials in advance of the workshop. Decide on the appropriate number of participants and facilitators/volunteers to invite to your workshop after considering all materials.

This workshop has six main sections. Refer to **How to Use the Workshops** (page 11) for a description of each section.

From the **Digging In** section (page 48), choose what information you want to present based on participants' experience

### *Note: Digging In*

The information in this section can be shared through a traditional presentation, but participants may enjoy themselves more if creative techniques are used. Consider organizing games, discussions, small group interaction, demonstrations, or displays to convey the information. There are lots of lists in the workshop and rather than reading them, try to brainstorm ideas first with the group. If the required equipment is on-site, showing videos or photo slideshows can also be great. Links to several videos are in the **Resources** section (page 102).

and interests, timeline, and available materials. If you are following the agenda included here, Digging In has been allotted 45 minutes to complete. Keep that in mind when choosing your content to ensure that the information you want to cover will fit into your schedule.



Blueberry flowering

Digging In provides introductory-style information on edible wild plants. To go into more depth on the topic, refer to the **Bibliography** (page 96) and **Resources** (page 102) for more sources to check out.

The **Activities** section (page 89) offers four options for hands-on, interactive activities that you can organize for your group. Participants really enjoy these activities so try to leave lots of time for going through them. This is the part of the workshop where participants are able to learn in a hands-on way, and the activities will really help them engage with the topic. Read activities over carefully prior to the workshop, choose which you want to do, and then assemble any necessary materials. To save on costs you could also ask participants to bring in some materials themselves such as items that are readily

available in people's homes.

It's up to you when in the agenda to put the activities. In our **Sample Agenda** (page 99) they are at the end but activities can be used:

- At the beginning to get people excited about the workshop and motivated to learn more
- Throughout the workshop for demonstration
- At the end of the workshop as a tool for pulling everything together
- In more than one place during the workshop; do several activities

During the **Conclusion** (page 95) participants can ask questions and the facilitator should refer back to any unaddressed information from the list created at the beginning of the workshop of what participants want to learn. During this time the evaluations should be filled in and participants will each be given a resources sheet to take home.

## 4.2. Workshop

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### *Introduction*

(10 minutes)

**Step 1:** Introduce yourself to participants. You may want to provide a bit of background on your experience with gathering edible wild plants. Remember, you do not need to be an expert to host these workshops. If you are new to the topic, that is alright. Everyone will learn more together throughout the workshop.

**Step 2:** Introduce any local groups that are hosting the workshop:

- Give their names and briefly describe what they do
- Explain why they think it is important to promote food skills and why they chose the topic of edible wild plants

You can also take this opportunity to promote the group's upcoming events, contact information, volunteer opportunities, or other information that may be of interest to participants. Representatives of the group in attendance at the workshop may wish to do this introduction themselves.

**Step 3:** Read or put into your own words the following, to introduce participants to FSN and Root Cellars Rock:

### *Read to the Group*

The materials for this workshop were created by The Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador (FSN) through its Root Cellars Rock project. FSN is a provincial organization that promotes comprehensive, community-based solutions to increase access to healthy food for all. To learn more about FSN visit [www.foodsecuritynews.com](http://www.foodsecuritynews.com).

Today's workshop is one of eight that have been created based on the 4Ps of local food: planting, picking, preparing and preserving. These workshops aim to build food skills and create a space to share traditional food knowledge. To learn more about all eight workshops visit [www.rootcellarsrock.ca](http://www.rootcellarsrock.ca).

**Step 4:** Pass the **FSN E-News Sign-up Sheet** (page 109) around for participants to sign-up. The FSN E-News is a monthly email packed with resources related to food security across Newfoundland and Labrador.

**Step 5:** Review the agenda for the workshop with participants. Either post it on the wall or hand out photocopies to the group. You can find a **Sample Agenda** (page 99) in the supplementary materials.

**Step 6:** Go over any logistics that will make the workshop experience comfortable for everyone, such as:

- washroom locations
- food and drink availability
- safety rules
- weather precautions, if outdoors
- breaks

## Quick Tip

Let participants know if they can jump in at any time with questions and discussion items or if they should save those for a specific time during the agenda. Decide which option works for you based on your comfort with improvising while speaking publicly and redirecting focus back to the agenda items as needed.

## Roots of our Local Food

(10 minutes)

**Step 1:** Let participants know that you are going to share a short passage with them and then read the **Roots of our Local Food Quote** in the box on the following page (page 48).

**Step 2:** Going around the group, ask participants to share the following:

1. Their names
2. Did anything stand out to them from the passage?
3. What do they want to learn today about edible wild plants?

**Step 3:** As participants say what they want to learn, write those down on a piece of chart paper or on a white board for the group to see. At the end of the workshop the list can be revisited and any remaining questions unanswered can be addressed and further resources provided so that participants can continue to search out information.

## Roots of Our Local Food Quote

This excerpt is from *Changing Ecologic Adaptation in a Newfoundland Fishing Community* written by Maryl Weatherburn in 1971. It gives us a glimpse at the tradition of children harvesting wild edibles:

“After approximately age four children play by ‘roving’ around the countryside and looking in ‘holes’ and coves. Frequently, or whenever possible, as part of this play activity, they gather any edible species of plant or animal, which they eat themselves. So far these uses appear to be little changed, probably because the life of children is largely how it was traditionally; as yet there is no influence from television, movies or other alternative diversions. In fact, informants maintain that children spend more time in coves and ‘over the hills’ than they used to because they no longer play as large a role in the productive unit (fishing).”

### Digging In

(45 minutes)

Present the information you have chosen to use from this section. This is the main content on edible wild plants. Share the information in your own words and in the style that you think is best suited for your group. You do not need to cover everything here; pick and choose based on what you think is most useful for the participants of your particular workshop. Refer to the **Resources** section (page 102) for links to videos or photos that you could show along with your presentation and to gather more in-depth information on any aspect of the topic.

Be creative in how you present this information! Split the content up amongst several facilitators to avoid one person needing to speak for an extended length of time. Consider hosting learning activities like small group discussions, games, displays, or demonstrations. Use the lists in the workshops as starting off points for group brainstorming or discussion.

## What Are Edible Wild Plants?

Edible wild plants are plants that grow without human cultivation and are safe for humans to eat. They can be found in natural and mostly untouched places (forests, barrens, wetlands, seashores, etc.) but also in urban areas and disturbed areas. Disturbed areas are places where humans or natural events have altered the landscape significantly.

Not all plants are native to the places where they grow; many are introduced to an area by humans, either on purpose or by accident. Garden plants can “jump the fence” and start growing wild in new places, and heritage gardens left untended can become wild (Boland, 2011, ix). This flexibility means that sometimes edible plants are found in the most surprising places. Invasive species are introduced plants that propagate so successfully that they take over an area, displacing the native plants and potentially causing damage to natural and built environments.

Foraging is the term used most in this workshop to describe our efforts to search out, harvest (gather, collect) and use edible wild plants.

The word edible means that humans can safely eat the plants, but that doesn't mean that all of them are delicious. This workshop highlights 10 plants that will hopefully be to your liking. As with all foods, everyone has different tastes and some experimentation is required. It can take several tries before you develop a liking for a new food. Edible wild plants may have flavours that you are not used to enjoying yet.

This workshop provides resources and tips to encourage new foragers to safely start their search for edible wild plants in Newfoundland and Labrador.

## Why Gather and Eat Edible Wild Plants?

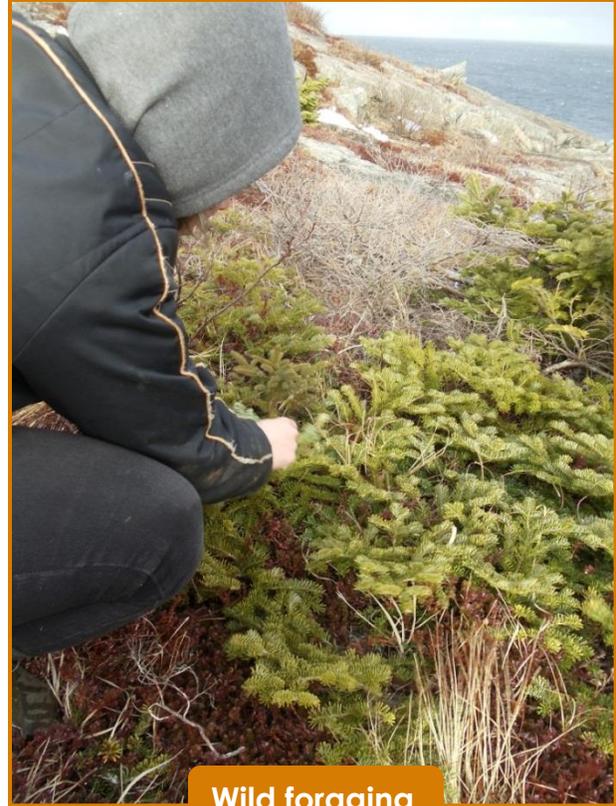
There are lots of reasons to go outside and collect edible wild plants!

- **Full flavour:** Foragers insist that there is nothing more delicious than a freshly picked ripe blueberry or the first spring greens of the season. Wild foods have all the natural organic flavour that

### Quote

“With the growing awareness of the benefits of eating locally (and the growing cost of food at the supermarkets), there is an increased interest in the edible plants found around us. From your back yard to the back woods, there is a wide variety of plants that can provide a nutritious supplement to your daily diet. Generally, these plants are pesticide free, are not transported hundreds of thousands of kilometres, are unprocessed, and are free for the picking.” (Boland, 2011, *Edible Newfoundland Plants*)

living soil, fresh air, and clean water create. Food also tastes better after an active day outdoors building up an appetite. When we eat wild foods outdoors, we usually are feeling relaxed and focused, really taking the time to savour the flavours. "There is a whole galaxy of powerful and surprising flavours preserved intact in the wild stock that are quite untapped in cultivated foods: tart and smoky berries, strangely aromatic fungi, crisp and succulent shoreline plants." (Mabey, 1972, p. 11)



- **Rich nutrition:** As soon as food is harvested the nutrients within it begin to break down. Eating fresh food ensures that your body is getting the most nutrients possible, and nothing is fresher than food that was just picked. Wild plants are food sources that are unaltered by shipping, processing, additives, preservatives or modification. Wild plants can be part of a healthy diet rich in fresh fruits and vegetables.
- **No price tag:** Wild foods are free for harvesting. Every time you forage you make a choice to save grocery dollars and use your time connecting with nature. Some people are even able to forage enough quantity and variety of food that they see a marked drop in their food expenses and time spent shopping.
- **Thrill of the search:** If you love adventure and mystery, then foraging is for you. Like a game of hide-and-seek, you need to pay close attention to your surroundings and look for clues. "There is something akin to hunting here: the search, the gradually acquired wisdom about season and habitats, the satisfaction of having proved you can provide for yourself. What you find may be no more than an intriguing addition to your normal diet, but it was you that found it." (Mabey, 1972, p. 12)
- **Sustainable food source:** Edible wild plants grow each year renewably. When left unaltered, natural environments sustainably support themselves. Edible wild plants can provide an environmentally nurturing food source if they are harvested with respect.

- **Connection with nature:** Out on the trails looking for wild food, you're sure to notice other things too. There is opportunity to discover the beautiful landscapes, diverse plant life, and variety of wildlife that this province has to offer. Going on edible hikes can be a way to re-centre ourselves and connect with the natural world.



Raspberries

- **Zero tending:** Gardening requires commitment and cultivation for plants to thrive. Whereas edible wild plants grow without tending and are there in abundance when you have time to look for them.
- **Physical activity:** Foraging can lead you to walk along the seashore, hike through woods, wade through wetlands, and search in urban green spaces. Low-impact outdoor exercise is an important part of a healthy lifestyle.
- **Subsistence:** Wild foods can provide for us in times when access to imported or farmed food is uncertain. Many people around the world rely on wild foods regularly or fall back on them during troubled times. Maintaining our local knowledge of wild foods is a way to promote food security. It can create a measure of self-sufficiency and independence and be a great source of learning and local pride.
- **Versatility:** In this workshop we focus on the edible qualities of wild plants, but they are good for many other things too. Wild plants are used in medicines, dyes, cleaning products, perfumes, in beauty products, for decoration, and many other purposes. All of the plants we use in daily life had wild ancestors. Researching the plants in your area may reveal other uses for them beyond the kitchen.
- **Connection with our heritage:** Berry picking and foraging are a big part of food traditions in Newfoundland and Labrador. What was caught, hunted, imported, and grown has always been supplemented by what could be gathered from nearby barrens and forests. Traditionally, local people had deep knowledge of local wild plants, as evidenced by the uniquely Newfoundland and Labrador names and uses for some of them. Many of our traditional dishes include berries and herbs that can be gathered nearby. Passing on wild foods knowledge from one generation to the next is an important part of preserving our heritage.

