

HERB GARDENING

March 23, 2021

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OSU Extension – Franklin County**



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES





Nancy Lahmers

- Franklin County Master Gardener
- Chadwick Arboretum (OSU) Plant Sale Herb Co-Chair
- Love growing and using herbs
- Looking forward to have fun with you today

Our Proposed Agenda

- Basics to create a pleasing and functional herb garden for your personal home use
- What to plant, when, where? Best growing conditions for central Ohio
- Share a little herb history and for us to have fun
- Herb uses and preservation
- Answer your questions. Encourage herb gardening

A close-up photograph of sage (Salvia officinalis) leaves. The leaves are silvery-green, elongated, and have a distinctively textured, velvety surface. They are arranged in opposite pairs along a stem. The background is slightly blurred, showing more foliage and some dry, brown leaves on the ground.

WHY GROW HERBS? FRAGRANT,
USEFUL, GORGEOUS, JOYFUL.
WHY NOT GROW HERBS?

What is an herb anyway?

Any annual, biennial or perennial plant with leaves, seeds, or flowers used for flavoring, food, medicine or perfume.



So, what is a spice?

Spices are usually dried and produced from other parts of the plant, including seeds, bark, roots and fruits.

- Cinnamon
- Coriander
- Ginger
- Pepper



My questions for you

- . What herbs would you like to grow?**
- . What herbs do you use in cooking?**
- . What scents/fragrances do you like?**
- . What will you use your herbs for?**
- . Do you have outdoor garden space?
Containers? Indoor space?**

What do we need to be successful?

- **Location, location, location!**
- **Soil type and nutrients**
- **Seeds or transplants**
- **Good Spacing**
- **Water source**
- **Pests (or no pests)**



**Think of a Mediterranean
island. Well drained,
sandy/gritty soil, sloping
site**



Just how much sun will you need?

BEST: MINIMUM 8 HOURS FULL SUN

- Better oil production (flavor)
- Sturdier plants
- More flowers and seeds
- Many of our culinary herbs are native to the Mediterranean
- Thrives in sunshine: Thyme, Sage, Rosemary

What soil to use?

- Well drained and loosened to 12"
- Course, yet fine enough to hold some water
- Clay soil? Cannot stay waterlogged. Amend with compost or well rotted manure. 1 part organic matter to 4 parts native soil
- Soil pH 6.0 to 7.5. Soil test at Franklin County Extension Office (CLOSED NOW)
- Mulch with three to four inches of wood chips, gravel or sand to retain soil moisture and fight weeds

*In what location
will you use and
enjoy your herbs
the most?*









Raised Beds In Your Yard



Great Starter Herbs

Strong flavored herbs:

- Rosemary, sage, oregano

Herbs for accent flavors:

- Basil, dill, mint, tarragon, thyme

Herbs for blending:

- Chives, parsley, cilantro

Aromatic:

Lavender

Herbs



bay



sage



basil



oregano



mint



coriander/cilantro



parsley



thyme



rosemary



dill



tarragon



chives

Summary so far!

- **Start with 4 or 5 herbs and a moderately sized plot/container**
- **Many herbs originated in the Mediterranean region and love the sun. Choose a spot that receives 8 hours of sunlight a day**
- **Most do well in gritty, well-drained soil and a pH of 6.5 to 7.5. Soil can easily be amended with compost and added organic nutrients**
- **Mulch herb beds with 3-4 inches of wood chips, gravel or sand**

Life Cycle Of Herbs

- **ANNUALS** – Complete life cycle in one growing season. Easy to grow from seeds
- **PERENNIALS** – Overwinter and regrow each season. Plant in a permanent location. May need to divide the roots
- **BIENNIAL** – Lives 2 seasons

NOTE: Ohio weather impacts perennials

Growing From Seed

- . Most herbs can be grown from seed. Annuals are easier than perennials**
- . Sow seeds indoors in late winter**
- . The finer the seed, the shallower it should be sown**
- . Mix small seeds with sand for even sowing**
- . Basil, cilantro, dill and parsley can be sown directly into the garden**
- . Transplant seedlings when soil has warmed**



DILL



Dill! So Easy And Gorgeous

- Dill weed is an annual, self-seeding plant with feathery green leaves. It is very easy to grow
- Dill seeds should be sown directly into the garden (dill puts down a taproot, so like carrots, it doesn't transplant well) about ¼-inch deep and 18 inches apart
- After 10 to 14 days, young dill plants should appear in the soil. Wait another 10 to 14 days, then thin the plants

