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Have some garden scents

When I plant the garden in the spring I'm very conscious of the rocky soil beneath my knees, the sun on my back — and the blackflies on my arms, by my ears and in my eyes.

When I lift my eyes I can enjoy the sight of sunlit trees dressed in young green ruffled against shadowy hills and the blue sky. Swallows dart across the barn yard, yellow butterflies and goldfinches reflect the brilliant sun and the air is filled with birdsong and the rustle of the breezes coming down the hill.

And then there are those garden smells, some sweet and some pungent. The scent of new mown grass — and new cow manure dumped on the compost pile. Heifers watch me over the fence while I dig, and I can smell their warm, grainy breath and hear their patient munching as they chew their cud.

Even if you have a separate herb garden filled with scented plants that you use in the kitchen or for making sachets, think about putting a few of the annual herbs — basil, dill and summer savory — in the vegetable garden. Pesto is a great culinary invention. This combination of crushed basil, garlic, parmesan cheese and olive oil has become so popular that some seed catalogs offer a dozen varieties of basil from the common lettuce leaf basil to lemon and anise basil to opal basil which has deeply colored purple leaves.

Pat Leuchtman



Between The Rows

Dill will forever remind me of my childhood on the shores of Lake Champlain. I can't quite explain why, but the scent of dill conjures up memories of blue lake, blue sky, green fields and endless summer afternoons. Proust had his madeines and I have dill.

Summer savory is good to grow next to the beans because it is said to help them grow well — and its a reminder to the cook to cook dried beans with a little summer savory to aid digestion.

Savory, dill and basil, like all herbs, require nothing more than an ordinary garden soil that drains well and lots of sun.

Lemon balm is a perennial herb that grows happily in my flower border. The ribbed green leaves are very pretty, the plant is absolutely indestructible, and the slightest touch will fill the air with a sweet, lemony scent.

Little old ladies are supposed to be especially fond of lavender, but I wore lavender cologne when I was in high school and it's still one of my fa-

vorite perfumes. In the garden I prefer the deep purple color of the Hidcote variety. Still it is the scent that is most important and the wonderful thing is that the plant is not only fragrant when it's in bloom, even the foliage and woody stems smell sweet.

I harvest lavender when it is just fully opened, dry it and strip the stems, putting the blossoms in sachets. Sometimes I take several lavender stems, bend the bare part of the stem over the blossoms and weave ribbon around to make a lavender wand that also acts as a sachet.

Clove-scented dianthus and pinks are other favorites of mine. The gray-blue, grassy foliage is a pretty contrast and accent among the greenery of the garden. The fringed flowers in shades of white, pink and salmon are a delight for the eye and nose.

Along with the lilac, honeysuckle is an important fragrant shrub and it's now available in cultivated varieties that grow in a more restrained manner and will not invade the rest of the garden and choke out other plants.

A final thought. If you ever have an opportunity to plant a tree, even on a residential street where many trees find the strains of traffic and car exhausts fatal, consider the linden (*Tilia*) tree. The Littleleaf Lin-

den (*T. cordata*) with its two- to three-inch heart-shaped leaves can grow up to 90 feet tall, but in cultivation will probably not grow much more than half that height. It grows slowly in a pyramidal shape and is very hardy. As far as I'm concerned, the very best reason for cultivating this tree is the strongly fragrant little flowers which bloom in June. Bees love them and so do I.

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I'm always glad when someone opens their garden to the public because it gives all a chance to share another vision, learn about new plants and new techniques. If it benefits a good cause so much the better. Sandra Redemske of 833 Colrain Road, Greenfield, has announced that her prodigious garden which contains fruit trees, blueberries, vegetables and more flowers than you ever heard of, all thriving beside a brook, will be OPEN on Saturday, June 25 from 1-4 P.M. There is no charge but donations are accepted to benefit the New England Learning Center for Women in Transition (NELCWIT) Rape Crisis Program. Sandra's garden is bountiful and beautiful, every plant healthy in a rich healthy soil.



Recorder graphic/Pat Allen

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Gardeners should