



The Environmental Health Association of Quebec

Education * Awareness * Prevention

ECO-JOURNAL

May is Environmental Sensitivities Month

MAY 2011

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Dear friends,

At our last Annual General Meeting, members unanimously voted to recognize the Month of May as Environmental Sensitivities Education and Awareness month in Quebec. In addition, they also voted to declare May 12th as Environmental Sensitivities Day in Quebec. It's time to bring this medical condition to the forefront!

Organizing EHAQ's events for May has been challenging. I thank all those who have contributed towards the organization of the conferences and our walk. I especially thank our extraordinary translator Claude Renaud, our superb graphic artist, Jean-François Desourdy, for the exceptional posters, symbol, banners and other art material, the hard work of our gifted webmaster Judith Richardson, the dedication and talent of our Editor, Alana Vineberg, all our volunteers, friends, supporters and those who endorsed and funded our events, our committed and enthusiastic Board and above all, you, our readers, members and well wishers.

Almost everyday we get pleas for help from people suffering from Environmental Sensitivities. These people have never met one another, yet their stories are all the same. There is some help in other Provinces of Canada for people who suffer from Environmental Sensitivities. Why not in Quebec?

I ask all of you – those who are well and those who have this medical condition, to join us for the march on Saturday, **May 28, 2011** in Montreal.

Most of our members are disabled and unable to walk in this march. Those who are well, come walk with us for education and awareness, and for those who are disabled and silenced by Environmental Sensitivity / Multiple Chemical Sensitivity.

Wear black and yellow:

-Black in solidarity with those who suffer from Environmental Sensitivities / Multiple Chemical Sensitivities

-Yellow, symbolizing the canary, a warning sign and hope for change

Please sign our petition, a copy of which is included with this newsletter. It can also be found on our website.

Sincerely,

Rohini Peris

President

What do canaries have to do with Environmental Sensitivities?

Canaries are the early warning symbol of a coming crisis.

History:

Canaries were regularly used in coal mines as an early warning system. Toxic gases such as carbon monoxide and methane in the mine would kill the birds before affecting the miners. ***They served as both a visual and audible cue for danger.***

It is time to examine the practices of our everyday lives, individual and industrial, and question the many unnecessary products we use and take for granted that may be seriously harmful to our health and the health of our planet.

ES/MSO sufferers are like the canaries. They become sensitive and react adversely to substances or phenomena in their everyday environment at levels tolerated by people who do not have Environmental Sensitivities.

This disability may be invisible, but it is real.

The crisis:

People who do not have Environmental Sensitivity do not react like the canaries. Because they pay no attention, they continue to be exposed to environmental pollutants. As a result, many develop chronic illnesses, which are increasing in frequency.

Illnesses that are related to environmental pollution exposures include cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, neurodegenerative disorders, asthma, allergies, some cancers and new emerging conditions such as chronic fatigue syndrome and fibromyalgia.

Living in an increasingly fragile environment that is being polluted by toxic chemicals will continue to impact the health of an ever increasing number of people.

Together we must look for solutions to protect and restore environmental health.



Report your adverse reactions:

Pesticide Incident Reporting:

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pest/part/protect-proteger/incident/index-eng.php>

Cosmetics Product Ingredient Labeling:

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/iyh-vsv/prod/cosmet_prod-eng.php

Cosmetic adverse reaction reporting:

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/reaction-eng.php>

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IN APPRECIATION:

ASEQ-EHAQ would like to sincerely thank all of our volunteers, contributors, donors and sponsors since its inception in 2004. Due to your generosity, we are able to provide support services and other programs to help people who suffer from environmental sensitivities and educate the public on least toxic strategies to protect human health and the environment.

LIVING WITH ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITIES

I'm a 31-year-old man living on the South Shore of Montreal. At the age of 28, while I was a university student as well as working part time, I developed an illness that changed my life.



That year, I suddenly became extremely sensitive to low levels of exposure to several chemical products commonly used in daily life. Detergent on people's clothes, perfume, deodorant, shampoo, second-hand smoke, carbon monoxide from cars, ink from books, treated wood, swiftly made me very ill, and that list has considerably grown over the months. It turns out that my body became intolerant to the chemicals contained in those products.

