

## Gardening Guide

# The Magic of May

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A close-up of the horse chestnut blossoms.

Photos Cynthia Brian



Alpine strawberries are a tangy snack.



Hemlock is growing to twelve feet with beautiful white blooms that are toxic.

### CLEAN and DIRTY PRODUCE

In my opinion, one of the main reasons to grow your own fruits, vegetables, and herbs is to know what is in your soil and on your plants. The USDA discovered 178 different pesticides on sample produce this year with the residue persisting even after the produce was thoroughly washed. Strawberries topped the list with over 20 different pesticides, one of the main reasons I grow my own strawberries and Alpine berries.

The cleanest and therefore the healthiest produce included:

1. Corn
2. Avocadoes
3. Pineapples
4. Cabbage
5. Onions
6. Peas
7. Papaya
8. Asparagus
9. Mangoes
10. Eggplant
11. Honeydew Melons
12. Kiwis
13. Cantaloupe
14. Cauliflower
15. Grapefruit

Pesticide residues are extremely rare on “The Clean 15” so these are items that we can buy and serve without worry.

Known as “the Dirty Dozen” here’s a list of the worst produce culprits you can purchase:

1. Strawberries
2. Spinach
3. Nectarines
4. Apples
5. Peaches
6. Celery
7. Grapes
8. Pears
9. Cherries
10. Tomatoes
11. Bell Peppers
12. Potatoes

Sadly, all of these fruits and vegetables are family favorites and generally considered to be healthy. Luckily we can easily grow all of these and if you don’t want to grow your own, make sure to buy organic.



The fluorescent pink cornflags (*gladiolus communis*) are a favorite deer dinner.