

Agriculture Adventure

for Families

From fall through winter, the smells in the air signify the changing of seasons. Winter walks through the damp forest send the smell of pine up through the air. Quick stops at the store begin with the instant smell of cinnamon pinecones as the doors push open. Pies, candles, infusers and fresh trees fill homes and giving off warm spicy wisps of holiday cheer. Take a moment this month to welcome the scents of winter as we say goodbye to a challenging farm year.

Smells of the Season

Holiday fragrances are filled with nostalgia and tradition. While scent and the memories evoked by it are incredibly personal, there are certain smells that instantly fill a room with festive feeling.

Ginger

No confection symbolizes the holidays quite like gingerbread in its many forms, from edible houses to candy-studded gingerbread men to spiced loaves of cake-like bread. In Medieval England, the term gingerbread simply meant ‘preserved ginger’ and wasn’t applied to the desserts we are familiar with until the 15th century. The term is now broadly used to describe any type of sweet treat that combines ginger with honey, treacle or molasses.

Ginger is a spice that comes from the fresh or dried root of the ginger plant, Zingiber officinale. This plant belongs to the same family as turmeric and cardamom. It was domesticated in the islands of Southeast Asia and was known only in the West by being imported during the spice trade. Ginger is available in six forms: fresh, dried, pickled, preserved, crystallized (or candied), and powdered or ground.

Ground ginger, also referred to as powdered, is the dried and ground ginger root. It is readily available in standard supermarkets and is used primarily in sweets and curry mixes.

The flavor of fresh ginger is peppery and slightly sweet, with a pungent and spicy aroma.

Source: www.pbs.org/food/the-history
Source: www.thespruceeats.com/ginger-recipes-and-cooking-tips

Trees

What gives conifer trees their scent? Well, most of that piney odor is due to chemical compounds called terpenes. Pine, spruce, and fir trees – favored trees for decorating during Christmas – produce terpenes, which give them a distinctive and refreshing scent.

Christmas tree cultivation is an agricultural, forestry, and horticultural occupation which involves growing trees specifically for use during Christmas. Farms come in all sizes, from family-run spare-land operations to companies with thousands of acres devoted to the stock. Almost all trees require shearing, or trimming, during their growth to attain the desired Christmas tree shape. There are approximately 350 million Christmas trees growing on U.S. farms in any given year.

Don’t have time to go pick a live tree? Well of course you can go online, select one and have it at your doorstep ready to decorate!!

Source: University of Illinois Extension, National Christmas Tree Association



This farm bureau favorite book chronicles the lifecycle of growing a Christmas tree, showing the love and patience it takes to create this symbol of the holiday.

Cinnamon

Traditional use of this beloved spice is in mulled cider and a plethora of breakfast breads, from toast to rolls to sticky buns.

Grabbing the stick and powdered forms at the supermarket is easy, and few give a passing thought to the process to get it there. Cinnamon comes from the dried inner bark of several different types of tropical evergreen laurel trees, and is harvested during the rainy season when the bark is more pliable.

Trees should be at least a decade old in order to be harvested, and there are a couple of dozen commercially viable types. Some “trees” look more like thick-stemmed bushes. The bark is not only stripped from the trunk, but also the branches. It is rolled into tight quills to dry — some quills can be up to 30 inches long.

Source: www.tennessean.com/story/life/food/2018/12/15/cinnamon-holiday-

November Word Search

O R T M K Q B P P S K U E T V
J K T E D C N A E X R T S N S
J C X M R O I E Q B A W B E N
S J P O M P R T C Q B K R C J
R Q A R X T E I S D J I E S W
Q S P I C E D N P J F S A J O
A J H E R E T A E R T F D H A
F Z E S R X X U E S E Y E K P
I G T Z W W M S R E D W O P G
F E D F Z N A L W I M N A I D
M I J B J R E A C E P S N U Q
O G E A F N K R F E E G H V R
C I N N A M O N G T E T H V K
P D L F I P F E L R Y J K R N
G M Y R Z P S W E Q G W M I W

Bark

Bread

Cider

Cinnamon

Fraser Fir

Ginger

Memories

Pine

Powder

Scent

Spice

Stick

Sweet

Terpenes

Treat

Trees

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