

## Herbs for You and Your Dog

**Recipes to use grow-at-home herbs in ways both you and your dog can enjoy.**

*By Tom Barthel*

Windowsill herbs, grown at home the organic way, make the perfect ingredient for a special treat you and your dog can enjoy. Everyday freshness is only a snip away. Whether you use them to enhance your life or your dog's, the many benefits these year-round culinary delights bring is well worth the small effort it takes to grow them. Use these easy tips and recipes to make the most of your all-natural bounty.

### Wheatgrass

Wheatgrass has some amazing health benefits. Its ability to boost the immune system is renowned. Discover what smoothie shops have known for years. Fresh wheatgrass grown on a sunny windowsill makes a great supplement to a well-balanced diet.

#### Wheatgrass Smoothie For You

##### Ingredients:

- 1 banana
- ½ cup fresh blueberries
- 1 cup low-fat plain yogurt
- 1 tablespoon ground flax seed
- Splash of orange juice
- 2- to 3-inch diameter bunch of fresh wheatgrass

Blend all ingredients together. Sweeten to taste with wildflower honey or organic agave nectar.

#### Wheatgrass Smoothie For Your Dog

##### Ingredients:

- ½ banana
- 1 tablespoon applesauce
- cup fresh blueberries
- ½ cup low-fat plain yogurt
- 1½ teaspoon ground flax seed
- 2- to 3-inch diameter bunch of fresh wheatgrass

Blend all ingredients together and serve.

### Ginger Root

Known for its ability to soothe upset stomachs and ease the symptoms of nausea, ginger root has long been an ingredient in wonder tonics the world over. Easily grown as a houseplant, ginger makes the perfect addition to a holistic home with health-conscious people and their pets.

#### Ginger Root Tea For You

Dice 1 teaspoon of fresh ginger root and steep it in a mug of hot water. Drink after meals and when upset stomach and nausea occur.

#### Ginger Root Tea For Your Dog

Dice 1 teaspoon of fresh ginger root and steep in a mug of hot water. Allow the tea to cool thoroughly and offer to your pet at 2 teaspoons per 10 pounds of body weight as needed for gastrointestinal distress. To enhance the experience, sweeten the tea with a touch of honey. Pour any leftover tea into an ice cube tray and freeze the doses for future use.

### Parsley

A versatile cooking herb, iron-rich parsley adds more than just flavor to dishes for people and their dogs. The compounds found in this super plant mimic the hemoglobin that carries oxygen on red blood cells. Its natural astringent, cleansing, and deodorizing properties mean it also leaves the breath fresh and clean.

#### Parsley Beauty Tonic For You

Parsley has been used for centuries as a cleansing, revitalizing cosmetic treatment. Make your own tonic for more radiant and supple hair and skin. Just take a generous clump of parsley (about ½ cup), chop the parsley and add it to one cup boiling water. Steep for one hour, cool and use on the skin and hair as part of your daily hair and skin regimen.

#### Parsley Fresh-Breath Treats For Your Dog

##### Ingredients:

- 1¾ cup lukewarm meat or vegetable broth
- 1½ teaspoon dry yeast
- 1¾ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup whole wheat pastry flour
- ½ cup yellow cornmeal
- ¼ cup fat-free powdered milk
- 1 tablespoon fresh chopped parsley

Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Dissolve yeast in lukewarm broth and let stand until foamy (about 10 minutes). Stir in dry ingredients and fresh herbs. Roll the dough out to ¼-inch thickness. Cut shapes with your favorite cookie cutters, and bake on a greased cookie sheet for 45 minutes. Turn off oven, and allow biscuits to finish hardening 10 to 12 hours. Recipe makes 20 to 30 biscuits, depending on the size and shape.

Get growing on a sunny sill in your home and reap the many benefits fresh herbs can offer. With even one or two herbs on the sill, you'll discover endless green options for enriching your life and your dog's.

Tom Barthel is a Michigan-based master gardener and freelance writer specializing in pet and gardening topics.

Pick up the February 2010 issue of DOG FANCY to learn how to grow your own windowsill herbs.