I now suffer from neurological problems, which are really annoying as well as painful. To be able to get some relief, I have to live in an environment that is completely free of any chemical products. When exposed to these products, I suffer from extreme fatigue if the exposure is over a long period of time, or if it is one large exposure. I also have difficulty breathing comfortably. It is now completely impossible for me to be in the home of people who use these products.

The illness that I developed is called Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) or Environmental Sensitivity (ES). It has confined me to a life of isolation. Unless friends and family respect my health condition and use products that I can tolerate, it is impossible for me to spend time with them in a closed environment (home, car, bus, etc), since the chemicals present in all the products they use (perfumes, cosmetic products, soap, etc) cause me to have disabling, painful symptoms.

I have to wear a mask when I leave my house, and especially in places such as restaurants or waiting rooms.

Furthermore, I have developed electromagnetic radiation sensitivity and now react to the radiation emitted from

several electronic appliances such as televisions, computer screens, telephones, cellular telephones, etc. This sensitivity has sunk me into the most profound pain and distress for several months until it calmed down to a more tolerable level.

With the progression and an increase in sensitivities, I also developed intolerance to medication, to certain foods, to sounds and skin contact with certain chemicals. I lost over 40 pounds because of this illness but also because of inadequate treatments given to me by health professionals due to a lack of understanding surrounding this illness. Weeks of medication (anti depressants), to which I developed an extreme intolerance, has permanently given me a burning pain in my stomach; I now live with a chronic intestinal inflammation and suffer from constant heart burn and indigestion which gets worse when I eat certain foods (fruits, raw vegetables, milk, etc.). I now have to closely watch the foods I eat.

Synthetic vitamin treatments also turned out to be injurious. Exposures, medication and electromagnetic exposures have resulted in my developing chronic fatigue. With the evolution of this illness, a cerebral scan has shown that I now have cerebral lesions.

Even though this is a very perilous and devastating disease in every aspect (financially, socially, personal and private life, career, etc.) it appears to be extremely difficult to obtain a medical diagnosis or help.

Doctors don't seem to be informed about this disease. The physical pain and suffering that I have endured, has often been played down by the medical community, and called a psychological

disorder. Scientific studies are clearly showing the physiological nature of this medical condition – which very simply is the inability of my body to detoxify commonly encountered chemicals and medications.

I am now in crisis. The family home where I lived has now been sold and I have not been able to find a suitable place to rent. Because of my health condition, I need a very healthy environment to live in, and unfortunately, it is simply impossible for me to live in a condo or an apartment due to poor air quality. Most people whom I know suffering from this medical condition, have similar experiences with housing. This is because the air is shared in a building and products used by other tenants make living in such an environment unbearable.

For the past three months, I have been living on the verandah of a friend, quite like a homeless person. Fortunately I have a good sleeping bag. I am an intelligent student, with the rest of my life stretched out before me, but I am now reduced to homelessness because of my inability to tolerate low levels of chemicals.

I do not know what my future holds. As I write this, no resource exists to help people who are suffering terribly just like me. There is no adequate shelter where I can go to live. For a country that boasts being at the forefront of social justice and human rights, Canada's and Quebec's negligence is unacceptable.

Is anyone out there listening?

Testimony of a woman afflicted with Environmental Sensitivity (ES) / Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) for over 19 years

Here I am, living with Environmental/Chemical Sensitivities and willing to deliver a brief testimony. I am hoping to adequately portray the suffering caused to me because I have this medical condition. A condition that meant nothing to me until it struck me with its poisoned arrow.

My name is Annie. My debilitating case of Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) began following a massive exposure to chemicals used by my former neighbours. Once the medical condition set in, I lost my job and had to forgo the majority of the activities I cherished. Since then I am confined to my home most of the time. When I do go out in public, I suffer serious symptoms including: a feeling of intoxication, difficulty breathing, disturbed vision, cardiac palpitations, significant headaches, severe sore throat, muscular weakness, and tremors. As you can imagine, feeling this way is frustrating, exhausting, and infuriating. I feel like a laboratory mouse subjected to multiple toxins.