## Note: Food Supply Food for Thought

Excerpt from *Food for Free* by Richard Mabey:

“It was the two World Wars, and the disruption of food supplies that accompanied them, that provided one of the most striking examples of the usefulness of wild foods. All over occupied Europe fungi were gathered from woods, and wild greens from bomb sites. In America, pilots were given instructions on how to live off the wild in case their planes were ditched over land. And in Britain, the government encouraged the ‘hedgerow harvest’ (as they called one of their publications) as much as the growing of carrots.” (p. 13)

Newfoundland and Labrador is vulnerable to disruption of our food supply because of our remote location and dependence on outside food sources.

Have you seen examples in the news or at the grocery store of interruption to our food supply?

Have you heard stories in your family of times when imported food was scarce?

How do you think wild foods play a role in Newfoundland and Labrador, past and present? What would you like their role to be in the future?

### Guidebooks

Root Cellars Rock has used several excellent plant guidebooks as the basis for this workshop.

The most important point to take away from this workshop is to **remember that if you are in doubt of the identity of an edible wild plant, consult a guidebook first. If you are still in doubt, do not eat it.** Only eat wild plants that you have confirmed are safe to consume.

We recommend that you pick up several local guidebooks and take them with you each time you collect edible wild plants. Look for ones with multiple identification photos or line drawings of more than one part of the plants.

You can take one guidebook on the trail and then use other guidebooks to double check everything at home before eating new plants. Experienced foragers have recommended confirming new plants in as many as three guidebooks or with multiple local experts before eating something unfamiliar.

The following guides are available through the Newfoundland and Labrador public libraries and most can also be purchased from local bookstores:

- *Edible Plants of Newfoundland and Labrador* by Peter J. Scott
- *Trees & Shrubs of Newfoundland and Labrador* by Todd Boland
- *Plants and Wildflowers of Newfoundland* by Michael Collins
- *Native Trees and Shrubs of Newfoundland and Labrador* by A. Glen Ryan
- *Field Guide to Edible Wild Plants* by Bradford Angier
- *A Field Guide to Edible Wild Plants: Eastern and Central North America* by Lee Allen Peterson
- *An Illustrated Flora of the Northern United States and Canada* by Nathaniel Lord Britton and Addison Brown
- *Native Wild Plants of eastern Canada and the adjacent northeastern United States* by F. H. Montgomery
- *Wildflowers of Newfoundland and Labrador* by Peter J. Scott and Dorothy Black
- *Wild Flowers of Fogo Island and Change Islands* by Todd Boland
- *Edible and Medicinal Plants of Canada* by MacKinnon et. al.
- *Edible Garden Weeds of Canada* by Adam F. Szczawinski and Nancy J. Turner

## Note: Guidebooks

If possible, bring in copies of some of the guidebooks listed here to show workshop participants. Some of the guidebooks are published in Newfoundland and Labrador. Consider contacting local publishers to see if they will donate copies to your community group or allow you to put in a discounted bulk order if participants are interested in getting their own copies.

MUN Botanical Garden is also an excellent resource. They are highly knowledgeable about the plants of this province and available to assist people interested in learning more. Visit [www.mun.ca/botgarden](http://www.mun.ca/botgarden) or their Facebook [www.facebook.com/pages/MUN-Botanical-Garden-Inc/280608787849](https://www.facebook.com/pages/MUN-Botanical-Garden-Inc/280608787849)

If you are using a guidebook that we haven't listed that you find useful while foraging in Newfoundland and Labrador, please let us know so that we can add it to our list. Email [info@rootcellarsrock.ca](mailto:info@rootcellarsrock.ca).



Picking blueberries

## Ecoregions

Newfoundland and Labrador has 9 diverse ecoregions within its borders. Ecoregions are areas of land that are made unique by their particular combinations of soil, vegetation, water, climate and geology. Ecoregions can be split up further into subregions or ecodistricts, which are smaller parcels of land that have unique characteristics.

"The province's ecoregions and subregions provide habitat for 1,406 known species of vascular plants, 13 indigenous mammals on the Island and 37 in Labrador, and 73 species of birds that commonly breed here. There are also thousands of invertebrates (insects and worms), fungi, and algae and countless micro-organism species, all of which are vital to our ecosystems." (NL Department of Environment & Conservation, 2012)

Some edible wild plants have adapted to grow in many places across the province, but others thrive only in a few small areas. Plant guidebooks usually describe the type of surroundings that each plant prefers. You can combine that knowledge with information about ecoregions to figure out where certain plants might grow in this province.

For more information refer to the Department of Environment and Conservation's website, where you will find a map of all the ecoregions and pamphlets describing each one in detail: [www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/parks/apa/eco/index.html](http://www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/parks/apa/eco/index.html)

### Tip

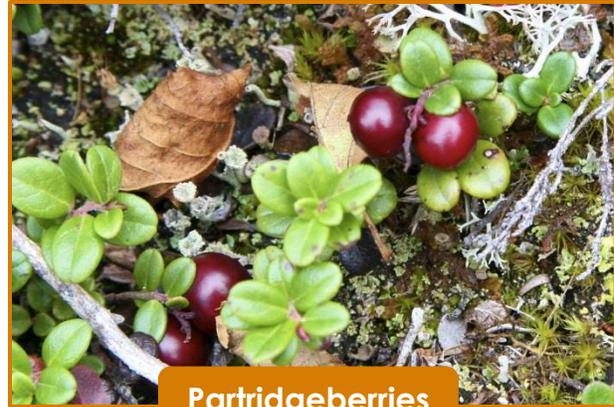
For this workshop you may find it helpful to print off the ecoregion pamphlet for the area where you live and look up what types of growing conditions exist nearby.

## Foraging Safety

Foraging can be an enjoyable, low-impact and safe physical activity for people of all ages if these practical considerations are kept in mind:

### Confident Identification

The number one rule of foraging for edible wild plants is to only eat what you are sure is safe. Carefully identify plants so that you feel confident knowing exactly what they are. **When in doubt about a plant's identity do not eat it!**



Partridgeberries

Show this funny video to your workshop group to send the message home: **“Don’t eat something if you don’t know what it is!”** <http://youtu.be/OlaOhjDD-8>

Here are some resources that can help you identify edible wild plants:

- **This workshop:** To get you started 10 common and easily identifiable edible wild plants are highlighted in this workshop. Refer to **10 Common Edible Plants of NL** (page 66).
- **Plant guidebooks:** A local guidebook is the forager’s best friend. Take them with you when you collect plants and consult them often. Refer to **Guidebooks** (page 52) for a list.
- **Local people:** There are a lot of knowledgeable people in our communities. Invite them to go out foraging with you and ask them lots of questions.

### Finding People Who Are In The Know

If you aren’t sure who the knowledgeable people are in your community, try some of these things to find them:

- Talk about foraging when you’re socializing. Mention that you went berry picking or that you’re searching for wild mint and see who joins the conversation.

## Tip: Root Cellars Rock Forum

The Root Cellars Rock blog has a forum where you can connect with other people interested in local food across the province. Ask questions, share information, and make contacts that can improve your experiences foraging. <http://rootcellarsrock.ca/forum/>

- There may already be edible wild plant groups or events in your area that you could join. Or get involved with gardening or nature clubs; they may have members also interested in edible wild plants.
- Ask seniors about edible wild plants. Many of them have learned a lot about the topic from the generations before them.
- Organize a public event like an edible hike or workshop. See who comes out and talk with them.
- Use resources like MUN Botanical Garden ([www.mun.ca/botgarden](http://www.mun.ca/botgarden)) and the Root Cellars Rock forum (<http://rootcellarsrock.ca/forum/>) to ask questions and make contacts with people across the province.

### Weather & Daylight

Check the local weather forecast before going on a foraging trip. Try not to get caught on the trail or in the woods when foul weather comes in. Be aware of what weather you're prepared for and comfortable in.

Fog can come in very quickly and make navigation dangerous if you are near cliffs, the shoreline or off the trail. If fog surrounds you either stay in one place until it passes, or if you are certain that the way you came was safe and can be followed again you can re-trace your steps.

While foraging, it's easy to lose track of time. If you're not prepared to spend the night on the trail ensure that you are not far from home or your vehicle when dark falls. Know the current time for sunset. Consider packing a headlamp or flashlight in your foraging kit just in case.

### Quote

"Spectacular vistas, whales breaching, ice bergs floating by, and a forager's paradise. We are blessed with many wilderness areas that offer abundant edible plants. I rarely go on a hike without stopping to have a little taste of this or that."  
(Kasimos, 2011)

### Trail Knowledge

Newfoundland and Labrador has a remarkable selection of trails that make foraging a delight. Check out this link for trail resources in the province:  
[www.newfoundlandlabrador.com/thingstodo/hikingwalking](http://www.newfoundlandlabrador.com/thingstodo/hikingwalking)

Be prepared to navigate your way safely when you go out foraging. Bring along water resistant trail maps if possible and a compass. Plan out routes that are appropriate for your experience and skill level. If you become lost, remain in one place until you are found. Contact help if you have a cell phone or radio.

## **Note: Trail Kit Demonstration**

While reading through the sections **Foraging Safety** (page 55) and **Foraging Know-how** (page 59) make a list of the items mentioned that you think should be taken on an edible hike in your area. Gather all the items from your list and put them together in a backpack. Bring that trail kit into the workshop to show participants. Before discussing these sections of the workshop, let participants poke through the backpack and pull items out, guessing at why each thing may be useful or necessary while foraging.

### **Apparel & Tools**

Wear appropriate footwear and clothing for the terrain and weather. Dress in layers and keep in mind that you may be wandering through wet patches, prickly bush, or areas with insects. Consider packing an extra set of dry clothes. Bring sunglasses and a hat to protect against sun overexposure.

Pack gloves if you will be harvesting from plants with sharp or stinging parts, like roses or nettles. Take scissors, pruners or a sharp knife as needed. It's a good idea to carry a pack of some kind for your gear. Use appropriate containers to harvest plants into, like fabric bags, baskets, or re-sealable plastic containers depending on what you are gathering.

### **Food Safety**

Just like in the kitchen, food safety is important when gathering wild foods. Carry clean water with you to wash your hands and food before eating. Use clean, food-safe containers to harvest food into.

Bring along lots of water that is safe to drink and do not rely on finding potable water along the trail. On long trips carry a water purifying kit if needed.

Avoid harvesting foods or drinking water in areas where soil or water may be contaminated or where unknown pesticides or chemicals could have been sprayed. Do not harvest plants from water sources with 'no swimming' or similar warnings posted.

Do not harvest plants, particularly ones to be eaten raw, where there is a likelihood that domestic animals like cats and dogs have left behind droppings and urine. That waste can have pathogens in it that cause illness in humans.

Start with small quantities when trying a new food. Be sure that you have no allergic or negative reactions before eating more. As with all foods, people respond to wild edibles in different ways. Listen to your body's signals and go slowly. Refer to **Appendix H: Food Safety** (page 35) as a further resource.

St. John's Safer Soil provides information about soil contamination, particularly high lead levels in urban areas: <http://safersoil.ning.com/>

### Personal Wellbeing

Keep these things in mind to ensure your personal wellbeing while foraging:

- **Water & Food:** Pack adequate clean water and healthy snacks. Be aware of your body's signs of dehydration and hunger.
- **Back & Knees:** Be aware of your posture and support your back and knees when bending, kneeling, crouching, or reaching to harvest plants. Consider bringing a knee pads or piece of clothing to kneel on while harvesting low plants like blueberries. Pack your backpack so that it will be comfortable to carry for the duration of your trip. Use a walking stick if that will aid you on the trail.
- **Sunburn & Heat Stroke:** Apply sunscreen and wear a hat and appropriate clothing to protect yourself from sun overexposure. Even on overcast days sunburn and heat stroke are possible.
- **Medication:** Bring along any medication that you take regularly or may need for emergency situations like allergic reactions or asthma attacks.
- **First Aid:** Take along a first aid kit in your trail pack. Pharmacies often sell small sport ones. If you hike or camp often, consider taking an emergency or wilderness first aid course.
- **Check-in:** Let someone know where you are going and approximately when you will be returning. Consider taking a cell phone or radio with you.



Picking chanterelles

## Foraging Know-how

The information in the following sections can help you become a successful and knowledgeable forager.

### Respect for Nature

Take time on the trail to feel grateful to live in a place where edible wild foods are so abundant. Protecting the natural places that produce those foods is an important part of foraging. Every time we set out to gather plants, we should do so with a commitment to honour the natural environment.

