



## Natural Cosmetics from the Kitchen

When we visit second-hand stores, one of our favorite places to search is the old books section. Recently we found a 1981 Reader's Digest book, "Back to Basics." There were directions on building cabins, digging a well, installing a wood-burning stove, building a root cellar as well as all kinds of recipes for fruit and vegetables. One of my favorite sections is Natural Cosmetics from the Kitchen.

Homemade cosmetics take time to prepare and may not last too long, but you know exactly what ingredients are in each one. When making cosmetics at home, be sure equipment is clean. Also, to avoid the possibility of an allergic reaction, test a small quantity of any unfamiliar substance on the underside of your arm, and wait 24-48 hours to see if a rash develops. Complexion health depends on many factors including diet, age, exercise, what you eat and how much you sleep. Some skin conditions may require a doctor's care, but there are some simple topical treatments to cleanse, stimulate and nourish the skin and help preserve a youthful look.

There are fruits and vegetables for every skin type. Highly acid fruit like, lemons, concord grapes, limes, grapefruit, strawberries and apples can be applied in moderation and used only on oily skin. Tomatoes, peaches, apricots and some varieties of grapes (Malaga, Tokay and seedless) are slightly more acid than the skin surface and are beneficial for most skin types. Neutral ones like bananas, sweet pepper, persimmon, cucumber and watermelon also have health benefits. The least acid ones, like carrots, iceberg lettuce, honeydew melon, avocados, and cantaloupe are good for moisturizing dry skin.

Any of these fruits or vegetables can be applied directly to the face, for example a slice of tomato or cucumber can be used as a cleanser. Making facial masks can include binders with the fruit to make a natural facial to nourish and stimulate your skin. For dry skin, use lanolin, sour cream, honey or egg yolks as binders. If you have it, add a few drops of liquid lecithin as a moisturizer. For oily skin, yogurt and egg whites make a drying binder. If you have normal skin, you can use any of these as well as whole eggs and whole milk in addition.

Before using a mask, thoroughly cleanse your face. Smooth the mask on gently, avoiding the area immediately around ... [Read More](#)

### *Ask Billie*

Q. Are Sun Ovens used in other countries?

A. Yes. Sun Ovens® have been placed in over 150 countries in the world. They are especially useful in developing countries where deforestation has developed a crisis for finding wood and charcoal for cooking. This alternative cooking method not only reduces the demand on forests, it also reduces the health hazards created by cooking on an open fire and improves women's life conditions.

In these countries much time is spent searching for wood and many hours are spent stirring food as it is cooked on those fires. No stirring required with a Sun Oven® frees up time for income generation and other more productive activities.

What is your Most Burning Question about Food Storage or Emergency Preparedness?

Send your questions to [editor@sunoven.com](mailto:editor@sunoven.com)



Billie Nicholson



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## Home Grown Food Summit: Water Purification for Better Health

Glen Meder

### The Hydrologic Cycle.



*Glen Meder, pure water specialist extraordinaire, gave a presentation during the 2017 [Home Grown Food Summit](#) on drinking water purity. Here are notes I took from his presentation.*

Pure drinking water protects your family from water contamination. We live in an increasingly toxic world mostly because of population increases. Our bodies have not adapted to contaminated water.

When you drink water, it goes straight through your stomach to the small intestine and gets absorbed into the bloodstream. water makes up ever cell in your body - it transports all nutrients, is the basis of trillions of

chemical reactions in the body. It picks up toxins in the body and is crucial to regenerating new cells. Water is the key to life and needs to be clean fresh water. It comes from the ocean as undrinkable and must work through the hydrologic cycle of evaporation, condensation and precipitation. Rain makes fresh water.

Unfortunately, we have overloaded our environment with toxins and the “fresh” water falling from rain hits the ground already contaminated. We know about water emergencies like hurricanes and flooding which can interrupt commercial water services. There have also been not so obvious contaminations like river contaminations due to chemical spills which make water unusable. Cancer clusters may be the result of some contamination. There were 3,885 chemical spills in 2013 reported, wonder how many spills went unreported?

How can you treat contaminated water? The Red Cross recommends:

1. boiling - pure water leaves as steam, leavings become more concentrated
2. chlorination - adding bleach to water is an effective way to kill bacteria
3. distillation - the most effective way to purify water

Methods not recommended

1. filters of any kind
2. ozone
3. ultraviolet light
4. other chemicals

You don't know if water is contaminated. There are different types of contaminants that will only be concentrated by boiling water: particulates, inorganic contaminants, radioactive metals, organic contaminants. Microbiological - living organisms will be killed by boiling water, but not removed.