My disability also obliges me to live off Social Security. My dwindling circle of friends and relatives found this to be shameful. Gossip was spread about my condition; that I was not really sick and was just making it up. The truth is that these individuals do not witness the suffering I endure on a daily basis. My body has been taken by storm, weakened by the environment and under constant attack from pollutants. Personal contact with people outside my home exposes me to a range of chemicals which severely impact my health. These include: perfumes, cigarette smoke, hair dyes and fixatives, gasoline, laundry products, etc.

I have visited many doctors: homeopaths, naturopaths, neurologists, acupuncturists and osteopaths, and no one could help me. It was no use searching for help in Quebec where this disease is not recognized. The only assistance that sufferers receive in this Province comes from ASEQ-EHAQ. The medical community seems intent on brushing aside ES/MCS. We are neglected and often scoffed at when we go to the hospital; though other patients are treated with respect and compassion.

My suffering has increased even more because my relatives and friends refer to my condition as my “problem.” I am a strong woman and I am not inclined to feel sorry for myself. However, if I dare express the physical pain that I feel, I am called a whiner. It is an ordeal for me to attend family gatherings because my condition requires everyone to modify their habits, i.e., provide me with an environment that is scent and fragrance-free. In spite of their efforts it is not easy to get rid of these chemicals and exposure to them makes me ill right away. It is useless to hope that people will accommodate me. When a rare visitor comes to my home, they often neglect to take the necessary steps to be scent free. Do they forget or just not care? I was informed that a close relative said ‘only hypochondriacs are afflicted with a similar disease obsession’. This ignorant mindset is equivalent to a person consuming peanut butter in the presence of someone who is allergic to peanuts.

Facing this constant and cruel insensitivity I have felt backed up against a wall and have contemplated suicide. Thanks to exchanges with other people suffering from the same medical condition, I learned that being treated this way, and suffering because of it, is commonplace. I discovered that I was not the only person suffering from this condition to be constantly dehumanized with labels.

I am grateful for the support I receive from my life partner, who encourages me to hang on despite my hardships. I am saddened by the thought that many people suffering from ES /MCS do not have this kind of support. From the bottom of my heart I hope that more scientific research will be conducted in order to better understand Environmental Sensitivities. Without this, our Human Rights will continuously be abused.

I encourage you, my fellow sufferers, to tell your stories. One day the weight of evidence will accumulate like drops of water and chip away at the rock of indifference. The more knowledge people accumulate about our polluted environment, the greater the likelihood of finally seeing this medical condition recognized, as it is in Germany. I am wholeheartedly with each one of you. Hang on, you are not alone.

-Annie

First Steps to improve or maintain your health - Environmental Sensitivities

Environmental Sensitivities is a painful, chronic condition that can develop in people of all ages, often following either a single high exposure or repeated low level exposures to chemicals commonly released into the environment.

The symptoms: involve many body systems; can be reproduced with repeated exposure; improve when the triggers are removed; occur with chemically dissimilar triggers; and occur at low levels of exposure. The condition is chronic.

Some people may be genetically more susceptible to adverse effects from exposure to relatively low levels of environmental chemicals because of altered ability to metabolize commonly encountered chemicals and medications.¹

If you have a diagnosis of Environmental Sensitivities then what do you do? Environmental Sensitivities is the umbrella term for sensitivities to many factors, such as chemicals, food, electromagnetic radiation and fields, noise, light, etc. The term 'Sensitivities' does not come close to describing the effects of this medical condition such as: pain and suffering, loss of employment, the ensuing poverty, loss of enjoyment of life, disability and exclusion from society.

With the right information, it is possible to break the downward spiral. What does one have to do to bring about and maintain a decent level of health? To start with, it is very important to find a practitioner who knows about this condition or a doctor who has been trained in Environmental Medicine. To find a doctor in your area, contact ASEQ-EHAQ.

