

THE BAILEYAN

The Official Newsletter of the Liberty Hyde Bailey Garden Club of Ithaca, New York

The Liberty Hyde Bailey Garden Club of Ithaca meets each month, on the third Tuesday (second Tuesday in May and December) at the Horton Room in the Floriculture Greenhouse, Tower Road Cornell University Ithaca, New York. The Club is open to all gardeners. Visitors are welcome.

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2006 Officers

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This month: February 21th, 2006 – Gardens of the United Kingdom

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Next Meeting: March 21, 2006 – Guest Speaker on Bonsai

Meeting Schedule and Programs: 2006

January 17:	Organizational Meeting	July 18:	Picnic
February 21:	Gardens of the UK Ray Fox	August 15:	Garden Visit
March 21:	Guest Speaker on Bonsai Dr. Lou Albright	September 19:	Perennial Exchange, Seed List 2006
April 18:	Plant Auction	October 17:	Dish to Pass
May 16:	Seedling Sale*	November 21:	Election
May:	IHS Plant Sale	December 19:	Holiday Festivities
June 20:	Garden Visit		

Please mark these dates on your Garden Calender.

*All meetings are on the 3rd Tuesday of every month, except for May and December. Meetings are held in the Horton Seminar Room in the Floriculture and Ornamental Horticulture Greenhouses, unless otherwise indicated. Specific programs and time variations will be announced in the newsletter. Our usual meeting time is 7:30PM with the Board of Directors meeting at 7:00PM (when held). Summer garden visits sometimes meet earlier. Members and guests are welcome to attend both meetings.

Opportunities

Upcoming Events From Cornell Cooperative Extension

Beautification Volunteer Training in March 6, 13 and 20, 6-8:30 pm at Cornell Cooperative Extension, 615 Willow Avenue, Ithaca. Have you noticed the bright new plantings all around Ithaca in the spring and summer? Want to be part of a fun group that plants and takes care of these flower plantings this year? The Community Beautification Program is offering free training to be part of the 2006 Beautification Brigade. The three-part training will be held Mondays, March. The classes will focus on specific plants and landscape design for public spaces, and will feature slide shows of past years of beautification volunteers and projects, and examples of beautification in other cities.

When spring arrives this April, volunteers will help out 2 hours per week, in a scheduled morning or evening session, planting flowers on the Commons and other public spaces in the city of Ithaca. Volunteering with this group is a great way to make an immediate difference in your community, learn some gardening skills, and socialize with other interesting volunteers. For more information, or to request a volunteer application and class schedule, contact Chrys Gardener at 272-2292, extension 123, or send an email to cab69@cornell.edu

And be sure to check out the website, where you can see lots of beautification photos from 2002-2005. Go to <http://counties.cce.cornell.edu/tompkins/> and click on the link to Community Beautification.

Corn gluten meal: A natural herbicide?

Controlling weeds in an environmentally sound way can be a challenge in your garden and lawn. Corn gluten meal is a natural product that can safely inhibit germination of grass and weed seeds.



In 1985, Dr. Nick Christians, of Iowa State University (ISU), accidentally discovered that corn gluten had preemergence herbicide activity. The control plot of a turf fungal study showed thin seeded grass stands when pure corn gluten was used. Further study by Dr. Christians and his graduate students lead to 4 patents on corn gluten and its active components over the last 15 years. Currently over 20 companies are licensed by ISU to sell corn gluten as a natural herbicide (US Patent 5,030,268; Re 34,594).

Corn gluten is a by-product of wet milling process to make cornstarch. It is an animal feed for cattle, poultry, other livestock, fish and some dog foods. It also contains naturally occurring substances, which inhibit the growth of seed's tiny feeder roots by causing a break down in the cell wall. The seedlings struggle to get enough moisture, which causes them to die before they ever have a chance to take hold. When used as directed, corn gluten acts as a preemergent natural herbicide that will not harm beneficial insects, soil organisms, pond or stream life. It is also safe around pets and children.