Parsley - Flat and Curly Leaf



The amazing benefits of Parsley

- Flat leaf favored for cooking
- Curly is edible and ornamental
- OK in partial shade. Loves rich moist soil
- Can plant seeds indoors and transplant
- Biennial – sometimes harvest in winter
- Rich in iron, Vitamins A and C. Good for digestion
- Attracts pollinators

Cilantro Leaves/Coriander Seeds



- Often confused with parsley...until you taste cilantro leaves
- Pungent flavor used in Mexican or Asian recipes
- Directly sow seeds after last frost date.
- Keep evenly moist.
- Trim with scissors.

Coriander Seed - Spice



Coriander seeds have a mild lemony flavor that works best with other spices, like chili pepper and cumin. They are very rich in nutrients that are essential to the human body. Because of this, coriander has a multitude of health benefits.



Basil

- Intensely aromatic. Pollinator plant
- Loves warmth and sunshine
- Annual. Directly sow after soil has warmed
- Prefers rich soil
- Benefits from grooming! Pinch emerging tops and flowers promotes bushy plants
- Many, many, many varieties!



- **Basic Italian Large Leaf**
- **Genovese**
- **Red Freddy**
- **Thai Basil**
- **Eleonora**
- **Dolce**
- **Lemon**
- **African Blue**
- **Osmin Purple**

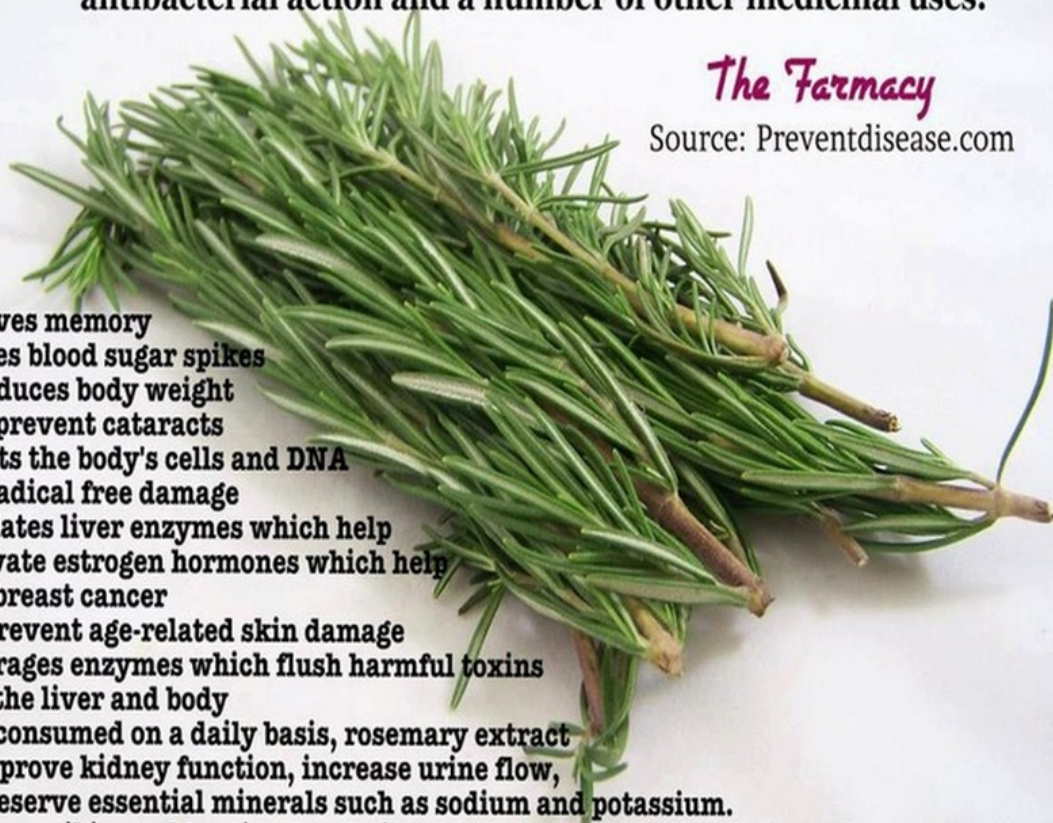
Grow your own medicine:

ROSEMARY

Rosemary is a perennial herb containing 19 chemicals with antibacterial action and a number of other medicinal uses.