The most basic step towards wellness is avoidance of those factors that made you ill or which trigger symptoms. It is important to drink clean water, eat organic tolerated food and breathe clean air. It is equally important to live in a healthy environment, by eliminating toxic chemicals for cleaning and personal use, for renovations and in workplaces, and to use ecological strategies and solutions for insect infestations on lawns, gardens and inside homes and buildings.

To create a healthy environment, one must examine all the products that are used within the home or working environment.

Use only fragrance-free products for all your needs. If you cannot find a suitable product, it is better to go without, than to substitute with 'just one scented or known toxic product'. Here are some suggestions.

Personal products: Avoid all perfumes and scented personal care products such as creams, shampoos and other hair products, deodorant, make up, etc.

Clothes and laundry: Use only fragrance-free laundry detergents. Use alternatives to clothes' softeners, or reputed brands such as Nature Clean. Chlorine-free bleach alternatives are available. Never use new clothes without washing them well.

Cleaning: It is important to avoid all scented cleaning products. Use only reputed brands from health stores.

Workplace: Ask for a separate working area free of carpets, an air purifier, a scent-free policy, well-ventilated areas next to printers and photocopiers, advance notice of renovations (that should be with least-toxic products), and to be able to work from home during this time.

Renovations: Never renovate when you cannot ventilate the area adequately by opening windows (choose smog-free seasons). Use only zero to low Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) paints and other materials. There are quite a few least-toxic materials on the market. Choose hard materials that do not off-gas. Always personally check the material before you have it installed in your home.

Remember to always read labels even if you consistently buy the same brand. If any of the 'natural' or 'eco' products make you ill, stop using them right away. Repeated use of an offending product does not make you better able to tolerate it. This will, in fact, worsen your condition.

What do you do with your scented products when you have made the change to healthier products? You certainly don't store them in your living space as the products will off-gas from the container (which explains how you get the smell of different products in the cleaning and laundry aisle in the store). Do not throw products you don't use anymore down the drain. Call your municipality for collection and disposal.

Be aware that some large companies advertise 'scent-free', 'perfume-free' labels for fabric softener sheets or liquids. This does not mean that they are not loaded with chemicals which will emanate for long periods of time. Also, such claims for detergents by these companies may not always be true as they are sometimes contaminated by fragrances.

***Green washing:** using words such as 'Organic,' 'Clean,' 'Green,' 'Eco,' 'Natural,' etc, or packaging that gives the appearance of being 'green' – such as using plants, the colour green, etc., but either does not list the contents of the product, or if the product content is listed it contains chemicals that are known or suspected to cause adverse health effects.

Use products that have ECOCERT certification

Please note that this certification does not include scent-free. It is always important to read labels.

www.ecocertcanada.com

1) McKeown-Eyssen Gail, Baines Cornelia, Cole David EC, Riley Nicole, Tyndale Rachel, Marshall Lynn, Jazmaji Vartouhi. Case-control study of genotypes in multiple chemical sensitivity: CYP2D6, NAT1, NAT2, PON1, PON2 and MTHFR, International Journal of Epidemiology 2004; 33:1-8

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THE BEES?

“THE LOSS OF THE BEES AROUND THE WORLD RAISES ALL SORTS OF UNSETTLING QUESTIONS. ARE THE HONEY BEES TRYING TO TELL US SOMETHING? ARE THEY THE CANARY IN THE COAL MINE, WARNING US OF A HIDDEN DANGER TO THE PLANET AND ALL OF HUMANITY?”

-Michael Schacker, A Spring Without Bees

Unexplained colony deaths have become an ever-increasing concern for governments across the world. Beekeepers in Europe and North America began to experience significant colony losses over the last several years, affecting the European honeybee.

Colony Collapse Disorder has been labeled as a puzzling culprit. It results in the worker bees becoming disoriented and not returning to the hive. When they do not return they die and the colony soon collapses. This disorder has been reported to have caused the collapse of 50 to 90 percent of European honeybee colonies in certain U.S. states.

It is common that some colonies will die-off, mainly during winter months, but the scale of the losses recorded by beekeepers has caused scientists and governments to examine this serious issue further.

