



A Few Tips for a Simple Life

by Michael Guilfoil, *The Spokesman-Review*

Organic farmer MaryJane Butters long ago embraced Thoreau’s dictum to “simplify, simplify.” As a Forest Service ranger in the 1970s, she spent two summers roaming Utah’s Uinta Mountains with her home on her back. Later, she maintained the most remote wilderness ranger station in the Lower 48. Today, Butters and her family live eight miles outside Moscow, Idaho, on their farm, headquarters of her mail-order dry-foods business. But even e-commerce hasn’t tempered Butters’ enthusiasm for simplicity.

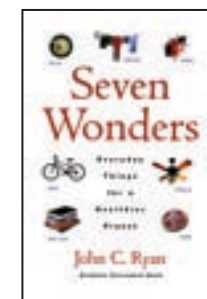
MaryJane’s

The magic of seven ...

In each issue of *MaryJanesFarm*, I give you seven simple solutions for a healthier lifestyle. But did you know that the number seven is found throughout science, myth, and history in many interesting forms? Here are a few: Seven has long been thought to be a “lucky” number; seven is the sum of any two opposite sides on a six-sided die and when rolling two dice, the probability of rolling a seven is the greatest of any number. Seven colors in the rainbow. Seven is neutral pH. Almost all mammals have seven cervical vertebrae. Seven heavenly bodies (Earth, the sun, and the five planets visible to the naked eye). Seven stars in both the Big Dipper and Orion. Seven fundamental types of catastrophes. Seven wonders of the ancient world. Seven days of creation. Seven days of the week. Seven continents. Seven seas. Seven virtues. Seven deadly sins. Seven chakras. Seven notes in the musical scale. Seven dwarfs. The seven-year itch (myth or based on the theory that all cells in the human body are replaced over a period of roughly seven years?). The U.S. declared independence in the seventh month of 1776. *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. In Japanese mythology, Seven Gods of Fortune. Most space missions have seven astronauts. Seven is the average person’s digit span (the number of digits they can recall in sequence). The seventh son of a seventh son has magic powers in Irish folklore, and is a vampire in Romanian legend. Seven is the largest number of sticks or any other cylindrical object that can be tied into a bundle so that the shape of the bundle remains fixed. The seven-point star is a traditional symbol for warding off evil (sheriff’s badges are seven-point stars). When asked to think of a number between one and 10, most people pick seven. More people were married on 7-7-07 than on any other date in history.

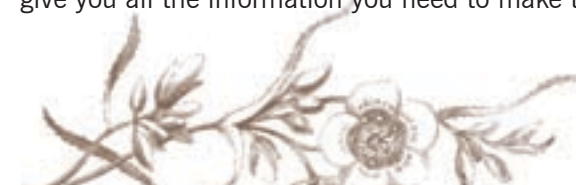
Simple Solutions

for everyday ORGANIC™



In December 1999, a newspaper reporter from Washington called. He was writing a review of the book *Seven Wonders: Everyday Things for a Healthier Planet* by John C. Ryan. Michael Guilfoil of *The Spokesman-Review* newspaper asked me if I had my own “seven wonders.” The story that ensued was headlined

“Simple Solutions.” Here, then, is the continuation of that story. Each issue of *MaryJanesFarm* will feature in detail new solutions, and will give you all the information you need to make them your own.



Solutions from previous issues are available in the magazine section of my website: www.maryjanesfarm.org/Recipes-Patterns-Instructions

“Every time you make a decision about food, you are farming by proxy.”
– Wendell Berry

7 Steps for Lowering Your Grocery Bill

The part of your budget that has the most flexibility is often the dollars you spend on food. If you’re feeling the pinch in this challenging economic climate, don’t trade quality for quantity—with my simple solutions, your savings are in the bag.

1. Buy outside the box

Shop the perimeter of the store—the outer aisles—where you’ll find produce, meat, eggs, and dairy. When you delve into the other aisles, look for slow-cook brown rice, quinoa, dried lentils and beans, and rolled or steel-cut oats and avoid the expensive, boxed, highly processed foods.

seven wonders

2. Think big

Bigger is better. Save \$\$ by buying larger sizes and checking the shelf tags that tell you how much the product costs per ounce. (For example, you’ll save about \$2 buying a 32-ounce tub of yogurt—transfer into smaller reusable containers for lunches.) Every ounce (and penny) counts.

3. Freeze it

Shop the sales and freeze your bargains. Fish, meat, juice, and even dairy choices like milk, hard cheeses, and butter freeze well for short periods of time. It’s like a store-wide sale in your freezer.

4. Heads up

Buy fresh salad ingredients instead of those packaged lettuce mixes. The small pieces in the packages spoil quicker because their cut ends are exposed to more oxygen.

5. Weighty issues

Buy bagged potatoes, onions, and fruit—and weigh them first. Because they’re bagged as 3 pounds, 5 pounds, or more, weights can vary a little and you can get up to $\frac{3}{4}$ pound for free.

6. Herbal magic

If you love fresh herbs but find yourself with spoilers before you can use them up, just refrigerate only what you can use within a week and hang the rest with a clothespin upside down to dry for later.

7. Tote it with you

Many stores are now giving bag refunds when you shop with a reusable bag. Pick up a few—think of them as fashion accessories!