### Quote

“Nature trails give us the opportunity to reach into nature and to become a part of something that for many people has been forgotten or unknown. It is important to remember that you are only a guest passing through. By harvesting from natural areas, you are taking from an intricate system of life and death, so it is important to be a good guest. When you are finished harvesting and look around, you nor anyone else should be able to tell that you were there. This will ensure that everyone can enjoy these areas for generations to come.” (Kasimos, 2011)

The following pointers can guide you as a nature savvy forager:

- **Gather only what you can use in a short time and leave most behind.** Remember that birds, insects, and animals may also rely on the plants you are harvesting from. Most plants should be left untouched so that they can continue their lifecycles and nourish their surroundings. “Never collect enough to decimate the local population.” (Boland, 2011, *Edible Newfoundland Plants*)
- **“If possible, harvest without killing the plant.** For example, collect a few leaves off several plants as opposed to all the leaves off of one. Harvest the part of the plant that you need without disturbing the rest of it” (2011). When harvesting the above-ground parts of a plant do not pull up the whole plant, leave the roots intact in the soil.
- **Leave no trace of your presence.** There should be little indication that you have been in an area after you forage there. Try not to damage surroundings and leave nothing behind.

To get involved in the conservation of wild places in the province, contact the Newfoundland and Labrador Environment Network (NLEN) to find opportunities near you: [www.nlen.ca](http://www.nlen.ca)

### Record Foraging Experiences

Keeping records of your foraging discoveries is a great way to increase success as it makes it more likely that you'll find edible plants again each year and get the most out of each foraging trip.

Try some of these simple techniques:

- Keep a small field journal that you can write notes in or draw pictures in while on the trail. You don't need to be an expert or an artist to do this; the field journal is for your own use, so make it work for you.
- Make small notes in the margins of your guidebooks.
- Mark locations on your trail maps where good foraging spots are.
- Use a calendar to keep track of when the plants you harvest are ready and how long things are available in season.
- Take pictures of plants to help with identifying and locating them again later. Try to get pictures of the same plants during different seasons. Use pictures as a resource when asking for help identifying unknown plants.
- Press leaves or flowers from plants to assist with identifying them again later. Here is a video on how to make a simple press from items at home. Consider showing this video at your workshop and even making presses with plants you have brought in: <http://youtu.be/LyuK6qwlqBg>

### Quote

"One winter when I saw a flock of waxwings feasting on my favourite cranberry picking spot, I was reminded of the importance that this food plays to wildlife, especially birds that do not migrate. They need this nourishment to get through the cold months." (Kasimos, 2011)

### Seasons

Part of confident plant identification is knowing how plants will look during different seasons. Recognizing a dormant blueberry patch poking through the snow on a winter hike can be an exciting find for next fall's berry harvest. The tall looming stalks of a Japanese knotweed plant in late summer are a clear indicator of where to look for small tender shoots in spring.

Edible plant guidebooks usually describe what seasons are best for harvesting different parts of plants. You may want to make a calendar or chart that has the different plants you like to harvest labeled so you remember when to go looking for them. In general immature greens and tender shoots can be harvested in spring in Newfoundland and Labrador. Look for hardier cooking greens and

tougher stems throughout the summer and into fall or even winter. Fruit ripens throughout the summer and some types into late fall. Many roots can be harvested year round but will have different flavours and starch content as the seasons change. Flowers bloom from early spring into the fall depending on the plant.

### **Note: Noticing Abundance**

Have you ever bought a new thing thinking no one else had it, but then you start to notice it all over the place? That happens when you first start looking for wild edibles too. At first it seems like there aren't many where you live, but slowly as you train your eye for them and have them in mind, you will notice them everywhere, even in the oddest places!

Start slow as a new forager; pick a plant that you really like and search for it. Once you get the hang of spotting that plant, harvesting it and eating it, move on to another plant. Getting to know each plant well makes it easier to spot them year-round.

There are several plants that can still be harvested through the winter, particularly if weather is mild. The plants are likely dormant and not producing new leaves or fruit, but they are still edible. Rose hips, partridgeberries, and cranberries improve in flavour after a few light frosts. The frosts can also kill off insects that may infest those plants. However, berries and rose hips will become soft after several hard frosts so try not to leave them too long. Tougher winter cress and dandelion greens can still be harvested and cooked in winter as you would kale or Swiss chard. Cattail roots can be dug up and made into a flour substitute in winter. For more information on winter harvesting refer to this post on Root Cellars Rock: <http://rootcellarsrock.ca/2011/12/winter-foraging/>

Several of the plants described in this workshop have more than one part that is edible and those parts are ready to be harvested at different times of the year. For example, rose petals can be harvested in summer and later rose hips in the fall. Almost every part of the cattail is usable and each part has a prime season for harvest. The first tender greens of dandelions are lovely in spring salads, and then later the flowers, roots and hardier greens can also be used. Harvesting different parts of plants during different seasons can add variety to the dinner table year round.

## Harvesting

Here are some tips for harvesting successfully:

- Only harvest plants once you have identified them with certainty.
- Take only the part of the plant that you need and leave the rest to grow.
- Harvest a little bit from several plants rather than stripping everything from one.
- When berry picking, take your time. Only put ripe berries in your bucket to avoid sorting out leaves, twigs, and unripe berries later.
- Harvest flowers and mushrooms into a woven basket or mesh bag so that as you walk pollen and spores drop or blow away.
- Keep an eye out for insects or disease on plants and avoid harvesting infested plants. Sort a potentially infested harvest carefully before eating to check for insects or spoilage.
- Don't roughly tear parts off plants, leaving big wounds on the stems. Use a sharp knife or scissors to cleanly cut off the part you want.
- Be gentle with soft berries. Collect them into several shallow containers rather than one deep one to avoid crushing them.
- Choose containers with lids or closures. It's a shame to drop and spill a harvest you've just collected!
- Use or store harvested food as soon as possible to enjoy it fresh.



Wild foraging on a hike

## Food Preparation

Most edible wild plants can be prepared as you would normally prepare other similar cultivated fruits, vegetables, and herbs.

The following is an excerpt from *Edible Newfoundland Plants*, a MUN Botanical Garden handout written by Todd Boland.

"The five common parts of a plant that are generally consumed are the roots, greens, flowers, fruits and seeds. Fleshy roots can be dug up and eaten or dried for later use. Generally, when roots are harvested to be eaten, they are high in starch which can be used as a flour substitute. Greens include the leaves and stems, and are generally picked before they get too tough. They can be steamed, stir fried, stewed or just eaten raw. Flowers can be used to brighten up

salads, stir fries, or omelettes. They can be dried for teas, battered and deep fried, or some can be stuffed with rice. Fruits can be eaten fresh off the bush, made into juice, jams, or jellies, or dried for later use. Seeds can be eaten fresh, thrown into soups, stews, or salads, or ground into meal." (2011).

For recipes using edible wild plants, visit the Root Cellars Rock blog's recipe sections: <http://rootcellarsrock.ca/> and look at the recipes and preparation suggestions in Peter J. Scott's guide *Edible Plants of Newfoundland and Labrador*. Recipe suggestions and preparation tips are also included in this workshop in the section **10 Common Edible Plants of NL** (page 66). As well, many cookbooks from Newfoundland and Labrador include recipes using wild foods.

For more information on food preparation skills, refer to the workshops **Using Culinary Herbs**, **Preparing Local Vegetables**, and **Canning/Bottling**.



**Marsh cranberries**

### **Preservation & Storage**

Ideally it's best to eat wild foods as soon as possible. That way you get the full benefit of their flavours, nutrients, and fresh textures.

The shelf life of wild plants may be slightly shorter than their cultivated cousins that are bred specifically to last. Refrigerate plants as needed. Refer to these food storage guidelines and look for similar foods:

[www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publichealth/envhealth/food\\_storage\\_guide\\_2008.pdf](http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publichealth/envhealth/food_storage_guide_2008.pdf)

The following is a list of ways that the different parts of edible wild plants can be preserved for longer term use:

**Roots:** cook and freeze, can or pickle, store in a root cellar, dry/dehydrate

**Leaves and stems:** blanch and freeze, can or pickle, dry/dehydrate

**Flowers:** dry/dehydrate, can or pickle

**Fruits:** freeze, can, dry/dehydrate

**Seeds:** dry/dehydrate, freeze

Refer to the **Canning/Bottling Workshop** as a resource as well as this post on freezing fruits and vegetables: <http://rootcellarsrock.ca/2011/10/ice-ice-veggies/>

## Wild to Garden

Many edible wild plants can also be cultivated in backyard or community gardens. Common examples are roses, sorrel, winter cress, mint, and dandelions. If you can't get enough of your favourite kind of wild berry, then plant a few bushes at home too. Planting native plants in your yard is a good way to invite local birds, insects, and wildlife to visit. You can even grow some wild plants indoors in window gardens or sprout their seeds; lamb's quarter is an example of a wild green that can be enjoyed year round indoors.

Learn the Latin names of plants to help you find them at garden centres and in seed catalogues. Use this inventory of Canadian seed companies to find a retailer near you: [www.seeds.ca/sl/csci](http://www.seeds.ca/sl/csci)

### Note: Berries as Ground Cover

An excerpt from *Ask Ross Traverse About Gardening*:

"It is interesting to note that partridgeberry plants (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*, also called mountain cranberry) are sold in some nurseries as a ground cover plant. This evergreen ground cover also has the advantage of producing delicious fruit in the fall. What more could you ask for!

The native low bush blueberry (*Vaccinium angustifolium*) also makes an excellent ground cover. It has white blossoms in early summer and in the fall the fruit is spectacular and delicious. Before the leaves fall, they turn a brilliant red. The only maintenance required is pruning every second year to increase fruit production. Both partridgeberry and blueberry plants grow in acidic soil. An annual application of a general-purpose fertilizer will stimulate growth and fruit production." (Traverse, 2006, p. 62)

A quick video on low bush blueberries as ground cover:

<http://youtu.be/rbNc-zchh0E>

Rather than buying seeds, you can instead try saving the seed from wild plants. This takes a bit more effort and time, but can be a great opportunity to learn more about plants and to cultivate them for free. Research the plants you want to collect seed from and find out when they go to seed and what those seeds look like. Use the **Seed Saving Workshop** for reference.

Some plants are successful in the wild because they reproduce quickly and extensively. When planting these in your garden, consider putting them in small containers or a raised bed to keep them from overrunning your lawn or other garden plants. Refer to the **Container Gardening Workshop** as a resource.

It is strongly recommended that you do not plant Japanese knotweed or cattails as garden plants. They are both invasive species that can have negative effects on biodiversity and the natural and built landscapes around them. For more information on invasive species in this province visit the Newfoundland and Labrador Invasive Species Council website: <http://nlinvasives.ca/>

### Build a Foraging Community

Be sure to pass on your excitement about edible wild plants to others. Bring people together to share experiences, knowledge and skills. Build a community of foraging enthusiasts where you live and connect with others across the province.

- Host an event like an edible hike
- Start a plant club
- Take kids for walks and teach them about plants along the way
- Share meals made from edible wild plants
- Ask local libraries and bookstores to stock plant guidebooks
- Invite a speaker to do a presentation for your group
- Learn about other ways to use wild plants besides eating them
- Get involved with an environmental group or conservation program
- Support park and trail preservation efforts
- Post on the Root Cellars Rock forum: <http://rootcellarsrock.ca/forum/>
- Submit a post to the Root Cellars Rock blog about your experiences. Email [info@rootcellarsrock.ca](mailto:info@rootcellarsrock.ca) to find out how.

### Note: Mushrooms

Foray Newfoundland and Labrador is the group to check out if you are interested in identifying and harvesting mushrooms. Visit them at: [www.nlmushrooms.ca](http://www.nlmushrooms.ca) and read their newsletter *Omphalina*. Consider attending their annual mushroom foray which takes place in a different place each year.

Andrus Voitk, Past President of Foray NL, has written a guide titled *A Little Illustrated Book of Common Mushrooms of Newfoundland and Labrador* which you can use to identify edible mushrooms. It is available through public libraries or can be purchased directly from the Gros Morne Cooperating Association, with all proceeds going to support Gros Morne National Park: [www.nlmushrooms.ca/page35.html](http://www.nlmushrooms.ca/page35.html)

## 10 Common Edible Plants of NL

This section gives detailed descriptions of 10 edible plants that are commonly found around Newfoundland and Labrador that are relatively easy to identify. The 10 highlighted plants are:

1. Winter Cress
2. Dandelions
3. Wild Roses and Rose Hips
4. Partridgeberries
5. Labrador Tea
6. Blueberries
7. Mint
8. Japanese Knotweed
9. Lamb's Quarters
10. Cattails

Several of these plants have multiple edible parts. For more detailed information on each of these plants, refer to the **Resources** section (page 102) for links and guidebooks.

### *Note: Demonstration*

If you plan on going through this section in detail with participants, then try to think of creative ways to do so. Print off the section as handouts or turn pictures of the plants into a slideshow. Try to harvest some of the plants in advance of the workshop to show participants or even do food preparation demonstrations with. Don't worry if it's not the ideal harvest time for the plants; showing parts of them out of season will still help people identify the plants later. Show participants the short videos from the links provided. Refer to the **Activities** section (page 89) for more ideas on sharing the plants with participants in interactive ways.