There are many reasons why the honeybees have been dying. The United Nations Environment Program's (UNEP) recent study on bee colony threats and disorders has listed more than a dozen causes. Some of these include: fungal infections, predatory species, problem breeding conditions, increasing farmland, urbanization and loss of wild spaces, migratory beekeeping, air pollution, and pesticides.

To keep up with the rising global demand for food, farmers contract migratory beekeepers to pollinate their fields. Feral* bees cannot meet the needs of mass pollination any longer. This means millions of bees are being transported from farm to farm likely spreading disease and exposing them to unnatural stresses. The UNEP has also reported that in order to maintain their yields, some gather bees in huge hives which also exacerbates breeding and makes them more susceptible to disease.

The most prevalent and unequivocal cause of dying colonies is the toxic smorgasbord of pesticides being spread on farmland. The increased use of broad-spectrum pesticides (designed to eliminate a variety of predatory species) or systemic pesticides (absorbed in the plants and found in pollen and nectar) has had the lethal affect of damaging bees' sense of direction and memory.

*Feral bees are bees that were originally native to Europe. They were brought to North America by European settlers.

BEE FACTS:

- Of the 100 crop species that provide 90% of the worlds food supply more than 70 are pollinated by bees.
- Bees are needed for plants to reproduce.
- 21st Century technology cannot meet the pollination demands that provide in the global agricultural system.
- More than 16% of flowering plants are pollinated by bees.
- Bees are attracted to flowers with open or flat tubular flowers and bright colours.
- Flowers that are pollinated more often will produce larger and more uniform fruit.
- It takes one million bees to pollinate the 420,000 acres of California's almond crop.
- Should bees no longer survive it is expected that 20,000 species of wild flowering plants will become extinct.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP:

- Never use pesticides in your garden or on your lawn!
- Introduce plants and flowers that attract bees to your garden.
- Be careful where you get your bee products. Be wary of green washing and make sure when you buy honey it's sustainable and certified organic.
- Buy organic and local produce when possible.
- Spread the word and encourage your family, friends, and neighbors to do the same!

FYI:

UNEP study on bees: http://www.unep.org/dewa/Portals/67/pdf/Global_Bee_Colony_Disorder_and_Threats_insect_pollinators.pdf

Virtual Museum Canada about bees: <http://www.agriculture.technomuses.ca/english/bees/default.php>

Documentary Vanishing of the Bees: <http://www.vanishingbees.com/>





BISPHENOL A (BPA): 10 CANNED FOODS TO AVOID TO REDUCE EXPOSURE:

- 1) Coconut milk
- 2) Soup
- 3) Meat
- 4) Vegetables
- 5) Meals (e.g. ravioli in sauce)
- 6) Juice
- 7) Fish
- 8) Beans
- 9) Meal replacement drinks
- 10) Fruit

www.breastcancerfund.org

Bisphenol A (BPA) is used to make hard, clear plastic known as polycarbonate. It is used in many consumer products like food packaging including the epoxy resins that line metal-based food and beverage cans.

BPA is an endocrine disruptor that can negatively affect the body's hormones. It has also been linked with obesity, cancers, hormonal and reproductive abnormalities in animals, and is a cause of concern for the neurological development of babies.

A new study published in the Environmental Health Perspectives journal revealed participants who eliminated their consumption of food canned or packaged in plastic had a significant reduction of BPA levels in their urine.

Five families, 20 participants in total, were selected to partake in the study based on their self-reported regular use of canned and packaged foods. For three days the participants consumed their usual diet, followed by three days of fresh foods that were not

canned or packaged in plastic, and then returned to their usual diet.

During the period of abstinence, the study revealed an average reduction of BPA levels in their urine of 66% and between 53-56% for DEHP metabolites.

DEHP or Bis(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate, is widely used as a plasticiser. It is a concern for outgassing and can leach into liquid and food products that it comes into contact with.