The Farmacy

Source: Preventdisease.com



- Improves memory
- Reduces blood sugar spikes and reduces body weight
- Helps prevent cataracts
- Protects the body's cells and DNA from radical free damage
- Stimulates liver enzymes which help inactivate estrogen hormones which help cause breast cancer
- Help prevent age-related skin damage
- Encourages enzymes which flush harmful toxins out of the liver and body
- When consumed on a daily basis, rosemary extract can improve kidney function, increase urine flow, and preserve essential minerals such as sodium and potassium.
- Rosemary oil is used to stimulate hair growth, boost mental activity, relieve respiratory problems and pain, and relieve disorders in menstrual cycle, menstrual cramps, peptic ulcers, urine flow, prostate, gall bladder, intestine, sperm mobility, leukemia, and kidney stones.

Considered a perennial.

BUT: Often does not survive Ohio winters.

Think Mediterranean

Rosemary

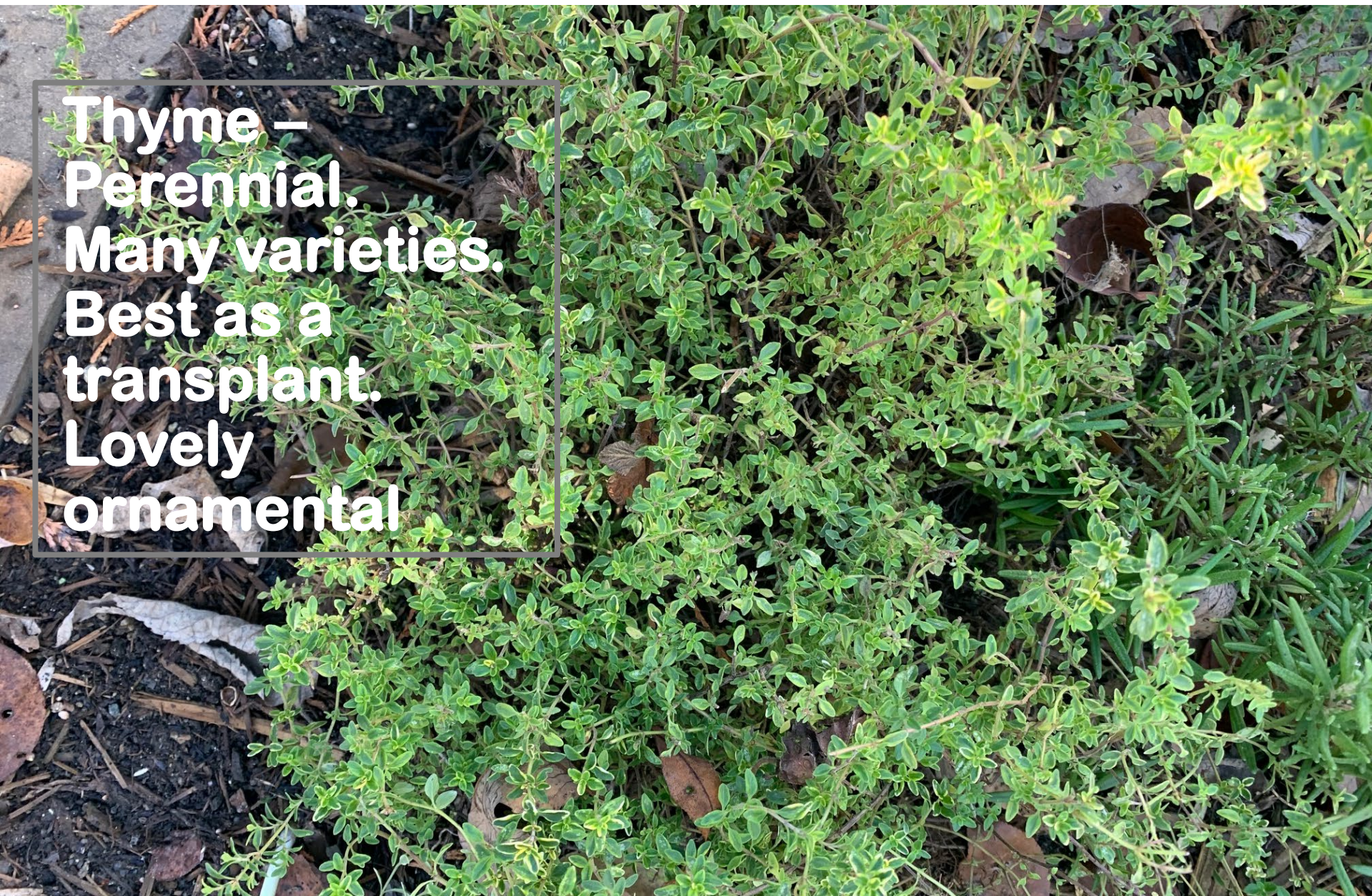


- **My favorite herb!**
- **Loves sun**
- **Best as transplant**
- **Difficult to survive Ohio winters – tender perennial**
- **Can bring indoors in a pot if you have enough humidity**
- **So many varieties!**



**6 foot tall perennial
Rosemary in Texas.
January 2021**

**Thyme –
Perennial.
Many varieties.
Best as a
transplant.
Lovely
ornamental**





Chives

- **Onion family**
- **Hardy Perennial**
- **Earliest herb to appear in the spring**
- **Easy to grow**
- **Good in containers**
- **Seeds germinate in 2-3 weeks in moist soil**

A close-up photograph of fresh mint leaves, likely spearmint, resting on a rustic wooden surface. The leaves are vibrant green with serrated edges and a prominent vein pattern. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**MINTS:Peppermint, Mojito,
Spearmint, Chocolate,
Kentucky Colonel,
Corsican, Apple**

Where to grow mints?

- All mints thrive in cool moist spots in partial shade. In general, mints tolerate a wide range of conditions, and can also be grown in full sun.
- Mint grows all year round and are perennial.
- They are fast-growing, extending their reach along surfaces through a network of runners. **COULD BE INVASIVE.**

Mint has been used as a culinary, medicinal and ornamental herb from the time of the Egyptians

According to the *Mint Industry Research Council*, is one of the “very few remaining all-natural flavorings.” It is found in gum, candy, toothpaste, mouthwash and pharmaceuticals

The more than 3,000 species in the mint family **TYPICALLY HAVE SQUARE STEMS** and contain essential oils