Distillation evaporates water and then condenses the purified molecules removing all contaminants. For a follow up to Glen's presentation visit [www.mydrinkingwater.com](http://www.mydrinkingwater.com).

## Materia Medica - Ginger



**Botanical Name:** *Zingiber officinale*

**Common Name:** Ginger root

**Family:** Zingiberaceae

**Ayurvedic/TCM Name:** shringara/vishwabhesaj

**Parts Used:** Rhizome

**Native Region:** Asia

**Geographic Distribution:** India, West Indies, Jamaica, Africa, Florida & US, Spain

**Botanical Description:** long, slender leaves grow along 2-4' stalks arising from creeping rhizomes, silvery brown skin & knobby underground

**Harvesting Guidelines:** Rhizomes are useful part. Dig at end of growing season if ground freezes during winter otherwise dig when needed

**Constituents:** Volatile oils

- Uses:**
1. Boiled slices of rhizome in water are good for colds, coughs, flu and hangovers. Chinese say power to strengthen lungs & kidneys. Helps break down organ toxins and cleanses the lymphatic system.
  2. Compresses to relieve sinus congestion, kidney problems, menstrual cramps, arthritis, headaches & spinal pain. Combine ginger oil and eucalyptus oil to boost immunity and improve breathing.
  3. Stimulates circulation - Garlic, ginger and onions all have anti-blood clotting ability. Together they protect against heart attack and stroke.
  4. Carminative (rids stomach & intestines of gas); aids fatty food digestion
  5. Relieves nausea, motion sickness & vertigo
  6. Culinary flavoring
  7. Ginger candy
  8. Chew to relieve sore throat
  9. Add a couple of drops of Ginger oil to your drinking water to kill staph and strep bacteria and speed healing.

### **Best Ways to Use:**

Raw ginger - put raw sliced ginger (one to two inch piece) in smoothies or in homemade vegetable juice; grated ginger root can be added to many Asian recipes.

Ginger Essential oil - 2-3 drops of essential oil is the recommended therapeutic dose; can be rubbed on topically with carrier oil (refined coconut, sweet almond) on an area of pain.

Ginger Tea - have 1 cup two or three times daily to reduce inflammation. Add raw honey & lemon to taste.

Ginger Powder - Use in cooking or take a supplement capsule dose of 1,000 milligrams daily.

### References

## Old-Fashioned Drinks to Slake All Thirsts

“Back to Basics” Reader’s Digest

Nearly any garden fruit or vegetable can yield juice to make tasty drinks. Grains, flowers, roots and bark can also add flavoring. Want a little fizz? Add bicarbonate of soda with tartaric acid, carbonated water or use water kefir grains to stimulate a little fermentation.

Begin with fully ripe fruit for the most intense flavor. Clean and peel the fruit and cut larger produce into smaller pieces. For fibrous vegetables, like celery, carrots and beets, it helps to cook them on a low heat for a few minutes to help with the extraction. Next step is to reduce the produce to a pulp. Put the pulp in a jelly bag, colander or cheesecloth and place over a clean bowl to drain for several hours. To get the most juice, some pulp may require squeezing through a press. Tighten the press every half hour.

Many fruit juices can be frozen into a frappe. Simply freeze the mixture solid, then reduce it to a slush by placing it in a blender. A little unflavored gelatin can thicken the mixture. Extra honey or sugar can help make a more intense flavor.

Beverages that have been simmered a few minutes and bottled in sterile, tightly capped containers will keep well in the refrigerator. To freeze, pour into a clean, plastic bottle (4/5 full - need space for expansion during the freezing process), cap and store at 0°F. For long-term storage (up to a year), can or freeze the drinks. Vegetable drinks except those based on tomatoes, should be canned by the pressure cooker method.

In years gone by, American inventiveness created beverages to satisfy some mighty powerful thirsts. Some are still popular today and others have become obsolete, but they all are delicious and healthful.

**Old-Fashioned Lemonade** - The secret to making old-fashioned lemonade is to extract the aromatic lemon oil from the rinds, either by soaking them in a sugar solution or by steeping the rinds in boiling water.