**Important Note:** Several of the plant sections below include video links. The content of those videos is meant to assist you in better identifying edible wild plants and finding culinary uses for them. The videos do not necessarily reflect the most current health practices or scientific research associated with those plants, nor do they reflect the opinions of Root Cellars Rock or The Food Security Network NL. Please use the videos as a learning tool only and continue to consult reliable plant guidebooks as well as the most recent health and food safety best practices when foraging for any edible wild plant and choosing to eat it.

## 1: Winter Cress (*Barbarea vulgaris*)

“On my hike around Signal Hill this evening, the only thing brighter than the elusive sun was the brilliant yellow flowers of wintercress” (Kasimos, 2011).

**What:** Mustard family (*Brassicaceae*). Can grow up to 60cm tall. Leaf rosette (15-30 cm diameter) of round, lobed leaves. “Many small (7mm) four-petaled yellow flowers grow on stalks at right angles to the stems, and long, narrow seed pods develop from the flowers” (Collins, 1994). “Rod-shaped seed capsules” (Scott, 2010).

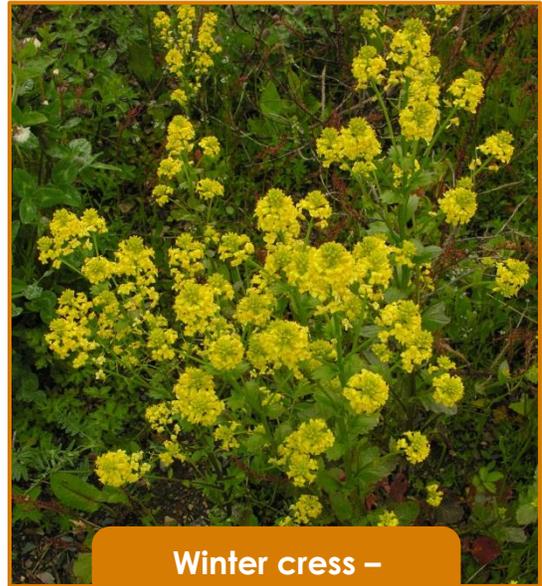
**Where:** roadsides, disturbed areas, banks of streams, wet rocky areas, wet fields

**Edible parts:** leaves, buds, flowers, seeds

**When:** Leaves grow in fall and last over the winter; they are best eaten prior to flower development. Easiest to harvest when there is no snow on the ground but you can even brush snow off and still harvest winter cress if you know where to find it. Buds and flowers appear in May/June. Seeds develop in summer and are dropped to regrow in fall.

### Notes:

- Also called Wintercress, Yellow Rocket, Herb Barbara, and Wild Mustard. Comparable in taste to rocket (arugula).
- Young fall leaves are best for eating raw though still bitter; mature leaves become more bitter and are better for cooking. To ease the bitterness, blanch the leaves in water, discard the water, and then cook again as part of your recipe. Fall frosts make mature leaves less bitter.
- Leaves, particularly tender central ones, can be eaten raw in salads, on sandwiches or in green smoothies to add some kick. Tougher and more bitter outer leaves and mature leaves can be steamed, added to soups and stir-fries and other preparations, similar to kale.



Winter cress –  
*Barbarea vulgaris*



Winter cress close-up

- The buds and flowers taste like broccoli and can be used similarly, however they are quite small and should not be overcooked. They can also be dried and made into a tea.
- “Like other mustards, dry seeds can be collected and used as a spice or for sprouting. Collect seeds when the pods begin to turn brown and dry out. Sow seeds in and around your veggie gardens in the fall for a plant that can be used year round.” (Kasimos, 2011)



Harvested winter cress

- Winter cress was used in the past to keep off scurvy and the leaves and buds have more ascorbic acid than orange juice.
- **Warning:** “Caution is advised because an alkaloid which may cause kidney malfunction has been isolated in winter cress” (Scott, 2010)

## Sautéed Winter Cress

From Foraging Foodie ([www.foragingfoodie.net/sauteed-wintercress.html](http://www.foragingfoodie.net/sauteed-wintercress.html)). See the original recipe for step-by-step photos.

- 4 big handfuls of young winter cress, thoroughly rinsed
- Butter
- One big onion, finely chopped
- Water as needed
- Honey or maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- Dash of ground cloves
- Nutmeg, salt and pepper to taste

Chop the winter cress. Sauté it with the onion for 4 minutes on high heat. Add water to prevent burning, and then add honey and spices. Mix and stir for another 4 minutes. Serve with white rice and a bit of soy sauce. Serves 4.

## 2: Dandelions (*Taraxacum vulgare*)

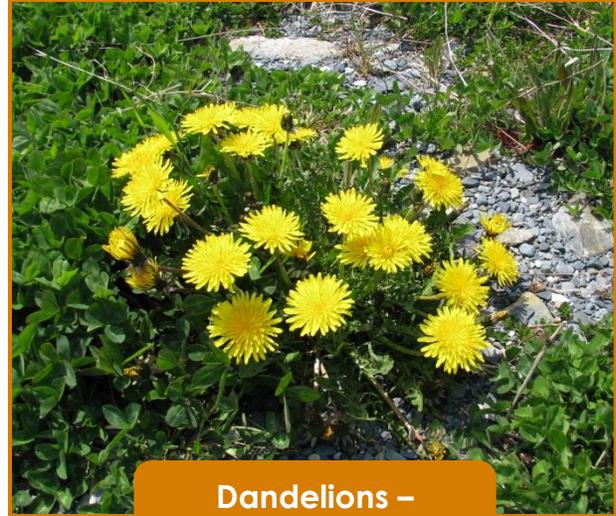
“...probably the best known flower in the world if often the least appreciated.” (Angier, 1974)

**What:** Aster family (*Asteraceae*). Grows up to 50cm. “Dandelions have a long taproot, long narrow leaves with jagged teeth along both edges, and disc-like deep yellow flowers” (Scott, 2010). Flowers sit atop tall, hollow stalks that have a white juice inside. “(Leaves) grow in rosettes directly from the roots” (Angier, 1974). Dandelions have one flower per stem. Mature flowers turn into white seed puffs.

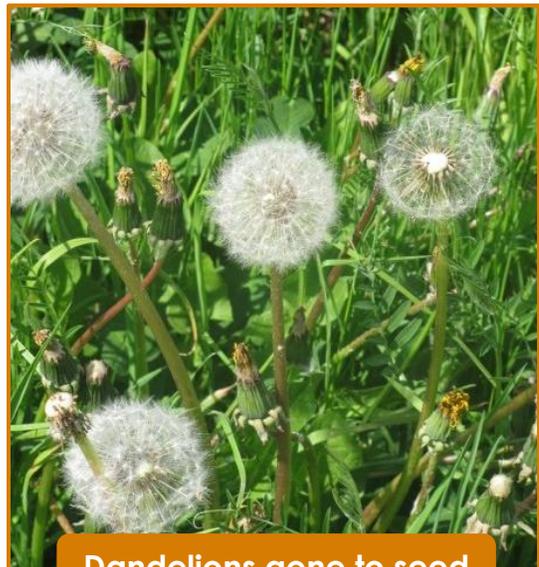
**Where:** Very prolific, dandelions grow almost anywhere people are or have been. Roadsides, fields, disturbed areas, lawns. “Fertile, moist soils produce the best tasting dandelions...like in vegetable and flower gardens” (Kasimos, 2011).

**Edible parts:** Every part of the dandelion is edible- leaves, roots, buds, flowers, hearts (“the part between the base of the leaves and the root” Kasimos, 2011), stem and sap.

**When:** Dandelion flowers are some of the first to appear in the spring and last to leave in the fall. Plants may flower several times throughout the growing season. Greens can be harvested from the spring onward but become bitterer and less tender with maturity. Harvest roots in the spring to make a coffee substitute or later to use as a root vegetable. Harvest buds when they are young and the stem is less than 4 inches tall so they’re less bitter. Hearts can be harvested anytime but are less bitter when young in the spring.



Dandelions –  
*Taraxacum vulgare*



Dandelions gone to seed



Dandelion greens

## Note: Bitterness

Bitterness is a flavour that we don't have a lot of tolerance for and can turn people off of eating dandelions for example, whose sap inside the stem and leaves are bitter. However, bitter greens have always been a part of the human diet and greens play an important role in a healthy diet.

To lessen the bitterness of raw dandelions and other wild greens, try preparing them in combination with nuts, oils, or healthy fats. These ingredients help to mute bitter flavours. For example, a great way to prepare bitter wild greens is to make pesto. It usually involves a combination of greens, oil, nuts and sometimes cheese blended together.

Another technique is to eat them in combination with sweet fruits. The fruit helps mute the bitterness in greens. Add greens to your favourite fruit smoothie for a nutritious breakfast or snack, or put fruit on your salad to brighten it up.

Mix bitter greens in small amounts into salads with milder greens like lettuce or spinach.

When cooking bitter greens, try pre-cooking them to lessen bitterness. Steam, blanch, or boil them once with water or stock. Discard that liquid and then cook again according to the recipe.

For recipes using greens check out the Root Cellars Rock blog (<http://rootcellarsrock.ca/>).

### Notes:

- Name comes from the French *dent de lion*, or lion's teeth. Also called piss-a-beds and dumbledors.
- Dandelions don't have any toxic look-alikes and are a great plant to start out with foraging as they are easy to identify, safe, and entirely edible.
- A similar looking plant is the Fall Dandelion (*Leontodon autumnalis*) which has a solid stem and blooms in the fall.
- Physicians used to prescribe dandelion roots and leaves to treat vitamin and mineral deficiencies.

- Early spring leaves can be eaten raw and used in salads, sandwiches, or green smoothies.
- Leaves and hearts are less bitter if gathered before it flowers.
- Hearts can be steamed or added to stir-fries and soups.
- Mature leaves become bitter and are better when cooked. Blanch, boil, or add to stir-fries, soups, or stews.
- Buds “can be steamed, thrown into soups, omelettes, and savoury pies. They are delicate so do not need to be cooked for long.” (Kasimos, 2011)
- Remove the bracts (green parts below the flowers) before using flowers.
- Use flowers raw in salads, sandwiches, omelettes, in teas, soups, syrups, jellies, and wine. Batter flowers and fry them for a savoury snack.
- Roots can be used for tea and as a coffee-substitute (see recipe below).
- Peel the outside from roots, and cook them like other root vegetables.
- Dandelion taproots are long and deep; use a trowel to harvest them.
- **Warning:** Skin irritation may occur from contact with the milky juice inside dandelion stems for people sensitive to latex.

**Video:** Eat the Weeds: Dandelions <http://youtu.be/CW0yFeKNIPw>

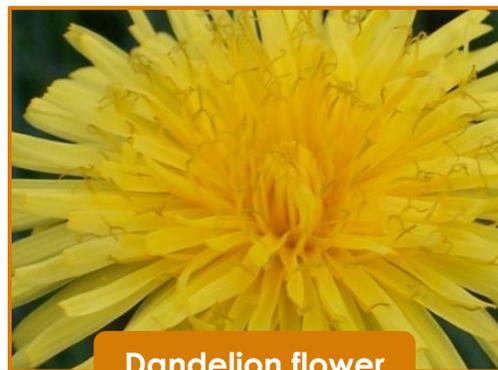
## Dandelion Root Coffee

A simple recipe for a decaffeinated substitute for regular coffee with only one ingredient:

- Dandelion roots

“Dig roots in spring, wash, roast slowly in oven (about 180°F) until they are dark brown and snap (about four hours), grind, and prepare as for coffee” (Scott, 2010).

Mix roasted dandelion root in with regular coffee to make it go farther. Dandelion roots have no caffeine.



Dandelion flower

### 3: Wild Roses & Rose hips (*Rosa nitida*, *Rosa virginiana*, *Rosa rugosa*)

**What:** From the Rose family (*Rosaceae*). *Rosa nitida* and *Rosa virginiana* are this province's wild roses:

*Rosa nitida*: Called wild rose, swamp rose, shining rose, and northeastern rose. Grows up to 1m tall. "This species is easily distinguished by the dense dark red bristles found on the younger stems...the leaflets have tothing around the margin and almost to the base of the leaflet. The pink flowers are wonderfully fragrant and are followed by orange-red hips" (Kilmer, Scott, 2003). Lots of bristles on the rose hips. Dark pink flowers.



Wild rose flowers – *Rosa virginiana*

*Rosa virginiana*: Called wild rose, Virginia rose and pasture rose. Grows 1-2m tall. "The stems of this shrub have scattered curved prickles. The leaflets have tothing but only on the upper three-quarters of the margins. The flowers often seem to be a paler pink than the northeastern rose" (Kilmer, Scott, 2003). Leaves turn red and purple in the fall. Usually produces more rose hips than *Rosa nitida* and the hips have less bristles.

Both types have pink flowers with 5 petals that are 4-7cm diameter. They can have single flowers but usually flowers are in clusters. Rose hips are bristly on the outside. The fleshy part is what is typically eaten. Inside the hips are small hard seeds and little hairs.