A close-up photograph of sage leaves, showing their characteristic silvery-green, textured surface and serrated edges. The leaves are arranged in opposite pairs along a stem. A thin, light-colored rectangular border is superimposed on the right side of the image, containing the word "SAGE" in white capital letters.

SAGE

Sage

- **Perennial. Many beautiful varieties**
- **Can start indoors 6-8 weeks before transplanting**
- **Drought tolerant**
- **Plants can become woody, so consider replacing after 3 years**
- **Wonderfully fragrant purple spikes**
- **Grows 12-24 inches**

- **Sage has become one of the most commonly used herbs for medicinal purposes due to its multiple properties which have been used and studied for centuries. It is especially noted for its anti-inflammatory effects.**
- **NOT JUST THANKSGIVING DRESSING**
- **I mix dried sage leaves with loose black or green tea. Wonderful fragrance.**



- **Lavender is a tender perennial in central Ohio.**
- **Garden display, culinary and aromatherapy.**
- **Does not grow well from seeds outside. Plant inside 8-10 weeks prior.**
- **Sun, warmth and well drained soil.**
- **Deer resistant!**
- **Pollinator.**
- **8-24 inch spikes. MANY varieties.**

Aromatic Herbs

- . Pleasant smelling flowers or foliage**
- . Essential Oils can be used to produce perfumes, toilet water and other scents**
- . Historical use of aromatics**
- . When dried, often retain aroma for long periods**
- . Examples: Lavender, mint, marjoram, rosemary and basil**



Oregano

- Herbs in the oregano family have been grown here since colonial times
- Their popularity soared when American soldiers returned from Europe with a taste for pizza and Italian sauces

- **Oregano is a hardy woody perennial**
- **Greek Oregano is the most flavorful for chef gardeners. Beware other varieties**
- **Transplants are best. Can sow seeds indoors 6-8 weeks before planting in sunny garden or pots**
- **Pinch stem to keep compact**

OREGANO CAN
BE INVASIVE



Tarragon



There are two distinct types of tarragon. The popular cooking herb is German or French Tarragon. The other, Russian Tarragon is not as tasty, but beautiful in the garden

Tarragon is best grown from cuttings or nursery purchase



- Tarragon is a hardy perennial best grown in well drained loamy soil that is rich in compost with a pH level from 6.3-7.5
- It does not like heavy soils, so add sand and well-rotted manure
- Excellent flavored vinegar