Ingredients:

- 4 lemons
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 quart (32 oz) water

Directions: Peel the rinds from lemons and put them in a bowl with the sugar for about 30 minutes. Boil the water and pour over the sugar and rinds. When water is cool, remove rinds. Squeeze the lemons, strain the juice, and add it to the mixture. Chill until ice-cold. Makes 1 quart.

**Mint Punch** - James Monroe, our fourth President, is said to have come up with this icy, clean-tasting concoction.

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup water
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup fresh mint leaves
- 1 cup grape juice
- 1 cup orange juice
- 1 cup lime juice

Directions: Warm the water until it just boils, turn off the heat and add sugar and most of the mint leaves (save some for garnish). Stir mixture until sugar dissolves. When cooled, strain out the mint; add the other juices. Refrigerate. Serve over ice with a mint leaf on top.

**Switchel** - Switchel is a refreshing, energy-boosting drinks used by farm hands to slake their thirsts during the heavy work of harvest season. Before refrigerators or styrofoam coolers, jugs of switchel were kept cool in the springhouse or by hanging them in a well.

Ingredients:

[More Recipes](#)

## Prepper World Summit 4: Surviving an Urban Conflict



*During the recent Prepper World Summit 4, speaker [Selco](#) discussed what he needed to do to survive the 1990's year long Yugoslavian conflict in a city that was surrounded by an enemy army. The former Soviet controlled country was composed of several ethnic groups, each of whom wanted their own country and autonomy. The original Yugoslavian Army opposed their resistance resulting in a real live survival situation where there was no electricity, running water, food and little shelter.*

In a collapse, people have the misconception that they will clearly notice and recognize the moment where things go bad. In addition, it is hard for people to understand that things can go bad really fast and last a really long time. In short term conflicts, most folks believe that order will be restored quickly and those people who acted badly will be captured and punished for their mid-deeds. It is a real shock when they realize that there is no sense of law and that they won't be punished. There are lots of bad people out there and when they realize there will be no repercussions for their actions, all the rules change and lawlessness prevails. It is also important to recognize that in desperate situations, even good people will do bad things to survive.

Many people deny the situation at first. In short term disasters, people act nice and help one another. But when folks realize there are not enough resources, things change and everyone needs to get tough.

Top things to do to survive

- people think they need to be big and strong; actually you need to be small;
- keep a low profile;
- stay hidden and safe;
- go out only to get the most needed things: water and food for today
- humble; don't be a target
- main problem will be other people all looking for the same scarce resources
- bartering for resources is a most dangerous situation during a collapse; you can be scammed, hurt or worse. You don't really know if the other party will meet their end of the deal.

Criminal organizations already exist; control is the game, they will try to take the city or part of it. It is important to get to be part of a group because it gives strength to divide tasks and provide security. It is almost impossible to survive as an individual.

Day to day in a collapse, when services are down, life becomes time consuming. Everything will take longer to get. For example, obtaining water, you will need a couple of hours to forage roof tops, wells, the river. And all the time you must be vigilant that a sniper doesn't shoot you. If you need fire you have to look for junk to burn. Keep in mind that using fire and the resulting smoke can be frightening and draw attention to you. Food has to be acquired through channels by trade. [Read More](#)

## **Making Ghee in a Sun Oven®**

Off Grid with Doug & Stacy



Off Grid with Doug & Stacy

In 2010, Doug and Stacy decided to leave the comforts of city life and travel back in time to a more sustainable and minimalist approach to life.

Thinking more and more about sustainability, availability, cost to operate, and a few other considerations, they decided to go off-grid and return to the Little House on the Prairie days with lanterns, a wood burning cook stove, a gravity fed cistern, and an ice box!

### Making Ghee in a Sun Oven®

Using a Sun Oven® is perfect for an off grid life-style. In one of their videos, Stacy shows how to make “ghee” (clarified butter) using their All American Sun Oven. She set up her Sun Oven® at a 90° angle to the sun so that the oven would warm up to 250°F but not get too hot. Sitting in the warm oven, the butter melted and milk solids separated from the whole milk butter obtained from grass-fed cows.. It took about 1 1/2 hours to melt the butter and allow the solids to settle out. She left it set up for another 30 minutes to allow the solids to toast and impart a nutty flavor.

The next step was to filter the butter fat from the milk solids. Ghee can be stored unrefrigerated, but if you want it to solidify and last longer, refrigerate it. Always store it in an air-tight dark container.