There are also several types of edible non-native roses growing in the wild in NL. "These roses have 'jumped the fence' from gardens" (Boland, 2011). The most common species is the *rugosa* (*Rosa rugosa*). Others are the "briar rose (*Rosa rubiginosa*), cinnamon rose (*Rosa cinnamomea*), multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), and red-leaf rose (*Rosa rubrifolia*)" (Boland, 2011). They usually grow to 2m or taller, much



Wild rose hips – *Rosa virginiana*

higher than the native roses. Flowers are pink or sometimes white, usually still with 5 petals although some have a double layer of petals. The rugosa roses have big hips that are easy to prepare for eating.

**Where:**

*Rosa nitida*: damp places, wetlands, along streams, ponds and brooks, wet thickets, peatlands, roadsides. Not found wild in Great Northern Peninsula or Labrador.

*Rosa virginiana*: wet and dry places, thickets, forest clearings, swamps, along shores, rocky slopes, barrens, peatlands, roadsides. Not found wild in Great Northern Peninsula or Labrador.



Harvested rose petals

Non-native roses: roadsides, trails, untended areas near communities

**Edible parts:** Petals, hips (the bulbous part just below the flower and atop the stem, usually orange to red in colour), leaves, shoots, flower stems, roots

**When:** Flowers bloom July/August. Rose hips ripen in late September but can be harvested into late fall and winter, after a frost that will sweeten their flavour and kill off possible infestations. After several hard frosts the hips may become mushy.

**Notes:**

- Wild roses are food for many types of birds and mammals.
- To eat rose hips, remove the seeds and hairs found inside first as they are hard and unpleasant to chew. “This is easiest done when the fruits are partially frozen, a few minutes out of the freezer. With a sharp knife, cut around the circumference of the hip, pop it open and remove the frozen seeds and hairs” (Kasimos, 2011). The seeds contain nutrients, so to use them, grind them, boil in water, strain, and then use the remaining liquid in other preparations, such as for making jam or jelly.
- Rose petals and hips can both be made into tea either fresh or dried. To make rosehip teas “simply boil the fruit for 10 minutes and strain. The tea is tart like cranberries, with a hint of rose, and is best served with a bit of honey.” (Kasimos, 2011) To make tea from rose petals, boil water, remove it from the heat, pour water over the petals and let them steep.
- Drying rose hips and petals can preserve year-round. If you plan to dry them, harvest pieces of stem with flowers and hips still attached. Hang bunches of roses upside down in a dark place with good airflow. Let them

dry until the petals become brittle and hips have hardened. For more information on drying herbs, refer to the workshop **Using Culinary Herbs**.

- Rose hips can be made into a sauce, syrup, marmalade, or jelly and added to soups and stews.
- Rose petals can be sugared or used plain as a garnish. They can be added to baked goods, jams, and jellies. Rose petals can be made into a vinegar, syrup or sauce. "All rose petals are edible, but petals from scented roses are the most flavourful" (Kasimos, 2011).
- The roots, young shoots, leaves and flower stems of roses are also edible although not commonly used. Young shoots and flower stems can be eaten raw and roots, shoots, leaves, and stems can be used to make tea.
- Insects may infest rose hips. Avoid harvesting from plants that show signs of infestation. Soak harvested hips in water and insects will float to the surface. Removing seeds from rose hips will expose any insects inside.
- **Warning:** Be especially cautious when harvesting roses that may have been treated with pesticides or other garden chemicals. It is not recommended that commercially purchased roses be eaten unless they were produced specifically as food.

**Video:** Edible Plants: Wild Rose (*Rosa rugosa*) (<http://youtu.be/Mg2mSrg4LAs>)

## Sugared Rose Petals

From Lick the Spoon

(<http://lickthatspoon.blogspot.com.au/2012/03/sugared-rose-petals.html>)

- 1 egg white
- Rose petals
- A pastry brush
- 1/2 cup caster sugar (or super fine sugar)

Hold the rose petal at the end that was previously joined to the stem. Finely brush both sides with egg white. Do not coat heavily, as this becomes problematic and will cause shedding.

Place the sugar in a small bowl. Gently dip the coated petal into the sugar until covered. You may like to pour some of the sugar onto the petal with your fingers for an even coating. Gently place the sugared petal on some baking paper to dry, or in an empty egg carton to shape the petals a little more. Leave for 3 hours or so to dry before using to decorate cakes, cupcakes or desserts.

#### 4: Partridgeberries (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*)

The *Vaccinium* species includes most of our wild berries including partridgeberries, blueberries, bilberries, cranberries, and marshberries.

**What:** Heath family (Ericaceae). Grows in a low, evergreen mat-like patch, usually about 30cm across and up to 10cm high. The oval, plastic-like leaves are glossy on top and pale with dark bristles on the bottom. Bell-shaped pink or red flowers grow in clusters. “Stems are reddish brown and shiny” (Boland, 2011). Often grows wild amongst crowberry, blueberry, and other edible *Vaccinium* berries.

**Where:** dry edges of bogs, dry rocky and peaty places, barrens, coastal headlands, heaths.



Partridgeberry – *Vaccinium vitis-idaea*



Partridgeberry flowers

**Edible parts:** berries.

**When:** Harvest when berries are dark red to purple in late September. Frosts will sweeten the berries and dispel any remaining fruitworms. “The berries can survive the winter under snow, and are sweetest and juiciest- though tricky to harvest as the skins are very soft and the interior liquid- as the snow clears in spring” (Kilmer, Scott, 2003).

#### Notes:

- Partridgeberry and redberry are the local NL names for *Vaccinium vitis-idaea* which are called lingonberry, mountain cranberry, foxberry, and rock cranberry elsewhere. When referencing partridgeberries in plant guidebooks from outside NL, search for mountain cranberry or lingonberry.
- **Warning:** Another plant also holds the name partridgeberry elsewhere in North America, but is different, *Mitchella repens*, a species with toxic berries.

- Partridgeberries can be used to make sauces, relish, syrups, desserts like tarts and quick breads, puddings and duff, jam, salad dressing, and wine. They are very tart and edible raw. Substitute them into baking and other recipes where cranberries are called for.
- Preserve partridgeberries by drying, dehydrating, or freezing them, or by making preserves.
- **Warning:** “The fruit are home to the fruitworm which is the larva of the moth *Grapholita libertina*. This fruitworm bores through the fruit and emerges in late August or early September, after which the fruit can be picked. The date of emergence varies, so check a few berries for fruitworm (white in colour, 3-4 millimetres long) before you start picking.” (Scott, 2010)



Partridgeberry vinaigrette

## Partridgeberry Vinaigrette

From Root Cellars Rock (<http://rootcellarsrock.ca/2011/04/partridgeberry-recipes/>)

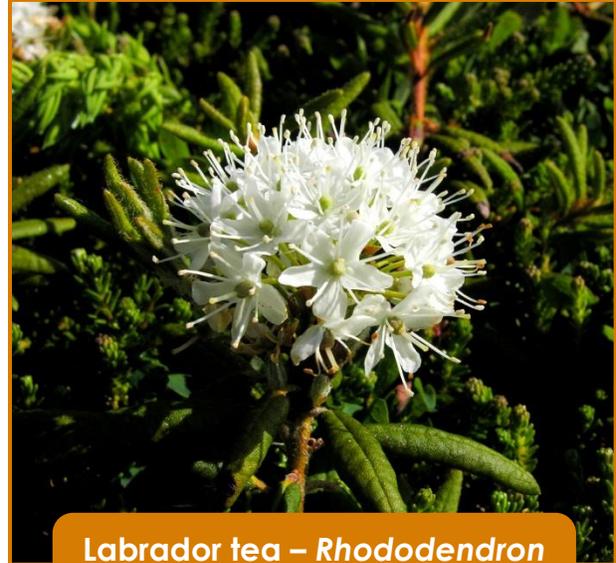
- 1/2 cup fresh or thawed partridgeberries
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 3/4 cup olive oil
- 1 tablespoon softened honey or other liquid sweetener
- salt and pepper to taste
- water

Blend berries, vinegar, oil and honey together. Add water slowly and stir until you get the consistency you want. Taste the vinaigrette and add salt and pepper or more berries or honey to your taste.

**5: Labrador Tea** (*Rhododendron groenlandicum* [formerly *Ledum groenlandicum*] and Northern Labrador tea -*Rhododendron tomentosum* [formerly *Ledum palustre*])

**What:** Heath family (*Ericaceae*).

Labrador tea- *Rhododendron groenlandicum*- Grows up to 1m tall but is usually much lower. Evergreen. "Twigs are covered in white to rusty red hairs; older stems are reddish brown and flaky" (Boland, 2011). New leaves have white hairs all over and are green on top. As leaves mature most hairs are shed from the top leaving it dark green and leathery. The underside stays hairy and the hairs turn rusty-red. Leaves are elliptical and untoothed. "Leaves often turn reddish brown to greenish brown in winter" (Boland, 2011). The sides of the leaves roll under. Clusters of 5-petaled white flowers bloom June-August.



Labrador tea – *Rhododendron groenlandicum*

Northern Labrador tea (dwarf Labrador tea)- *Rhododendron tomentosum*- is very similar to Labrador tea but is a smaller species with narrower leaves. Found only in Labrador north of Cartwright in this province. When bruised the leaves smell really nice.

**Where:** barrens, wetlands and bogs, damp and dry woods, beside ponds, exposed areas, artic-alpine barrens (Northern Labrador tea).

**Edible parts:** leaves.

**When:** Collect leaves from early spring up until September. Only take a few leaves from each plant to avoid harming the plants.

**Notes:**

- **Warning:** "To make tea, do not boil the leaves as this releases the harmful alkaloid andromedotoxin" (Scott, 2010). Steep the leaves instead (see recipe below).



Underside of Labrador tea leaves

- **Warning:** Sheep laurel (*Kalmia angustifolia*) or goowiddy is somewhat similar looking and toxic. Identify it by its hairless leaves and stems, green underside to leaves and pink flowers which are all different characteristics from Labrador tea.
- Labrador tea is aptly named for its edible use and can be made into a tea served hot or iced. It is caffeine free. The flavour is floral. See brewing instructions in the recipe below.
- Leaves can be chewed on while hiking or used as a seasoning for meats or fish.
- Use leaves fresh or dry or freeze them for year-round use.



Labrador tea leaves

**Video:** Elder Bertha Skye discusses Labrador Tea <http://youtu.be/b5HAzPnC5OI>

### Labrador Tea (hot)

- About 30 Labrador tea leaves per teacup or mug

Boil water. Remove water from heat and let sit 1 minute. Pour water over tea leaves and let steep 5-10 minutes according to your preference for tea strength. Remove leaves from tea. Flavour with honey or lemon as desired.

### Iced Blueberry Labrador Tea

- 8 cups of brewed Labrador tea
- 2 cups blueberries (fresh or thawed)
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

In a large saucepan, bring blueberries and water to boil. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring often, until blueberries break down, about 5 minutes. Add blueberries to the brewed Labrador tea. Add brown sugar to the blueberry tea mixture; stir and then let cool to room temperature, about 30 minutes. Refrigerate until cold, about 2 hours. Strain mixture through a cheesecloth-lined sieve into a pitcher. Stir in lemon juice. Serve over ice cubes.

**6: Blueberries** (*Vaccinium angustifolium* [early lowbush blueberry], *Vaccinium boreale* [northern blueberry, alpine blueberry], *Vaccinium ovalifolium* [mathers, oval-leaved blueberry], *Vaccinium myrtilloides* [velvet-leaved blueberry], *Vaccinium caespitosum* [dwarf bilberry, dwarf blueberry], *Vaccinium uliginosum* [alpine bilberry])

**What:** Heath family (*Ericaceae*). “This is an erect, low growing woody shrub which reaches up to 50cm in height. The younger twigs are green, and the older ones are reddish in colour. Its elliptical leaves are bright green above and paler below, and its flowers hang in bell-like clusters at the stem tips. Edible, sweet, dark blue spherical berries are produced in late summer” (Collins, 1994). Flowers can be white, greenish white, to lightly pink/purple. Leaves “have finely toothed edges,” sometimes begin with a bronze tint but then turn to glossy green on top, before turning “brilliant scarlet” in the fall (Boland, 2011). “Unripe blueberries go through a red phase; hence the conundrum ‘these blueberries are red because they’re green’” (Kilmer, Scott, 2003). “Most berries have a whitish bloom which makes them appear pale blue” (Scott, 2010).



Blueberry – *Vaccinium angustifolium*

**Where:** barrens, wetlands, peatlands, forest clearings, bogs, alpine meadows, exposed coastal headlands, recent burn sites, tundra (*Vaccinium caespitosum*, *Vaccinium uliginosum*, *Vaccinium boreale*), “moist woods and clearings in Southeast Labrador” (*Vaccinium myrtilloides*) (Boland, 2011).

**Edible parts:** berries, leaves.

**When:** Harvest leaves for tea in the spring and summer. Harvest the ripe, dark blueberries from August- September.

**Notes:**

- Several species of blueberries have been identified in Newfoundland and Labrador, with *Vaccinium angustifolium* being the most common. Despite their slight differences in appearance and flavour they are all edible.