Study Source:

Rudel RA, Gray JM, Engel CL, Rawsthorne TW, Dodson RE, Ackerman JM, et al. 2011. Food Packaging and Bisphenol A and Bis(2-Ethylhexyl) Phthalate Exposure: Findings from a Dietary Intervention. Environ Health Perspect :- doi:10.1289/ehp.1003170 <http://ehp03.niehs.nih.gov>

Electromagnetic Fields

Technology is in constant evolution. We are now exposed to increased levels of electromagnetic fields. Electro hypersensitivity is a result of exposures to electromagnetic fields (wireless products and other electrical equipment), radio frequency waves (wireless technology products). Electric and magnetic fields are invisible but they exist and have health consequences. It is therefore necessary to reduce exposures. There are technology and instruments to detect and eliminate these harmful waves.

Visit this website for the World Health Organization's (WHO) definition of electromagnetic fields and electromagnetic hypersensitivity: http://www.aseq-chaq.ca/ma_emfs/des/emfs_des.php

A Swedish study on electro hypersensitivity (EHS) was conducted on 167 patients. Listed below are the causes of electromagnetic sensitivity:

mobile phone antennas, global systems for mobile communication, wireless telephones, radio transmitters, computer screens, railway and tramway lines, transformers, television screens, electrical and lighting devices.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF QUEBEC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



The AGM took place on March 25, 2011, at the Centre St. Pierre in Montreal. Current and upcoming projects were discussed, followed by a presentation on “How to Maintain a Healthy Home.” The presentation included important information on topics such as mould, electromagnetic fields, and eco materials used for building construction and home renovations. In addition, EHAQ’s Healthy Housing Project was discussed. A resolution was passed during the meeting establishing the month of May as Environmental Sensitivities Awareness Month. Please visit our website for more information: www.aseq-chaq.ca

Electro Hypersensitivity page 7

These products, appliances, equipment and machines are present everywhere in our environment. However, certain solutions and precautions exist that would allow us to live in health.

Dr. Olle Johansson, Associate Professor, Karolinska Institutet, Department of Neuroscience, Experimental Dermatology Unit, Stockholm, Sweden, states that ‘In Sweden, electrohypersensitivity (EHS) is an officially fully recognized functional impairment (i.e., it is not regarded as a disease).’ According to Dr. Johansson, out of a population of nine million, between 230,000 and 290,000 Swedes report a variety of symptoms when ‘in contact with electromagnetic field (EMF) sources.’

From his letter it is evident that Swedish citizens suffering in this manner are accommodated, supported and respected. To read Dr. Johansson’s letter, visit :

http://www.aseq-chaq.ca/ma_emfs/pdf/Olle_Johansson_Sweden_letter.pdf

Tips on how to best manage electro hypersensitivity:

- Avoid the contact with electromagnetic fields.
 - Measure the alternating electrical and magnetic fields in your environment.
 - Reorganize the electrical appliances in your home.
 - Organize work in a reduced-field environment at the office and at home.
- The recent discovery for treatment by Per-Arne Öckerman, a Swedish biochemist gives new hope for people suffering from electro hypersensitivity. You can find his research at the following link: <http://www.papimi.gr/cases/ockerman/ockerman2.htm>



ARE YOU EATING YOUR VEGETABLES?

In addition to being delicious, eating a variety of different vegetables offers a plethora of health benefits. Vegetable pigments, all of the bright rich colours, are an indication of what they have to offer. Plants manufacture what they need to grow, defend, protect, and heal themselves. Pigments protect plants from solar radiation, oxidative damage to cells, environmental stresses, and attacks by microbes, insects and animal predators.

Chlorophylls:

Plants rich in these: deep-green leafy greens.

In plants these pigments help to deactivate carcinogens.

Surprise! Chlorophylls may deactivate colon and liver cancer carcinogens.

Carotenoids: yellow, orange to red

Plants rich in these: apricots, cantaloupes, carrots, leafy greens (chlorophylls hide the colour), pumpkins, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, winter squash

In plants these pigments: aid in photosynthesis, protect from solar radiation, act as antioxidants, and attract pollinators and seed dispersers.

In people, these pigments: protect the immune system, skin, and epithelial cells, and may prevent heart disease, cancer, and muscular degeneration.

Surprise! Eating carotenoids with a little fat can help the body absorb them.

