



633 W Broadway
Gardner, MA
978-632-0991
February 16, 2023



Hours:
Monday to Friday:
8:30 am to 5:30 pm
Saturday:
8:30 am to 4:00 pm
Sunday:
closed

* please notice that our Thursday evening hours have changed.
WE will close at 5:30 pm.



Housekeeping notes:

We're closed on President's Day – 2/20.

Chicken order forms are available at the counter – stop in and ask for one. We'll have all the supplies, from heat lamps and starter feed to grit, to ensure the success of your chicks!

Now that our cold snap (and it really SNAPPED!!!) is behind us, the abnormally warm weather is back – beware March!! The urge to “clean up the yard” is going to be harder and harder to resist...it's ok to clean off the edges of the lawn along the street and other hyper-managed areas, but that's about as far as you should go for now. Why? The native insects – including the bees and other beneficials – are still hibernating. They hibernate in duff, untidy edges, uncut back perennials and wild corners. If you clean down your garden now, you'll kill them all. It's critical to wait for the clean down urge to manifest until AFTER the red maples start blooming. Those blossoms are the first real food for the insects and they will emerge when the flowers start to open. How do you tell what a red maple looks like? Check this website out: <https://bplant.org/compare/91-93> you'll see the flowers up close...and they're both beautiful and loaded with pollen.

We're continuing to make changes in the store both inside and out.

Here's a warehouse change: Beginning in March The Good Earth will become a direct Poulin Grain distributor! What does this mean for you? It means that we will be able to access high quality feed for all kinds of farm animals. This includes one of the best egg production feeds available called Poulin Egg Production Plus for chickens and ducks – a SOY FREE high protein feed that produces healthy birds that produce VERY healthy eggs (we've used this for years with our duck flock). You will see the difference... What other feeds are there? There's Sweet Goat, Pig Grower and Finisher, Horse and Cattle feeds of all kinds, Alpaca and Rabbit feeds, Green Mountain Organic grains and much more. If you're looking for a specific grain, PLEASE let us know, and we'll see what we can do! Poulin has exquisite quality control – and that matters in a world where quality control can be a nebulous thing...

Our latest inside move (after the addition of our wonderful houseplant wall) is to introduce a working library (the Lane Reading Nook!) in the back of the store (with a comfortable chair no less!). These are books from our personal libraries that focus on all of the aspects of healthy plants and animals living in a healthy environment – that just happens to have healthy people working in it as well!!

We realize that the norm these days is to grab the phone and punch a quick question in to Google or whatever search engine suits us best. Nothing wrong with that approach of course, but there is huge value in having a library of books to poke and prod through. Why?? Because there are LOTS of challenges to growing healthy animals and plants – and managing land well for the long haul – and that “poking and prodding” is the way to see how facts, ideas and ideas correlate with each other and to use that mental network to create successful farm and

garden strategies. We're inviting you to stop by and do your own poking. We're always happy to help with specific questions if those come up!

With those questions in mind – we're offering a workshop this coming Saturday, 2/18, 1:00-2:30 on Designing a Productive Home Landscape (\$15/person). This is the place to come and start the process of understanding your yard and what you can do with it – and what you need to achieve your garden goals. It's the jumping off point for a series of workshops that look at developing healthy soils, planting bare root trees, mixing minerals, making raised beds really work and homestead berries, to name a few. It's a pretty marvelous world once you know how to work with it!

We've talked to many of you recently about the best potting soil for all of the plant projects that come up this time of year. From Happy Frog to Promix, from Stonington Blend to Black Gold – there are so many options to choose from... For all of you who have stopped by to ask about the best potting soil for your early seeds we're offering a Seed Starting Program on 2/25, 1:00-2:30pm. The workshop includes pots, seed inoculant, soil mix and a package of seed (\$30). Space is limited so be sure to register early!!

And we've not forgotten our four-footed friends

If you're an enthusiastic owner of Rabbits, Guinea pigs and other small house pets or considering adding them to your household, we're inviting you to check out the Rabbits and Other Small House Pets workshop on 2/25, 10:00-11:30am. The House Rabbit Network and the Guinea Pig Rescue will bring live animals and walk through what it takes to keep these animals healthy and happy. No charge for this workshop but we're asking that you donate to the Network (suggested donation \$15) if that works for you.

And for the dogs in your life... If you've ever thought to try one of the frozen "slightly" raw dog foods now is the time! For the next ten days (2/17-2/27), you can pick up one of Stella & Chewy's Fresh Made packs from our freezers. There are 4 flavors and here's the link for one of them so you can check out the ingredients...<https://www.stellaandchewys.com/product/dog-food/frozen-and-freeze-dried-raw-dog-food/frozen-gently-cooked/freshmade/fresh-made-meat-a-palooza/> \$8.59 each (regularly \$10.99 each) – limit 4 to a customer please! Please bring along a copy of this newsletter and we'll show you the options.



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February 1, 2023
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