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**Organic Gardening**

As the season of gardening is upon us, many of you may be starting to think about caring for your landscape. When looking to hire a maintenance company, it can be beneficial to seek out *organic* lawn and garden care. This means that the company will not use any chemical inputs or pesticides, and your property will be cared for in an environmentally responsible manner. Chemicals are not healthy for the environment, or individuals exposed to them. Lawn and garden pesticides can have implications on childhood development, and they are easily transported into homes on clothes and shoes. A short list of organic landscaping professionals in the Hamilton area can be found at the right of this page. If you are caring for your own garden, native flowers and plants may be the best choice because they require less maintenance and are more resilient to Ontario's weather.

**SPRING INTO ACTION**

Spring is a great season to start a healthy change. The weather is ideal for outdoor exercise, locally grown foods are abundant, and community activities are being organized. The question is, where should you start?

**Outdoor Activities**

The Hamilton area has a wealth of hiking trails, public parks and community activities that the whole family can enjoy.

**Canoeing/Boating/Rowing**

- Christie Lake and Valens conservation area
- rent a canoe, paddle boat, hydro-bike or rowboat for the day or per half hour

**Camping**

- Valens, Confederation Park, Fifty Point
- Affordable nightly and weekly rates

**Biking/Hiking**

- An online version of the City of Hamilton's 'Bikeways, Trails and Parks' map can be found at [http://map.hamilton.ca/Static/PDFs/Public%20Works/HamiltonBikeMap-urban\\_2005.pdf](http://map.hamilton.ca/Static/PDFs/Public%20Works/HamiltonBikeMap-urban_2005.pdf)

**In-line Skating**

- Bayfront and Pier 4 park recreational trails (3.5 km long)
- Breezeway Trail, extends from Beach Boulevard to Gray's Road (3 km long)

There are many recreational courses offered by the City of Hamilton that can be searched on the City's website at <http://rec.hamilton.ca/econnect/Activities/Activities.asp?SCheck=840741467&SDT=39196.6011092593>.

**Local Organic Lawn Care Professionals**

**BlackLoam Landscapes**

James D. Guse  
3-102 West Ave. S.  
Hamilton, Ontario L8N 2S3  
(905) 525-0737  
[blackloamlandscapes@canada.com](mailto:blackloamlandscapes@canada.com)

**Creative Organics**

Paul Fiorentino/Greg Burghall  
905-319-7664  
905-975-9143  
3472 Hannibal Rd.  
Burlington, ON L7M 1Z6

**Environmental Factor**

905-297-0518  
17 Pinehurst Dr.  
Hamilton, ON L8T 4J1  
[hamilton@environmentalfactor.com](mailto:hamilton@environmentalfactor.com)

**Healthy Lawn Care Services**

905-648-9996  
1-800-311-1100  
992 Garner Rd. East R.R. #1  
Ancaster, ON L9G 3K9

**Natural Bug Repellents**

- **Citronella and Lavender**
  - Protects for 30 mins
  - Safe for children over 2 yrs of age and pregnant women.
- **Skin-So-Soft** by Avon
  - Contains Citronella oil
- **Neem**
  - Natural plant extract that can repel for up to 12 hours
  - Active ingredient is azadirachtin which repels and disrupts insect growth and reproduction
  - Both Neem oil and azadirachtin are safe and effective
- **Supplement**
  - Ingestion of garlic and vitamin B1 both help to repel insects



### South Western Bean Salad

*A colourful and flavourful bean salad that makes a great accompaniment to burgers, fajitas or sandwiches*

**Salad:**

- 1 cup fresh/frozen cut green beans
- 1 19oz can of each chickpeas or navy beans, black beans, and red kidney beans, drained and well-rinsed
- 1 12oz can whole kernel corn, drained
- 1 cup diced red onion
- 1 cup diced red bell pepper
- ½ chopped fresh cilantro

**Dressing:**

- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup cider vinegar
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- ¼ tsp sea salt
- ¼ tsp fresh ground black pepper

Combine all salad ingredients in a large bowl. Mix well.

Whisk dressing ingredients together. Pour over salad mixture. Stir gently. Cover and refrigerate overnight for best flavour.

Makes 8 servings

### Enjoy the Sun

Sun exposure has become a hot topic over the past decade. Although prolonged and excessive sun exposure can have detrimental effects, some sun exposure is beneficial. When we expose our skin to the sun, vitamin D is produced. By providing our bodies with vitamin D, we are aiding the absorption of calcium and phosphorous. This in turn promotes bone strength and prevents bone degradation. The right balance of sun exposure can be achieved by spending short periods of time outside in the afternoon when the sun is not at it's hottest. For times when prolonged sun exposure is

unavoidable, sunscreen with a SPF rating of at least 30 or 45 is advised, with appropriate reapplication. Most commercial sunscreens are made from chemicals that are absorbed into the skin, which can potentially cause skin irritation and undesirable health effects. Sunscreens that contain strong natural products, such as zinc oxide and titanium dioxide are not absorbed into the skin but sit on the surface and deflect the sun. Some natural sunscreen products are:

- Aubrey Organics Green Tea Sunblock for Children SPF 25, and other Aubrey Organics sunblock products
- Kiss My Face Sun Screen SPF 30 with Oat Protein Complex

### Local and Organic Eating

Warmer months facilitate the healthy lifestyle choice of organic and local eating. Although organic eating can often be expensive in commercial grocery stores, spring and summer offer a pristine time to explore your community's foods and support stores supplied by organic or local food producers. A few examples include:

- Cumbræ's** (Dundas) – naturally raised meats
- Hamilton Farmer's Market** (Jackson's square) – a variety of locally grown and organic foods
- Plan B Organic Farm** (Millgrove) – local organic farming
- Simpler Thyme** (Hwy 6 in Hamilton) – organic grown vegetables and herbs

It is important to remember that not all locally grown food is organic, and not all organic food is locally grown. Locally grown food has many definitions, most of which center around the distance the food has traveled. This factor impacts the effect that the production of the food has on the environment. It may be hard to

find out how far the food has actually traveled, so the best way to shop locally is to seek out food produced by local organic farmers. Organic food is classified as food that is produced with minimal environmental impact, and is not subjected to chemicals including pesticides and hormones. If you are in doubt about a food product, clarify with a store manager or better yet contact the source of the food.

It may not always be possible to purchase organic foods, but some choices may be more important than others. This is because an excess of pesticides is applied to certain fruits and vegetables.

<b>HIGHEST levels of pesticides</b>	<b>LOWEST levels of pesticides</b>
Strawberries	Avocados
Bell peppers	Corn
Spinach	Onions
Cherries (US)	Sweet Potatoes
Peaches	Cauliflower
Cantaloupe (Mexico)	Brussels
Celery	Sprouts
Apples	
Apricots	
Green Beans	
Grapes (Chile)	
Cucumbers	
Pears	
Winter Squash (US)	

DISCLAIMER: The products listed in this newsletter are examples, and Naturopathic Perspectives does not financially benefit from listing these companies and products.

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