Anthocyanins: blue, purple, burgundy

Plants rich in these: black turtle beans; purple cabbage, eggplant, potatoes; red onions; red and purple grapes and berries.

In plants these pigments: attract pollinators and seed dispersers, improve tolerance to stress, repel predators, resist disease, and prevent oxidative damage to cells.

In people these pigments: may prevent or reverse age related cognitive decline and/or neuro-degenerative disease, improve vision; help prevent cancer, heart disease, insulin resistance, and obesity; promote wound healing.

Surprise! Anthocyanins and water soluble and never occur with betalains.

Betalains: red-violet, yellow-orange

Plants rich in these: beets, swiss chard, prickly pear cactus fruit, spinach

In plants these pigments: protect against excess photoradiation.

In people these pigments: may protect against cancer, heart disease, liver damage, and ulcers.

Surprise! Betalains are water soluble and never occur with anthocyanins.

Source: Margaret Boyles, The Old Farmers Almanac 2011 Canadian Edition.

5 TIPS TO GET YOUR GARDEN READY FOR SUMMER

Prune: Remove dead branches and leaves from plants before the new growth begins. This will help avoid insects and disease. Removing wet leaves that may be left from the fall will also help avoid insects. Make sure your clippers are sharp to avoid injuring yourself or the plant.

Till: till your beds to aerate the earth.

Fertilize: use organic material, compost, and fresh nutrient-rich soil to fertilize your garden. DO NOT use pesticides or chemical fertilizers.

Weed: remove all weeds. Applying a layer of mulch will reduce weed growth.

Check tools: make sure hand tools and shovels, rakes etc. are not rusted, cracked, or dull. Sand wood handles that have splinters and rub with linseed oil to protect them.





Orange-Tomato Couscous with Chicken

6 boneless, skinless chicken thighs (about 1 1/2 pounds), trimmed
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
 1 1/4 teaspoons ground cinnamon, divided
 1 1/4 teaspoons ground cumin, divided
 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
 1 medium onion, thinly sliced
 1 14-ounce can diced tomatoes, with juice
 1 15-ounce can chickpeas, rinsed
 1 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth
 4 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro, divided
 1 orange, scrubbed, halved and cut into 1/4-inch slices
 1 cup whole-wheat couscous

Pat chicken thighs dry with a paper towel. Season with salt, pepper, 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon and 1/4 teaspoon cumin.

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the chicken thighs and cook until browned, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer to a plate and set aside.

Add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil and onion to the pan. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is softened, about 2 minutes. Add the remaining 1 teaspoon each cinnamon and cumin and cook, stirring constantly, for 30 seconds. Add tomatoes and their juice, chickpeas, broth, 2 tablespoons cilantro and orange slices; bring to a simmer, stirring with a wooden spoon to scrape up any browned bits. Return the chicken and any collected juice to the pan; cover and cook over medium-low heat until the chicken is cooked through, 5 to 10 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a clean plate.

Bring the cooking liquid back to a boil; stir in couscous and place the chicken

thighs on top of the mixture. Remove from heat, cover and let stand for 5 minutes before serving. Garnish with the remaining cilantro.

6 servings, about 1 chicken thigh & 1 cup couscous each.

Serve with steamed green beans or a spinach salad.

http://www.eatingwell.com/recipe/orange_tomato_couscous_chicken.html



Tempeh and Rice-Stuffed Peppers

6 sweet peppers
 1 cup long grained rice, rinsed and drained
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 2 packages (each 8 oz/ 240 g) tempeh
 1/4 cup olive oil
 1 onion, finely diced
 1 stalk celery, finely diced
 3 cloves garlic, minced
 1/4 dry white wine or tomato juice
 3 tablespoon sodium-reduced soy sauce
 2 teaspoon dried oregano
 1 teaspoon salt
 1/2 teaspoon pepper
 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
 1 can crushed tomatoes
 2 bay leaves
 1 sprig fresh basil

About 1 inch down from stem end, slice tops off peppers. Reserve tops; scrape out ribs and seeds from peppers.

In saucepan, bring 1 1/2 cups water, rice and salt to boil. Reduce heat and simmer covered until no liquid remains.