Blueberry plant in autumn

- Blueberries are also called “hurts” in NL.
- Use the berries as a fresh snack, in salads, cereal, desserts, baked goods, sauces, jams and preserves, in beverages like wine, juice, tea and flavored water.
- Use the leaves fresh or dried to make a tea.
- Preserve the berries by drying/dehydrating, freezing or making into preserves. Preserve the leaves by drying or dehydrating.
- Refer to Todd Boland's book *Trees & Shrubs of Newfoundland and Labrador* for detailed descriptions of each species of blueberry commonly found in this province.
- Blueberries vary in their sweetness depending on the species, soil conditions, etc. Some can be quite tart, similar to a partridgeberry. Taste wild blueberries before adding them to recipes and adjust the sweetness of other ingredients as needed.
- According to Todd Boland from MUN Botanical Garden, there is almost twice the antioxidants in our province's low bush blueberries compared to the high bush varieties commonly found in grocery stores.

## **Blueberry Cupcakes**

From *Wild Berries of Newfoundland*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • 1/3 cup soft margarine                   | • 1/2 teaspoon salt   |
| • 6 tablespoons lightly packed brown sugar | • 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon   |
| • 1 egg                                    | • 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg   |
| • 1 1/2 cups flour                         | • 2/3 cup sour milk (To sour fresh milk stir 2 teaspoon vinegar into 2/3 cup 2% milk) |
| • 1 teaspoon baking powder                 | • 1 cup blueberries   |
| • 1/2 teaspoon baking soda                 |   |

Cream margarine and sugar together until light and fluffy. Beat in egg. In a separate bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg. Stir dry ingredients into creamed mixture alternating with sour milk until just mixed. Do not over mix. Fold in blueberries. Fill 12 lightly greased muffin cups 2/3 full. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes or until golden brown. Allow to cool and then top with your favourite icing. Serve with wild mint or Labrador tea.

**7: Mint** (*Mentha arvensis* [wild mint], *Mentha cardiac Baker* [heart mint])

All of the species of 'wild' mint found in this province are introduced species, not native. They have "jumped the fence" from gardens or been accidentally dispersed.

**What:** Mint family (*Lamiaceae*). Mint have square stems and opposite leaves that grow directly from the main stem. Leaves are coarser on wild mints compared to garden mints. Flowers are usually white to pink/lilac. Identify mints by their signature smell by rubbing a leaf between two fingers.

Wild mint- *Mentha arvensis*- Grows up to 60 cm tall. "The whole plant is covered with short, stiff hairs" (Scott, 2011). Lilac flowers form coronas at each level of leaves on the stem.

Heart mint- *Mentha cardiac Baker*- "Hairless, broad, dark green leaves and purple stems" (2011).

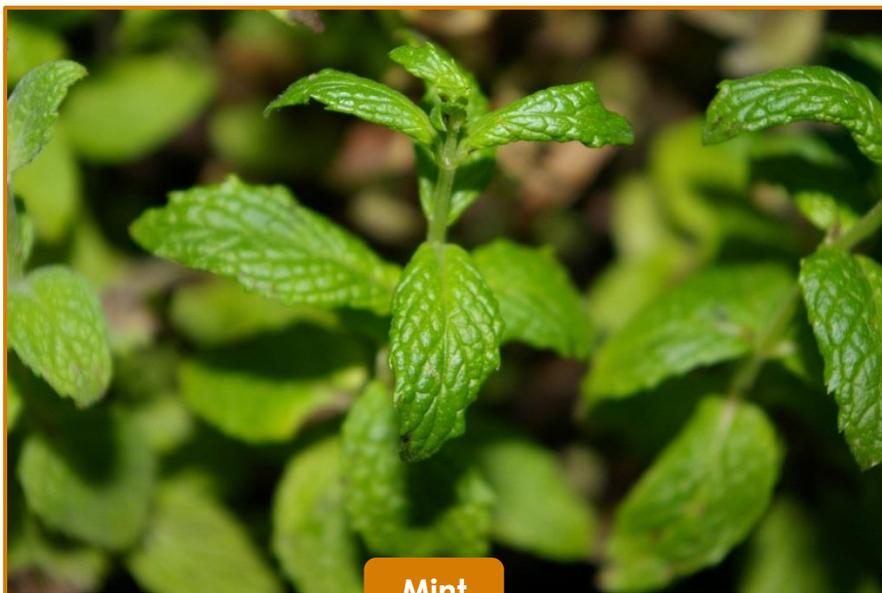
**Where:** wet areas like along streams, river, ponds and ditches

**Edible parts:** leaves and stems

**When:** Harvest leaves and stems starting in spring, through summer, and even into early fall.



Mint - *Mentha arvensis*



Mint

## Notes:

- Harvest stems above the waterline if growing in water to avoid potential contamination.
- Use mint leaves fresh, or dry or freeze them for later use.
- Be aware that wild mint is bitterer than garden mint and recipes may need to be adjusted accordingly.
- Use mint as a breath freshener, garnish, in drinks and as a tea, in salads, as a seasoning for meats and side dishes, and in desserts. Mint can be used to flavour jams, jellies, sauces, and spreads. Mint is also a nice plant to chew while on a hike.
- For more information on mint, refer to the workshop **Using Culinary Herbs**.



Wild mint flower

## Chickpea, Tomato, Lemon and Mint Salad

From *The Commonsense Kitchen* by Tom Hudgens

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 red onion, diced
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- salt
- 2 cups cooked chickpeas, well drained
- 2 cups diced ripe red tomatoes, seeds removed
- juice and finely grated zest of 1/2 a lemon
- pinch of hot red pepper flakes
- 1/2 cup loosely packed mint leaves, coarsely chopped – set aside a few whole leaves for decoration
- 1/4 cup coarsely chopped parsley
- freshly ground black pepper
- extra-virgin olive oil

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the onion and garlic with a little salt and sauté for 1-2 minutes. Add the chickpeas and cook until they are dry. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to room temperature. Before serving, gently toss in the tomatoes, lemon zest and juice, pepper flakes, mint, parsley, and season with salt and pepper. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil and serve. Serves 2-4.



**Japanese Knotweed –  
Fallopia Japonica**

### 8: Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)

**What:** From the Buckwheat family (Polygonaceae). Grows up to 4 metres tall. “A very tall, rapidly growing perennial plant with hollow stems and a spreading root system” (Traverse, 2006). “Its roots can reach 7 metres out and 3 meters deep, taking over entire gardens in one season” (Kasimos, 2011). “The spring stems are reddish.

Mature stalks are hollow and the leaves are somewhat rounded. Sprays of tiny

white flowers are produced among the upper leaf axils in September” (Boland, 2011). “The shoots are olive green with considerable red pigment. The bamboo-like stems... have oval, olive green leaves” (Scott, 2010).

**Where:** disturbed and abandoned areas, along river banks, beside roads and trails, gardens.

**Edible parts:** young shoots, rhizome or rootstock—the stem of the plant that grows underground from which shoots and roots grow off.

**When:** Cut shoots in early spring around late April/May. The rhizomes can be harvested year-round but it is easiest when the plant is young.

#### Notes:

- Also known as mile-a-minute, fleecflower, Newfoundland bamboo, September mist
- On the World Conservation Union’s list of the world’s 100 worst invasive species
- Collect shoots when they are under 20cm and the leaves have just started to unroll.
- Prepare the young shoots like you would asparagus or rhubarb. Their shape and texture is similar to asparagus although the taste is described as being closer to rhubarb, yet more tart. Use Japanese knotweed shoots in preserves, baked goods, salads, stir-fries, in stews, sauces, and soups.
- “Cut these fat, asparagus-like sprouts off close to the ground, remove any open leaves, and drop into salted boiling water to simmer briefly for about five minutes, only until a fork pierces them easily” (Angier, 1974).



**Shoots**

- “Rhizome can be peeled and cooked or roasted” (Boland, 2011). “The thick tuberlike rootstocks are welcome because of their nutritious starchiness, tastiest when roasted but also good boiled, and because of the almond-like nibbles afforded by the bulbs which if left alone root and become tubers themselves” (Angier, 1974).
- Because Japanese knotweed is so abundant and invasive, over-harvesting is less of a concern. “If you can’t beat it, eat it” (Kasimos, 2011).
- Related to Giant knotweed (*Fallopia sachalinensis*) which is also edible and grows in southern and western Newfoundland.
- **Warning:** Japanese knotweed contains the laxative emodin. “Eat in moderation, initially, as they may be slightly laxative” (Scott, 2010).
- **Warning:** “Knotweed contains oxalic acids which can be a concern to people prone to kidney stones and gout. If your doctor has warned against eating too much spinach or chard because of these conditions, then you should also limit your knotweed consumption” (Kasimos, 2011).
- **Warning:** Because people often try to eradicate Japanese knotweed from their gardens and public land, it may have been sprayed with herbicidal chemicals. Be cautious and only harvest from safe sites.

**Video:** Foraging Japanese knotweed (<http://youtu.be/lpTp6XKaPH0>)

## Japanese Knotweed Jelly

From 3 Foragers (<http://the3foragers.blogspot.ca/2011/05/japanese-knotweed-recipe-knotweed-jelly.html>)

- 4 cups water
- 8 cups chopped Japanese knotweed stalks, leaves removed

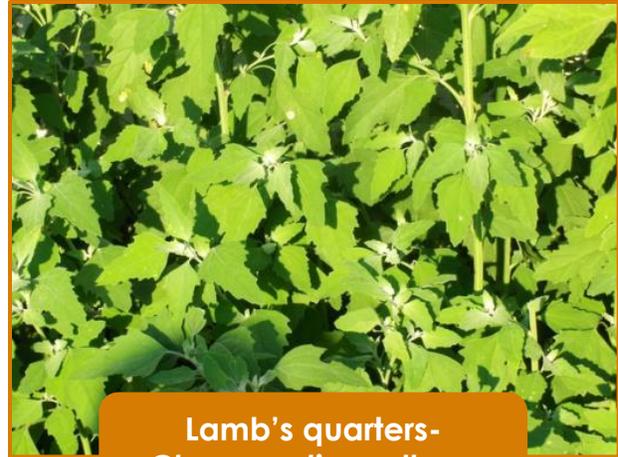
Add the water and the chopped knotweed stalks to a large pot. Bring the water up to a boil, and reduce to a simmer for 10 minutes. Allow the mixture to cool, and then hang the stewed knotweed in a jelly bag or in cheesecloth, and allow it to drip for an hour or two. You need to end up with 3 1/4 C knotweed juice.

- 3 1/4 cup knotweed juice
- 1 box powdered pectin (1.75 oz.)
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 4 cup sugar

Put the knotweed juice, lemon juice, and pectin into a large pot. Bring it up to a rolling boil. Add all the sugar at once. Bring it back up to a rolling boil, and boil 1 minute while stirring constantly. Remove from the heat and ladle it into hot, sterilised jars. Cover the jars. Process jars in a water bath for 10 minutes, and then cool. Makes 6- 8oz. jars.

## 9: Lamb's Quarters (*Chenopodium album*)

**What:** From the Goosefoot family (*Chenopodiaceae*). Can grow more than half a metre tall when mature. "Fleshy, arrow-shaped leaves, not unlike their close relative, spinach" (Boland, 2011, *Edible Newfoundland Plants*). Flowers are green and not showy. "Look for 'goose foot' shaped, greyish-green leaves growing on upright stems. The leaves look dusty and feel like they have small sand on them" (Kasimos, 2011). "The leaves of young plants appear to be dusted in sugar" (Scott, 2010). Seeds are "tiny, black, often dullish, flattish but convex" (Angier, 1974).



Lamb's quarters-  
*Chenopodium album*

**Where:** Disturbed places, roadsides, gardens, fields, trails, ditches, along fence lines, thrives near compost piles and manure heaps. Absent wild in Labrador but can be cultivated from seed.

**Edible parts:** leaves, buds, flowers, stems, seeds.

**When:** Harvest young leaves in spring, mature leaves and stems throughout summer. Look for buds from May through September as plants continuously flower through that time. Harvest seeds in late summer to fall.

### Notes:

- Also called wild spinach, pigweed, fat-hen, and goose foot.
- "Because lamb's quarter has no harsh flavours, many deem it the best of the wild greens" (Angier, 1974).
- 75,000 seeds have been counted on a single plant.
- Use the seeds as a cereal and ground into a meal or flour.
- "This amazing plant is related to spinach, but is even more nutritious. Some foragers even call it wild spinach since it is very similar in taste and uses" (Kasimos, 2011).



