

■ MUSHROOMS

From Page 6

some people have various food allergies.

But what if you do not live near a forest or have time to go hunting for mushrooms? Maybe you really love eating mushrooms and want something more than the basic white button mushrooms or portabellas that you may find in your local grocery store. Maybe growing some of your own would be an interesting project to try and yield some fresh and delicious mushrooms to add to your favorite recipes.

SDSU research into growing mushrooms

Casey Snyder, an undergraduate Horticulture student, is conducting a research project on growing a few saprophytic (wood consuming) mushrooms. Fresh gourmet mushrooms are rare in the United States and are a highly prized commodity in the culinary world.

Among the mushrooms considered gourmet, Shiitake and Oyster are the most commercially grown. Snyder's project focuses on these two species of mushroom based on commonality, consumer demand, and ease of growth.

The preferred method used for growing Shiitake and Oyster mushrooms is to collect and then inoculate manageably sized wood logs, typically 4 to 6-inches in diameter, with mushroom

mycelial spawn.

Logs are inoculated by drilling holes in a diamond pattern using a 7/16th inch drill bit, filling open holes with prepared spawn, and waxing over exposed wood to seal in the spawn and moisture. Some species of mushrooms have spawn that is growing on dowels that are pounded into the logs.

Prepared logs are then handled gently and laid in shelterbelts, stacked in sheds, or propped against railings in designated growing sites. These sites should be shaded and cool, but still allow for air movement and ventilation to prevent mold. Logs inoculated in the spring, may fruit in late summer or fall but are more likely to fruit the next spring, then again in the fall. Fruiting may continue in the spring then again in the fall for 3 to 5 years but is generally best in years 2 to 3. The duration of fruiting depends on temperature and humidity and the condition of the logs.

There are many different methods of creating mycelia spawn from mushroom spores. Casey is using a commercially available sawdust spawn that is typically more economical than some other types of spawn. The inoculated logs will be weighed and sprinkled with water when humidity is low. The

logs are very low maintenance between inoculation and harvest as the mycelium needs time to establish in the log before fruiting. During this time the mycelium is consuming nutrients and starches inside the logs and ultimately preparing itself for reproduction. This is referred to as the incubation stage of mushroom production. The edible mushrooms that are harvested and consumed are the product of this process.

This project aims to discover profitability and practicality of cultivating mushrooms in South Dakota. About 1.7 million acres or 3% of South Dakota's total land area is forest land. Many residents of the state have access to woodland areas, including wood lots and shelterbelts. Rural residents often plant trees that are recommended by South Dakota State Extension and Conservation specialists. There are several programs available through the South Dakota Game, Fish, & Parks, as well as the Department of Natural Resources and the Conservation & Forestry Department of South Dakota, that pay landowners to establish woody habitat for many wildlife species, including nongame wildlife. The State recommends a number of trees to plant in shelterbelts, including: Bur Oak, Crabap-

ple, Black Hills Spruce, Cottonwood, Green Ash, and many others. While most of the trees used for shelterbelts are very hardy for our climate, they still require management from a young age (watering, weeding, fertilizing) to an advanced age (pruning, thinning, and weed tree removal). Weed trees that are commonly found seeded in established shelterbelts include: Common Buckthorn, Sumac, and others. Each tree specifically named in this section will be used in this project to test the viability of mushroom growth on South Dakota shelterbelt trees. Many of these trees can be cultivated or sourced in cities as well.

The local foods movement is one that can be profitable and beneficial to communities. Small scale farmers provide a variety of products to consumers from vegetables and fruits to value-added goods like jellies and maple syrup. Consumers desire locally grown products at a reasonable price and mushrooms are a unique product that can capture their attention by novelty, nutrition, and price.

This project will work in conjunction with a local foods producer, Foodtopia Farms, in Toronto, S.D. This producer serves local counties and the state through the South Dakota

Local Foods Cooperative. Marketability and production of mushrooms has been very successful in nearby Minnesota and is promising throughout this state. It is speculated that demand for gourmet mushrooms will be a sustainable venture and allow consumers to have regularly stocked, fresh, and locally produced gourmet mushrooms seasonally.

There are other smaller-scale options for a home grower as well. Mushroom

growing kits are available for a variety of mushroom species. Basically the kit includes mushroom spawn or mycelium that is growing in sawdust or some other growing media. Generally you open the bag and moisten the growing media to help get the mycelium to grow and begin fruiting. In a short time you should have mushrooms growing out of the medium that you can harvest and enjoy.

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Fill the puzzle so that every row, every column, and every section contain the numbers 1-9 without repeating a number.

	5		4	1	6			
1					7	3	6	
6			3	8		5	1	9
7					5		8	
		6				1		
	2		8					7
5	1	7		4	9			2
	9	8	1					6
			2		8		7	

EASY EA BOOK 59 #5

Last Tuesday's Solution

6	9	4	1	7	8	3	2	5
7	5	2	4	6	3	9	8	1
3	8	1	9	2	5	4	7	6
9	7	6	8	1	4	5	3	2
5	2	8	3	9	7	6	1	4
1	4	3	6	5	2	7	9	8
8	6	9	7	4	1	2	5	3
2	3	7	5	8	6	1	4	9
4	1	5	2	3	9	8	6	7

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Check next Tuesday's paper for the solution to today's puzzle.


CH BOOK 59 #4

GUBBELS SALVAGE

Wanted:

- Old Cars
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