Facts to know about Ghee:

1. Ghee has a high smoke point. You can cook and fry with ghee and it will not breakdown into free radicals like other oils.
2. Ghee does not affect people with a dairy or casein intolerant because the milk solids and impurities have been removed taking away the allergens.
3. It is rich in oil soluble vitamins A and E as well as K2 (helps mineralize bones) and CLA (conjugated linoleic acid) - an antioxidant with anti-viral properties.
4. Ghee is rich in medium chain fatty acids which can be absorbed by the liver directly and burned as energy.
5. It will improve digestion and immune strength. Ghee stimulates the secretion of gastric acid, aiding the digestive process. It also contains butyric acid, a short chain detoxifier that improves colon health, supports healthy insulin levels and is an anti-inflammatant.



Off Grid with Doug & Stacy

Visit Stacy & Doug on their YouTube channel to learn more about their off grid life-style.

[Off Grid with Doug & Stacy.](#)

### References

<https://draxe.com/ghee-benefits/>

<http://www.care2.com/greenliving/15-amazing-benefits-of-ghee.html>

## Solar Blueberry Coconut Muffins from our Solar Chef



*Quick breads can be made in much less time than yeast breads. the leavenings used raise the bread after it goes in the oven. Sun-baked Blueberry Muffins are always a welcome treat.*

### Ingredients

2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 tablespoon baking powder  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
1/2 cup sugar  
2 large eggs, at room temperature, lightly beaten  
1 cup buttermilk, at room temperature  
6 tablespoons coconut oil, melted and cooled  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 cup frozen blueberries  
2 tablespoons coconut flakes  
powdered sugar (optional)

### Directions

Preheat Sun Oven®; line 2 6-cup muffin tins with paper or silicone liners.

In a large bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, and salt. Stir in the sugar. In a medium bowl, whisk together the eggs, buttermilk, coconut oil, and vanilla. Make a well in the flour mixture. Pour the liquid ingredients into the well and add the blueberries. Stir until the flour mixture is just moistened; it should be lumpy. Spoon the batter into the prepared muffin tins. Sprinkle some coconut flakes over each muffin. Bake in the Sun Oven for 30 to 40 minutes. Cool muffins in pans for 5 minutes then turn out onto racks to cool completely. Dust with powdered sugar just before serving.

Makes 12 muffins.

## Raising Livestock - An Ounce of Cleanliness is Worth a Pound of Cure



[Wikimedia.org](http://www.wikimedia.org)

Reader's Digest "Back to Basics"

Raising livestock is an every day affair. It may only take a few minutes a day, but you can never skip a day. Cleanliness is the single biggest contributor to livestock health. Feeding and shelter requirements vary from one animal type to another, but they all require good sanitation to stay in the best health.

Before purchasing any animals, check with local authorities to make sure they are permitted in your area. We learned that we

can only have 8 chickens in our area and no roosters. Determine an estimate of how much food will be required and if you have the space to grow some of it or will you need to purchase it and determine some sources.

Planning is the beginning of successfully handling livestock. Be sure the feeding and watering equipment is protected from contamination and the shelter is easy to clean. If you have pasture area, it should be free of boggy areas, poisonous weeds and dangerous debris. Use fencing to contain and protect your animals and traps to protect them from predators. Keep feeding and watering equipment clean daily. Make sure they have dry bedding and check them daily for signs of trouble.

Once or twice a year thoroughly scrub and disinfect your animal's shelter. Haul out all old bedding to the compost heap and replace it with some that is clean, new and dry. Take all movable equipment outside, wash it thoroughly and let it dry in the sun. Sunlight is an excellent disinfectant. Scrub the inside of the house with a stiff bristled brush to remove caked on dirt, then go over everything again with a disinfectant formulated for use with livestock. Follow the directions on the disinfectant and allow plenty of drying time before reintroducing animals back inside. Do this any time an infectious outbreak occurs or before bringing a new animal into the shelter. If you buy a new animal, keep it quarantined until you are sure it is healthy. Some farmers pen the new animal with a member of the existing herd to be sure the new animal isn't a symptom-free disease carrier. If they are, then only a single animal is lost and not the entire group. If you take an animal out to a show, isolate it for a while upon return before introducing it back.

Remember: a clean environment is the best way to guarantee healthy, profitable and attractive livestock.



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