Lamb's quarters

- “Its use as a food plant dates back to prehistoric times. Remains of the plant have been found in Neolithic settlements all over Europe” (Mabey, 1972).
- Eat the young leaves raw on sandwiches and in salads. Add them to green smoothies. Turn them into a pesto or add to fresh dips.
- Mature leaves can be steamed, sautéed, used in stir-fries. Add the leaves anywhere you would spinach, like in sauces, soups, and stews.
- “Stems with flower buds can be harvested when still in tight bunches and used like mini-broccoli or rapini” (Kasimos, 2011).
- Lamb’s quarter is a good plant to save seed from and try growing in your garden. Plant it in containers if you are concerned about it overrunning.
- **Warning:** Lamb’s quarters contain oxalic acids, more of which is found in the mature leaves. It can be a concern to people prone to kidney stones and gout. For this reason you may wish to eat only the tender young leaves rather than the mature ones. If your doctor has warned against eating too much spinach or chard because, then you should also limit your consumption of lamb’s quarters. (Silver, 2012; Kasimos, 2011)

**Video:** Eat the Weeds: Episode 84 Lambsquarters, pigweed, fat hen, goose foot  
<http://youtu.be/4oL49PBsCP0>

## Poached Eggs with Lamb's Quarters

From Foraging Foodie ([www.foragingfoodie.net/poached-egg-with-lambs-quarters.html](http://www.foragingfoodie.net/poached-egg-with-lambs-quarters.html))

- |                                 |                               |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • 2 eggs                        | • 1 tablespoon orange juice   |
| • 2 teaspoons white vinegar     | • 2 dollops of sour cream     |
| • Butter                        | • Croutons                    |
| • 2 handfuls of Lamb's quarters | • 2 sprigs of chives, chopped |
| • Salt and pepper to taste      |                               |

Poach two eggs by bringing a pot with water to a boil. When the water is about to boil, add the white vinegar and gently transfer the eggs into the water. Cover the pot, lower heat to simmer it for 4 minutes. Melt some butter and sauté the Lamb's quarters with salt and pepper and a tablespoon of orange juice. Divide the Lamb's quarters over two plates. Add a dollop of sour cream on each bed of Lamb's quarters. Place the poached eggs on top of the sour cream. Sprinkle with croutons and chives. Serves 2.

## 10: Cattails (*Typha latifolia*)

“If you have cattails, you’ve got four of the five things you need to survive. You’ve got water, food, shelter and fuel. The fifth thing you’re missing is, well that’s companionship” (Green Deane, 2009).

**What:** From the Cattail family (*Typhaceae*). Leaves can grow up to 2 metres long. “To spot a cattail stand look for the furry, white seed heads from the previous year on top of long stalks. The leaves are grass-like, relatively broad and often dull grey-green” (Boland, 2011). Leaves are shaped like sword blades. “Stiff, erect flowering stalks, topped with yellow, pollen-laden male flowers above hot dog-shaped, brown female flower heads” (Foster, Duke, 1990).



Cattails – *Typha latifolia*

**Where:** wet places - ponds, marshes, lakes, along rivers, ditches, bogs, swamps.

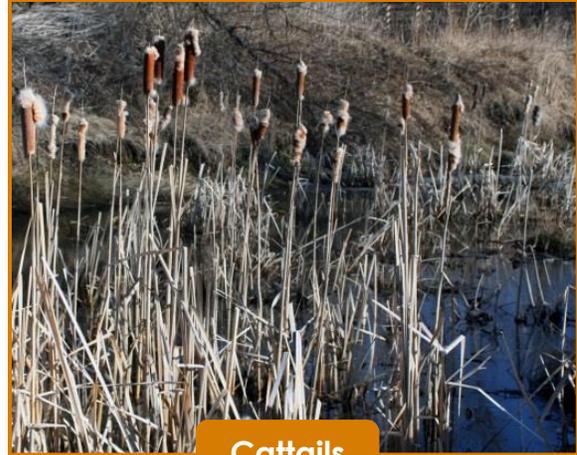
**Edible parts:** young shoots, roots, flowers, pollen, leaves.

**When:** shoots (spring), roots (fall, winter, spring), flower/pollen (May-July), lower stem (spring, summer, fall).

### Notes:

- Also called bulrushes, rushes, and flags.
- “The cattail is thought of as one of the most important wild foods because of its variety of uses” (Boland, 2011).
- Cattails are native to Newfoundland’s west coast but invasive in the east, “spreading eastward in the ditches of the Trans-Canada Highway” (Scott, 2010).
- “The young shoots...can be peeled and added to salads, soup, stir-fry and sandwiches” (2011). They taste similar to cucumber and can be pickled. Boil them briefly in salted water if they are tough when harvested.
- “The top, male, portion of the flower head can be steamed or simmered much like corn” on the cob (2011). “Collect the spikes when they are green, that is, when they are about to break through the papery sheath that encloses them. Remove the sheath, boil for a few minutes in salted water, and serve with butter. The core is inedible” (Scott, 2010).
- To eat the leaves peel off the green outer leaf and eat the white core raw or cooked.

- “The pollen can be collected and used as a nutritious addition to flour” (Boland, 2011) and also to dye flour yellow for cakes or other desserts.
- Roots can be eaten “raw, baked or boiled” (2011) and also barbecued. They can also be made into flour (see recipe below). Use them similarly to potatoes and other starchy vegetables. Clean them well and peel while wet or after barbecuing.
- “Peeled of their outer rind, the tender white insides of the first 1 or 1 1/2 feet of the young stems gives this worldwide delicacy its provocative name of Cossack asparagus. Again, these are edible both raw and cooked” (Angier, 1974).



Cattails

**Video:** Eat the Weeds: Episode 64 Cattails, typha <http://youtu.be/hrVCTE68fbU>

## Cattail Root Flour

From Costa Kasimos on Root Cellars Rock  
[\(http://rootcellarsrock.ca/2011/12/winter-foraging/\)](http://rootcellarsrock.ca/2011/12/winter-foraging/)

Dig up cattail roots in the fall or winter. They should be firm and have white flesh. After cleaning the roots, peel them and break them apart by lightly pounding with something heavy like a rolling pin or cast iron pan. Place the broken up roots in a bucket of water and use your hands to break the pieces apart even further. The starch will begin to separate from the fibres and settle. Use your best judgement to decide when to stop, and then remove the fibres from the water.

Allow the starch to settle, and then decant the water off. Transfer the remaining slurry into a shallow pan and place it somewhere warm to dry.

This starchy flour contains gluten, and is best used in recipes mixed with wheat flour. It is very smooth textured and it has a sweet flavour.

## Activities

### Wild Show & Tell

This activity is appropriate for any time of year, but will be easier to organize during months when edible wild plants are abundant. It requires a bit of preparation in advance, as the facilitator will need to collect cuttings for the activity. If food is being served

as part of the activity then it is recommended that a kitchen be used and food safety kept in consideration. Refer to **Safety** (page 44) for resources.



Chuckley pears

### Materials

- A few cuttings from different edible wild plants. Aim for at least 3. Try to harvest different parts of plants to show a variety of leaves, stem, fruit, flowers, roots, and seeds depending on what's available. The cuttings do not need to be at peak ripeness. For example, bring in a stem from a blueberry plant even if it isn't the time for harvesting berries. The section **10 Common Edible Plants of NL** (page 66) could be used as a resource for choosing some easy to identify plants.
- Chart paper. One sheet of chart paper should be written up for each plant that is brought in, listing the 5 senses (touch, sight, smell, hearing, taste) with some space for writing under each.
- Markers
- Fresh samples of ripe edible wild plants to eat or food made from edible wild plants (optional). For example: blueberry jam, brewed Labrador tea or mint tea, partridgeberry muffins. Ensure samples have been properly cleaned in advance.
- Dishes and cutlery for serving food (optional).

**Note:** Participants should wash their hands with soap and water before participating in this activity.

**Step 1:** Explain to participants that the group will be playing a game of show and tell, similar to what they may have played in elementary school, where all five senses will be used. The facilitator should ask everyone to sit in a circle facing each other. Tell the group that when foraging the senses of touch, sight, smell, and hearing will play important roles in safely identifying plants before using the sense of taste to eat them.

**Step 2:** The facilitator or another volunteer can start to get the ball rolling. Take a plant cutting and investigate it using the first four senses:

- **Touch:** What do the different parts of it feel like? Are there any interesting textures, such as fine hairs, bumps, ridges, and thorns?
- **Sight:** What does it look like? Is it shiny, waxy, or dull? What colours are on it? Does its look match how it feels?
- **Smell:** What does it smell like? Do parts smell different from each other?
- **Hearing:** If you shake, rub, or scrunch it, does it make any sounds, like seeds rattling or crunching leaves?



Labrador tea

Suggest that participants each make 1 or 2 observations. Pass the plant around the circle giving everyone an opportunity say something. It's fine if people want to skip their turn and come back to it later.

**Step 3:** Remind participants of the importance of correctly identifying edible plants and that they should never eat anything that they are not sure of. Taking time for close observations makes it easier to identify plants. After observing a plant closely, suggest that participants write observations down in a trail journal.

**Step 4:** As participants share their observations, ask a volunteer to write some of the key points on the chart paper so that the group eventually puts together a brief summary describing each plant with the five senses.

**Step 5:** Now that 4 senses have been explored, it is time to discuss the fifth one, taste. If possible, allow participants to eat a small quantity of some of the ripe edible wild plants you have harvested. Do not eat the cuttings that everyone has just handled, but rather other pieces that have been prepared in advance. If fresh plants are not available to share, a prepared substitute could be used such as jam, baked goods, or tea. As participants sample the plant, ask them to describe its taste and consider ways that the plant could be prepared and eaten at home. If plants or prepared foods are not available to share, ask participants to describe what the plants tasted like other times that they have eaten them in the past. Record participants' observations on the chart paper.

**Step 6:** Give participants the opportunity to share any other observations or comments they have about the plants. Leave time for participants to tell stories they may have about harvesting and preparing these plants previously, or seeing it done while growing up.

## Forager Memory Game

This activity can be done indoors at any time of the year.

### Materials

- The Forager Memory Game cards, printed single-sided (page 104)
- Scissors
- A flat surface



Rose flowers

**Step 1:** Prior to the workshop print off and cut out the Forager Memory Game cards. Print the cards single-sided and ideally in colour. If you plan on using them several times, consider laminating them or printing them on hard-stock paper.

**Step 2:** Decide whether you will play the game with the full set of 30 cards (including 10 plant sets of pictures, names, and clues) or if you will play with 20 cards, leaving one identifier (pictures, names, or clues) out.

**Step 3:** This game is played similar to the children's game Memory. Shuffle all the cards you are using and place them all upside-down on a table or other flat surface. Taking turns, go around the group turning over either 2 or 3 cards, depending on whether you are using a partial or full deck. On each turn, try to match a plant's name, picture, and clue for a set. When a participant gets a set they can take those cards to a pile and should lay them face-up so everyone can see them. If a set is not made, the next participant takes a turn. Participants should try to pay attention when it is other people's turns to remember where cards lie. The game is completed when all the 10 sets are made.

**Step 4:** While playing the game, review information from the section **10 Common Edible Plants of NL** (page 66) which includes detailed descriptions of all of the plants on the cards. That section can be used to create hints if matching cards becomes difficult. When matches are made, read the clues and names aloud from the cards and show each other the pictures so that everyone learns from each matching set.

## Edible Walk

This activity could be done year-round depending on weather and availability of local edible wild plants. Be sure to let participants know about walk details in advance so that they are prepared with appropriate clothing, shoes, and gear. Use **Foraging Safety** (page 55) and **Foraging Know-how** (page 59) for reference when preparing for an edible walk.

It may be difficult to share the relevant content from this workshop and fit an edible walk into one short event. Consider offering a series of events instead. For example, host a two-part workshop with one part indoors and another outdoors. Or host several workshops and walks, focusing on what's available during different seasons.

Depending on the location of the walk, transportation may need to be arranged in order for participants to attend. Keep accessibility in mind when choosing trails so that persons of all abilities can enjoy the event.

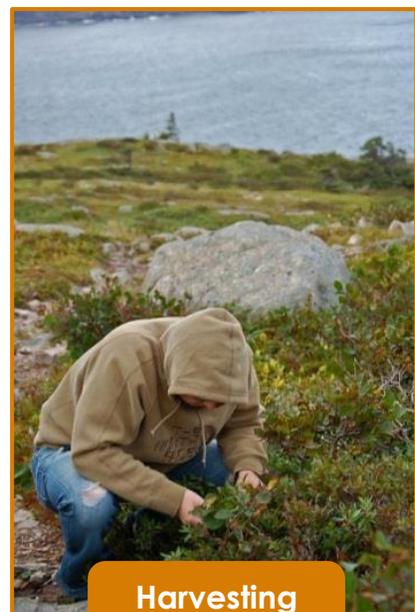
Edible walks do not need to take place at far-away locales. Consider nearby parks, gardens, and walking trails as potential locations. Be careful not to harvest from sites that were potentially sprayed with herbicides or pesticides or could have contaminated soil or water.

Keep in mind the information in the section **Respect for Nature** (page 59) and be sure to not cause undue damage to any location by overharvesting.