- **Use BASIC SEED STARTING MIX when starting herbs from seed and then transfer the seedlings into organic potting mix made for vegetables when they have a few leaves.**
- **It is important to use sterile potting mix and not garden soil or leftover soil from other plants if you want to avoid transmitting or transferring pests or diseases.**
-

Herbs In Pots – Indoors Or Outside

- It is important that **containers** are **spacious** so the roots grow well. It's advisable that the pots are at least **10-12"** wide and that the cuttings are placed in rows with a separation between them of about 8"
- The soil that you use should be well prepared for the plant to receive potassium, nitrogen and phosphorus. These are needed so it can grow strong

Try cuttings or dividing mature plants

DIVIDE plants in early spring or early fall
Tarragon, chives and mint

Take stem CUTTINGS from healthy, non-woody shoots cut below a leaf node. Can use a rooting hormone

Lavender, scented geraniums, rosemary, hyssop, sage

Cuttings

1. Dig up the roots. This is typically done when plants are dormant.
2. Snip roots that are about the width and length of a school pencil. You want your cuttings to be 3-6 inches long.
3. Place your cuttings in a seedling flat filled with potting soil. You want to lay them horizontally in little trenches that 1/2 inch deep.
4. Mist them with a water bottle and cover with a plastic lid or a sheet of glass. You want them to maintain humidity.
5. Check on them every day to see if they have developed sprouts.
6. Once they sprout you can remove the cover but keep moist.
7. Transplant when they have made several sprouts and have root hairs growing.

Growing Herbs Indoors

Herbs really do prefer life outdoors and most like a lot of sun. But, with good lights and patience you can grow several varieties indoors

South-facing windows have the brightest light and most hours of sun during the short, cool winter days. Good choices for these locations are rosemary, thyme, basil, bay laurel and oregano

East- and west-facing windows receive bright sun for about six hours in the morning or afternoon, but east windows remain cooler.

Good choices include mint, parsley, chives and chervil, which thrive with less intense light and prefer the cooler temperatures.

Under grow lights

Full-spectrum grow lights are ideal for all herbs. Place plants within a foot of the bulbs or follow the instructions provided with your lights

Start by having the lights on for 12 to 16 hours a day for bright-light plants and adjust as necessary



Success Indoors

Plant rosemary, thyme, oregano and bay laurel in a blend of equal parts of cactus mix and regular potting soil

Let the soil dry a bit before watering. Other herbs grow well in regular potting soil

Keep soil slightly moist, but not soggy

Fertilize once or twice a month with a liquid houseplant fertilizer

Harvesting for Preserving

- . Harvest in the morning on a dry, sunny day, after dew has dried
- . Harvest leaves just before flowers bloom
Fragrances that attract pollinators will be at their peak
- . Harvest flowers before blooms fully open (except lavender)
- . Gather seeds as color changes from green to brown/gray

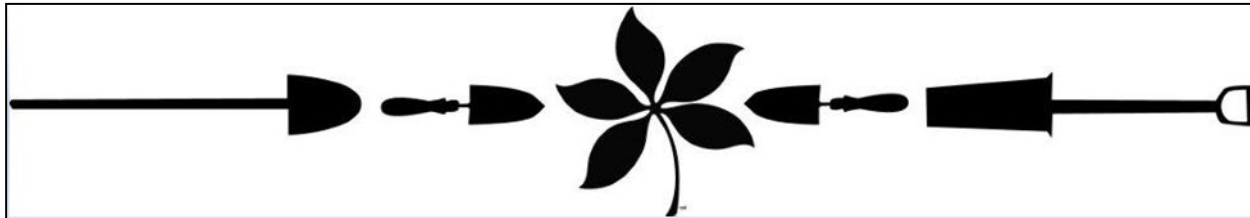
Preserving Herbs

- Herb flavors and aromas are volatile
- Store herbs as soon as possible
- Can freeze herbs in airtight containers keep flavor 6-8 months
- Freezing methods retain more flavor
- Drying is the most popular method but can lose some aroma

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MASTER GARDENER?

The Ohio State University
Extension Master Gardener
Volunteer Program
provides **intensive training in
horticulture** to interested Ohio
residents, who then volunteer their
time assisting with educational
programs and activities for Ohio
residents through their local OSU
Extension county office.

What Questions do you have?



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