Using coarse side of box grater, grate tempeh. In a large skillet, heat half of the oil over medium heat; fry onion, celery and garlic until softened, about 5 minutes. Add tempeh, wine, soy sauce, oregano, salt and pepper. Cook until no liquid remains, about 1 minute.

Scrape over rice. Add parsley; toss to combine. Divide stuffing among peppers, mounding tops. Snugly arrange peppers in single layer in 10X10X4 inch (5L) baking dish; top with reserve tops. Mix tomatoes with 1 cup water; spoon around peppers. Tuck bay leaves and basil around edges; drizzle peppers with remaining oil.

Cover with lid or foil; bake in 350F (180C) oven until peppers are almost tender, 1 hour. Uncover; bake until tender, 20 minutes.

Canadian Living / The Vegetarian Collection.



Quinoa Salad:

2 cups vegetable broth
 1 bay leaf
 1 teaspoon salt
 1 cup quinoa
 3 tablespoon olive oil, divided
 1 small zucchini, thinly sliced
 1 small yellow squash, thinly sliced
 1/2 cup sliced mushrooms
 1 small red onion, thinly sliced
 2 garlic cloves minced
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 1/2 cup dried apricots, diced
 1/2 cup dried cranberries
 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley
 1/4 dill
 salt and pepper

Bring broth bay leaf and salt to boil in soup pot. Add quinoa and return to boil, cover; reduce heat, and simmer 20 minutes or until quinoa absorbs liquid. Remove from heat, discard bay leaf and cool. Heat 2 tbsp oil in large skillet and sauté vegetables until lightly browned. Add to quinoa. Drizzle remaining oil and juice over mixture. Stir in fruit, herbs, salt and pepper.

Hint: use this quinoa recipe to stuff vegetables, such as acorn squash, zucchini, or Portobello mushrooms and serve as a main vegetarian course.

HELP US MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

We at EHAQ, through our volunteer work:

1. Do our best to help people who live with this medical condition, and
2. Inform the general public on ecological strategies that are safe for human health and the environment.

Your funds will help us help those in need.

If you would like to support us through sponsorship, or advertising in our newsletter or on our website call: **514-683-5701**

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Website \$360 for one year, includes index page ad and dedicated page, plus one free business card ad in Eco-Journal.

ASEQ-EHAQ is looking for volunteers in the following areas:

- 1) To help with advertising our conferences
 - making calls to members
 - posting posters and flyers in key locations
- 2) To help at the Montreal conferences on May 12 and May 28
 - registering participants
 - manning tables
 - help with set up and closing

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CALENDAR:**MAY 12**

Conference

5:00 p.m. registration

6:00 - 9:30 p.m.

"Environmental Health : Seeds of Change"

Coeur des Sciences, UQAM,

Amphithéâtre, SH-2800,

200 rue Sherbrooke West, Montreal,

Québec H2X 3P2

MAY 28

Environmental Sensitivities

Education, Awareness and Action Day

Conference

12:00 - 2:00 p.m.

"Toxic Trespass : Effects on Human Health"

Concordia University, H-110, 1455 de

Maisonneuve Blvd. West, Montreal

March for education and awareness

COME WALK WITH US...

Wear Black and Yellow

2:15 - 3:15 p.m.

1455 Boul de Maisonneuve to McGill

College Avenue.

Sign our Petition! For details:www.aseq-ehaq.ca

Editor's Note

Dear friends and members,

Thank you for your feedback from the previous issue of Eco-Journal and to the courageous people who stepped forward to share their stories with us. We at the ASEQ-EHAQ are striving to bring important information to the public about Environmental Sensitivities and create real changes in governmental health policy. To do so, we count on your support and involvement.

If you have information that would be useful to others on any aspect of human health and the environment, please forward it to us for inclusion in the next issue: communication@aseq-ehaq.ca.

In the next issue we will be looking into ES/MCS safe printer ink, naturopathic medicine, toxins in the bedroom and more!

We look forward to hearing from you.

Together, we can show how simple changes can make a big difference in everyone's overall health and wellbeing.

Sincerely,
Alana Vineberg
Editor

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