



January 2012

The Good Herb

A monthly newsletter with ideas for using the bounty of the garden!

Grand Shire Farm
9881 Summit Ave. NE,
Rockford, MI 49341
616-866-1963 or
connie@grandshirefarm.com
Website: www.grandshirefarm.com

Fennel

Fennel is one of several licorice flavor herbs. The green fennel, or Florence fennel grows easily from seed and the entire plant is useful in cooking. The leaves, seeds, and root or bulb all have a wonderful flavor! The other type of fennel is the Bronze fennel, which is a perennial and does not form a bulb. Fennel grows to 5 feet tall and looks very similar to dill, but has a much different flavor. It is a great additional to fish or vegetable dishes, where either the leaves or the seeds can be used. The fennel bulb can be roasted, or cut up and used fresh in salads.

In colonial times fennel was not only used for cooking, but also as an eye wash. A mild infusion of fennel leaves and/or seeds with water was felt to improve eye strength and relieve tired eyes. Here is an interesting quote from Longfellow:

*Above the lower plants it towers,
The fennel with it's yellow flowers,
And in an earlier age then ours,
Was gifted with the wondrous powers,
Lost vision to restore.*

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Other Uses for Fennel

Leaves:

Chop into salads and soups

A nice addition along with sliced cucumbers for an herbal ice water.

Use in facial steams for a deep cleaning.

Seeds:

Add to homemade bread or cookies

Add as a topping to cheese pizza

Chew to sweeten the breath

Make into a tea to suppress the appetite or to ease indigestion.

**As with all herbs, do not use fennel in excessive doses.

Fennel and Apple Slaw

- 1 bulb of fennel, chopped fine
- 2 Tablespoons fennel leaves, chopped
- 2 Granny Smith apples, skin on
- 1 T. lemon juice
- 2 cups grated green cabbage
- 2 red sweet peppers, diced
- 4 green onions, washed and finely chopped
- 1 cup broccoli florets, chopped fine

Dressing:

- 1/4 cup apple cider or apple juice
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1 Tablespoon honey
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly grated black pepper



Cut the apples into bite size pieces and place in a bowl. Stir well with lemon juice to prevent apples from browning. After 2 minutes, drain any remaining lemon juice. Add remaining vegetables to the bowl. Mix the dressing in a separate bowl and gently fold into the slaw. Refrigerate 2 hours for flavors to blend. Garnish with additional fennel leaves.

If you're like me, about this time of year your hands start to get very dry. Try this simple rinse - if you don't have the herbs at home they can be purchased at most health food stores. Another source I often use is www.mountainroseherbs.com.

Herbal Rinse for Chapped Hands

Bring 2 cups of water to a boil. In a separate heat resistant bowl add the following:

- 2 Tablespoons Fennel seeds
- 2 Tablespoons dried Comfrey leaves
- 2 Tablespoons Chamomile flowers



Pour the boiling water over the herbs, cover, and let steep for 20 minutes. Strain out the herbs. Store this infusion in the refrigerator. After washing your hands, rinse them in a little of the cold infusion.