Since corn gluten kills only the roots of sprouting seeds, it can be used around transplants and established vegetables, flowers, fruit, shrubs and lawns. It can be used even up to the day of harvest. Once vegetable or flower seedlings have true leaves, it is then safe to apply corn gluten.

Corn gluten has another benefit. It is 10% nitrogen by weight in a slow release form. As a 10-0-0 fertilizer it can inhibit weed germination and feed your lawn and garden nitrogen. (Additional supplements of phosphorous and potassium may be needed, based on a soil test.)

The only potential hazard that is documented so far is potential allergic reaction from inhalation of dust with certain individuals

Facts

Corn gluten is a fine yellow powder, usually pelletized for easier application.

It comes in 5 lb bags, but a 25 lb bag (blended with bone meal and potassium sulfate from the organically certified Idaho mine) will be available this fall from Necessary Organics.

It is patented as a preemergent herbicide. Feed mills can not legally sell it for this purpose unless it is licensed by ISU.

Corn gluten results in less weed seed carryover in soil and added nitrogen to feed plants.

Areas that gardeners want annuals and perennials to reseed should not use corn gluten until after the seedlings are up and have true leaves.

Effectiveness

- Corn gluten works on seeds not established plants. It will not kill a dandelion plant.

- It has reduced crabgrass by 86% the first year and 98% the second year provided recommended rates are applied in both spring and fall. Dandelion infestations were reduced 100% in plots treated for 4 years in spring and fall.
- Plants tested to date for susceptibility = 23 and include: barnyard grass, smooth crabgrass, curly dock, green & yellow, black nightshade, orchard grass, shattercane, purslane, wooly cupgrass, giant foxtail, lambsquarters, buckhorn, quackgrass, velvetleaf, annual bluegrass, dandelions, creeping bentgrass, black medic, redroot pigweed, catchweed bedstraw, & other common garden weeds.
- Corn gluten lasts 5-6 weeks. There is no carryover. After this time seeds can be planted in treated areas without being effected.

How to Use

- Application rate is 20 lbs /1000 sq ft.
- **Timing is critical!!** Apply in early spring, 3-5 weeks before weeds sprout (when crocus and early daffodils bloom). And in early fall when temp turns cooler. Apply in gardens any time.
- Spread around bedding plants, transplants, flowers or shrubs and rake in lightly.
- Spread evenly on lawns. Avoid any bare spots where reseeding grass.
- Sprinkle on cracks in driveways and sidewalks.
- Water in if there is no rain.
- Then allow area to dry for 2-3 days. Plants need dryness for corn gluten to effectively kill emerging weeds. If excessive rains occur, reapplication may be needed.

Is Genetically Modified (GMO) corn used to make corn gluten?

Up to 60% of the commercial corn and soybeans in the United States is grown from GMO Seed. Corn gluten sold as a preemergent herbicide may indeed contain GMO corn, but it has not yet been tested. Here's the twist. Corn gluten can reduce the need for traditional herbicides that have environmental side effects. It likely now contains GMO corn. It could be produced from non-GMO corn, but would likely be more expensive.

If GMO corn is used, can certified organic growers use it and will European markets allow it? How do home gardeners feel? And if plants are grown in soil treated with GMO corn gluten, could a crop pick up anything that show a positive GMO detect in testing?

Will the 10% nitrogen of corn gluten be a problem for low nitrogen needing plants?

Beans, peas and other legumes have reduced yields if given too much nitrogen. Also lean-loving flowers such as butterflyweed or coneflowers may not like the extra nitrogen?

LHBGC OF ITHACA

**February 21st
Gardens of England**

**7:30 PM
IN THE HORTON ROOM
Board of Directors: please meet at 7:00 pm**

**The Liberty Hyde Bailey
Garden Club of Ithaca, NY
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