### Materials

- Edible plant guidebooks, see **Guidebooks** (page 52) as a resource
- Appropriate clothing, footwear and gear
- First aid kit
- Cell phone
- Trail maps (as needed)
- Containers and tools for harvesting plants
- Clean water to wash hands and plants
- Trail journals and/or a handout listing some of the plants likely to be seen on the walk
- Pencils

**Step 1:** Speak with local people that are knowledgeable about edible wild plants and consult guidebooks to find out what plants are in the area. Choose a route and do a preparatory walk a day or two before the workshop to make



Harvesting  
blueberries



Partridgeberries

note of plants to point out to participants.

**Step 2:** Consider all stages of plant development when identifying plants for the walk. Take note of plants that are ready for harvest and others that are immature. For example, on a spring walk Japanese knotweed shoots may be ready to harvest. However, blueberry plants will just be getting new leaves and will not have developed berries. Point out blueberry plants to participants so that they can go back in the fall to harvest berries. Preparing thoroughly for the walk in advance will make it more likely that participants are able to see a variety of edible plants.

**Step 3:** Once everyone is gathered together, review the route and any safety information. This is also a good time to describe the plants that are likely to be

on the route so that participants can keep an eye out for them.

**Step 4:** Go on the edible walk. Point out plants to participants and describe them. Harvest ripe plants that have been identified with certainty, clean them well, and share them with participants to taste.

**Step 5:** Encourage participants to point out plants that they think are edible. Use those observations as opportunities to discuss a variety of plants and point out different characteristics. If a participant identifies a plant incorrectly, use that as a learning opportunity. Discuss the differences between the plant on the trail and the edible one the participant may have been thinking of. Be positive with participants and share as much information as possible. Encourage participants to share their knowledge as well. Do not eat anything that is not identified with absolute certainty. You can always go back later to get it once you're sure.

**Step 6:** If you are aware of any toxic or inedible plants in the area, you may wish to point those out to participants as well for reference.

**Step 7:** Along the walk, recommend that participants make notes in their trail journals or, if possible, provide them with a handout that includes many of the plants you expect to observe on the walk.

**Step 8:** Take pictures of both the plants and people on the edible walk. Use the photos as a resource for future workshops and promotion. Consider sharing photos and experiences from your edible walk with Root Cellars Rock. Email [info@rootcellarsrock.ca](mailto:info@rootcellarsrock.ca) for information on how to contribute.

## Edible Wild Plants Club

This is more of a long-term initiative rather than a single activity. Consider forming an Edible Wild Plants Club if there are several people in the community that are interested in regularly learning more about foraging. You could start off with a workshop to build community interest and from there form a club.

Edible Wild Plants Clubs can choose to meet year-round or only during certain seasons. Harvesting is most abundant in summer and fall but many people are very busy during those times. Consider hosting a few walks during prime harvesting time but then meet regularly in the winter to inspire people with presentations when harvests are scarce.

Edible Wild Plants Clubs could share the information from this workshop over several sessions. Also, consider some of the following:

- Go on edible walks, hikes, and maybe even camping trips.
- Do regular show and tells where people highlight a plant they really like.
- Host potlucks with foods made with wild ingredients.
- Focus on just one or two plants per meeting, giving them lots of attention.
- Bring in speakers to talk about plants or give sessions on related topics like wilderness first aid or cooking and food safety.
- Make connections with local environmental groups, nature clubs, trail associations, parks and MUN Botanical Garden to collaborate.
- Look at the other uses for edible wild plants and host hands-on workshops. For example, plants can be used as natural remedies, beauty aids, dyes, textiles, for decoration, and in cleaning.

If you choose to form an Edible Wild Plants Club, contact the Food Security Network ([info@foodsecuritynews.com](mailto:info@foodsecuritynews.com)) to access additional FSN resources and connect with other groups across the province.



Cranberry muffins

## Conclusion

(15 minutes)

Some of these steps can also be completed during the activities if there is a lull in discussion.

**Step 1:** Ask participants to share any plans they have for learning more about edible wild plants after the workshop.



Labrador tea flowering

**Step 2:** Read aloud the list of things participants wanted to learn from the beginning of the workshop. Have you covered everything? If yes, congratulations! If not, that's fine too because you will now hand out the **Resources** sheet (page 102) for participants to take home with links to websites and recommended books for further learning. You could also open any remaining questions up to the group and see if participants can answer the missed questions from their own experience.

**Step 3:** Hand out the **Evaluation Form** (page 100) and pens and ask that participants all fill them in before leaving. Completed evaluation sheets should be photocopied after the workshop so that you can keep a record to guide future workshops that you host. Send originals, along with the completed FSN E-News sign-up sheet, back to FSN as soon as you are able. For instructions on how to do that see **Evaluation and Follow-up** (page 13).

**Step 4:** Thank participants for attending and close off the workshop.

***We hope you enjoyed the Edible Wild Plants Workshop!***

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<http://www.almanac.com/blog/natural-health-home-tips/eating-weeds-why-not>

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- Page 94: **Helga Gillard**
- Page 95: **Lisa McBride Photography**

Forager Memory Game (page 104):

- Winter Cress: **Todd Boland**
- Dandelions: **Todd Boland**
- Roses & rose hips: **Lisa McBride Photography**
- Partridgeberries: **Lisa McBride Photography**
- Labrador tea: **Rachelle Batstone**
- Blueberries: **Todd Boland**
- Mint: **Lisa McBride Photography**
- Japanese knotweed: **Photobucket**
- Lamb's quarters: **Photobucket**
- Cattails: **Todd Boland**

To contact **Lisa McBride Photography**: [lisamcbridephotography@hotmail.com](mailto:lisamcbridephotography@hotmail.com)

Photos from **Photobucket** are available at <http://photobucket.com/>

## 4.3. Supplementary Materials

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### *Sample Agenda*

# Workshop Agenda Edible Wild Plants

A Root Cellars Rock Food Skills Workshop

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Facilitator:**

**Location:**

**Hosting Group(s):**

1. **Introduction** (10 minutes)
2. **Roots of Our Local Food** (10 minutes)
3. **Digging In** (45 minutes)
4. **Activity** (40 minutes)
5. **Conclusion** (15 minutes)

[www.rootcellarsrock.ca](http://www.rootcellarsrock.ca)





- Yes, I made new contacts and learnt of new resources
- No, I did not make new contacts or learn of new resources

Comments:

**6. Please rate the balance of presentation, discussion, and group activity at today's workshop: (please circle all that apply)**

- Good balance of presentation, discussion, and group activity
- Not enough group activity and discussion
- Too much presentation of material
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

**7. Please rank the hands-on workshop activity in helping you improve your understanding of the topic:**

Not helpful		Somewhat helpful		Very helpful
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

Comments:

**8. Please rank your understanding of today's topic before attending the workshop:**

Little Understanding				Very Knowledgeable
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

**9. Please rank your understanding of today's topic after attending the workshop:**

Little Understanding				Very Knowledgeable
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

**10. What did you enjoy most about today, or what was the most interesting thing you learnt?**

**11. What could have been changed to improve today's workshop?**

**12. Please share any additional comments or suggestions.**

# Picking: Edible Wild Plants Resources

All content from this workshop is available at  
[www.rootcellarsrock.ca/workshops](http://www.rootcellarsrock.ca/workshops)

## Guidebooks

*Edible Plants of Newfoundland and Labrador* by Peter J. Scott

*Field Guide to Edible Wild Plants* by Bradford Angier

*A Field Guide to Edible Wild Plants: Eastern and Central North America* by Lee Allen Peterson

*An Illustrated Flora of the Northern United States and Canada* by Nathaniel Lord Britton and Addison Brown

*Native Trees and Shrubs of Newfoundland and Labrador* by A. Glen Ryan

*Native Wild Plants of eastern Canada and the adjacent northeastern United States* by F. H. Montgomery

*Plants and Wildflowers of Newfoundland* by Michael Collins

*Trees & Shrubs of Newfoundland and Labrador* by Todd Boland

*Wildflowers of Newfoundland and Labrador* by Peter J. Scott and Dorothy Black

## Videos

Blueberries as Ground Cover

<http://youtu.be/rbNc-zchh0E>

Cattails, Typha <http://youtu.be/hrVCTE68fbU>

Dandelions <http://youtu.be/CW0yFeKN1Pw>

Don't Eat Something If You Don't Know What It Is!

<http://youtu.be/OlaOhjIDD-8>

Elder Bertha Skye Talks About Labrador Tea

<http://youtu.be/b5HAzPnC5OI>

Foraging Japanese Knotweed

<http://youtu.be/lpTp6XKaPH0>

How to Make a Flower Press

<http://youtu.be/LyuK6qwlqBg>

Lambs Quarters, Pigweed, Fat Hen, Goose Foot

<http://youtu.be/4oL49PBsCP0>

Wild Rose <http://youtu.be/Mg2mSrg4LAs>



Photo: T. A. Loeffler



Photo: Todd Boland



Photo: Sarah Crocker



Resource Sheet 4A out of 8

*Don't Eat Something  
If You Don't Know  
What It Is!*

# Picking: Edible Wild Plants Resources

All content from this workshop is available at  
[www.rootcellarsrock.ca/workshops](http://www.rootcellarsrock.ca/workshops)

## Websites

Canadian Seed Catalogue Inventory  
[www.seeds.ca/sl/csci](http://www.seeds.ca/sl/csci)

Digital Flora of Newfoundland and Labrador Vascular Plants  
[www.digitalnaturalhistory.com/flora.htm](http://www.digitalnaturalhistory.com/flora.htm)

Eat the Weeds [www.eattheweeds.com](http://www.eattheweeds.com)

Ecoregions, NL Department of Environment & Conservation  
[www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/parks/apa/eco/index.html](http://www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/parks/apa/eco/index.html)

Food Storage Guidelines (Health Canada)  
[www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publichealth/envhealth/food\\_storage\\_guide\\_2008.pdf](http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publichealth/envhealth/food_storage_guide_2008.pdf)

Foraging Foodie [www.foragingfoodie.net](http://www.foragingfoodie.net)

Foray Newfoundland and Labrador  
[www.nlmushrooms.ca](http://www.nlmushrooms.ca)

Invasive Alien Species (Newfoundland and Labrador Invasive Species Council) <http://nlinvasives.ca>

MUN Botanical Garden [www.mun.ca/botgarden](http://www.mun.ca/botgarden)

Newfoundland and Labrador Environment Network (NLEN) [www.nlen.ca](http://www.nlen.ca)

NL Hiking and Walking (Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism) [www.newfoundlandlabrador.com/thingstodo/hikingwalking](http://www.newfoundlandlabrador.com/thingstodo/hikingwalking)

St. John's Safer Soil <http://safersoil.ning.com>

A Taste of the Wild Side (Root Cellars Rock)  
<http://rootcellarsrock.ca/tag/a-taste-of-the-wild-side>

The Wildflower Society of Newfoundland and Labrador  
[www.wildflowersocietynl.ca](http://www.wildflowersocietynl.ca)



Photo: Sarah Crocker



Photo: Sarah Ferber



Photo: Todd Boland



Resource Sheet 4B out of 8

*Don't Eat Something  
If You Don't Know  
What It Is!*

Forager Memory Game Cards (30)

**Wintercress**

*(Barbarea vulgaris)*



The buds and flowers of this plant taste like broccoli but they are smaller. Use them like broccoli but be careful not to overcook them.

**Dandelions**

*(Taraxacum vulgare)*



Use the roots of this plant to make a coffee substitute that is caffeine free. Count the seeds to find out how many big events will happen in your life.

## Roses & Rose Hips

(e.g. *Rosa nitida*)



Birds and mammals, including moose, like to eat the fruit of this plant as a snack. When people eat them, the hard and hairy seeds inside are usually removed first.

## Partridgeberries

(*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*)



This plant has a different name in Newfoundland and Labrador than anywhere else, which can be confusing when looking it up in plant guides from away.

## Labrador Tea

(e.g. *Rhododendron groenlandicum*)



When making a tea from this plant, don't boil it directly in water. Boil water, remove the water from the heat, pour it on the leaves, and then steep them for 5-10 minutes.

## Blueberries

(e.g. *Vaccinium angustifolium*)



You may also appreciate this plant for its landscaping qualities, including bright scarlet leaves in the fall. Plant it as a decorative and edible ground cover in your yard.

## Mint

(e.g. *Mentha arvensis*  
[wild mint])



The leaves of these wild plants are coarser than their garden cousins and may have a more bitter flavour, but they can still be used in favourite recipes and tea.

## Japanese Knotweed

(*Fallopia japonica*)



“If you can’t beat it, eat it”. Harvesting young shoots to eat is one way to slow this plant from overrunning an area.

## Lamb's Quarters

*(Chenopodium album)*



Described by some foragers as the most useful wild green and compared to spinach for flavour and versatility.

## Cattails

*(Typha latifolia)*



This wild plant is well respected because so many of its parts can be used from top to bottom. Use the pollen to make pretty yellow cakes for example.

