

EXTRA!

A CURSIVE GLANCE
THE ART OF PORTION CONTROL
LET'S GET GROWING!
WONDERFUL WINTER SQUASH RECIPES



JANUARY 2022

PHOTO: YINYANG/GETTY IMAGES

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ASTRONOMY

Sky Map for January

WIT

Humor Me
*Grins and groans
from the Almanac*

WHAT'S NEXT

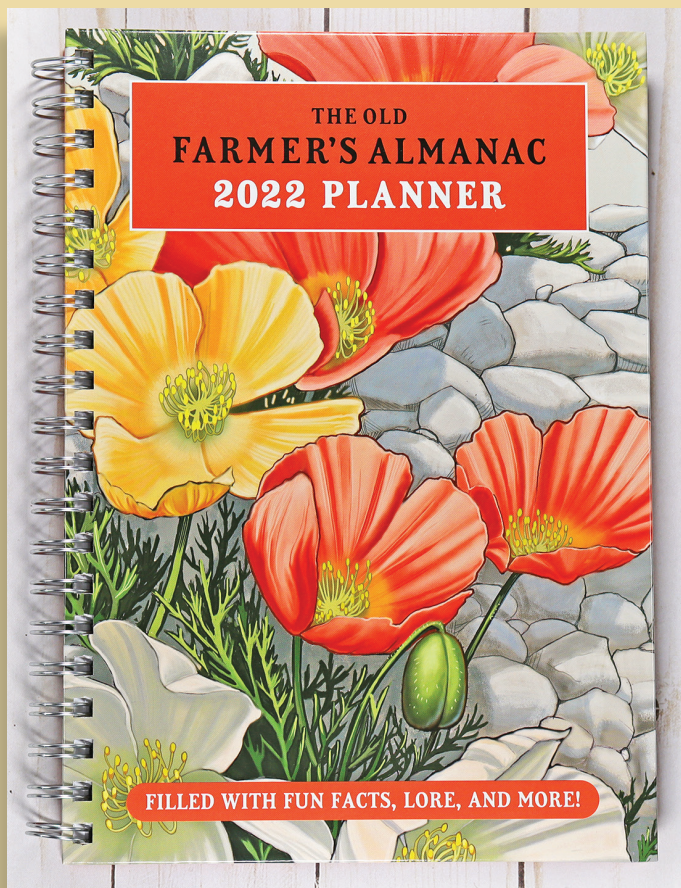
See what we have
in store for our
February issue!



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JANUARY

Holidays, Full Moon Names, and More



EYE ON THE SKY

JANUARY'S FULL MOON NAMES

Wolf Moon, Canada Goose Moon,
Severe Moon

MOON PHASES

New Moon: Jan. 2, 1:33 P.M. EST

First Quarter: Jan. 9, 1:11 P.M. EST

Full Moon: Jan. 17, 6:48 P.M. EST

Last Quarter: Jan. 25, 8:41 A.M. EST

SPECIAL EVENT

January 4 is the time of perihelion, when Earth is closest to the Sun for the year: 91,406,842 miles.



TAP FOR MORE ABOUT MOON PHASES



TAP FOR MORE ABOUT JANUARY'S FULL MOON

JANUARY'S BIRTHSTONE

Garnet: The garnet is thought to keep the wearer safe during travel—but not all mined garnets are worn as jewelry. Lower-quality garnets are used in products such as garnet-coated sandpaper for grinding and polishing.

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

Jan. 1: New Year's Day

Jan. 6: Epiphany

Jan. 8: Elvis Presley's Birthday

Jan. 17: Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday, observed

Jan. 17: Ben Franklin's Birthday



Order your 2022 Old Farmer's Almanac calendars at [Almanac.com/Shop](https://www.almanac.com/Shop).



BEST DAYS TO DO THINGS

These January dates, deemed to be propitious in astrology, are based on the astrological passage of the Moon. However, consider all indicators before making any major decisions. —*Celeste Longacre*

AROUND THE HOUSE

Bake: 15–17

Brew: 25, 26

Can, pickle, or make sauerkraut:
25, 26

Demolish: 25, 26

Dry fruit, vegetables, or meat: 27, 28

End projects: 1

Lay shingles: 18, 19

Make jams or jellies: 6, 7

Paint: 23, 24

Start projects: 3

Wash floors: 6, 7

Wash windows: 8, 9



OUTDOORS

Begin logging: 2, 3, 29, 30
Go camping: 1, 27, 28
Go fishing: 2–17
Set posts or pour concrete: 2, 3, 29, 30

IN THE GARDEN

Destroy pests and weeds: 8, 9
Graft or pollinate: 15–17
Harvest aboveground crops: 10–12
Harvest belowground crops: 20–22
Mow to promote growth: 8, 9
Mow to slow growth: 25, 26
Pick fruit: 20–22
Plant aboveground crops: 6, 7
Plant belowground crops: 25, 26
Prune to discourage growth: 27, 28
Prune to encourage growth: 8, 9

ON THE FARM

Breed animals: 25, 26
Castrate animals: 4, 5, 31
Cut hay: 8, 9

Purchase animals: 15–17
Set eggs: 12, 13, 22, 23
Slaughter livestock: 25, 26
Wean animals: 22, 26

PERSONAL

Advertise to sell: 10–12
Ask for a loan: 25, 26
Begin diet to gain weight: 7, 12
Begin diet to lose weight: 22, 26
Buy a home: 10–12
Color hair: 10–12
Cut hair to discourage growth: 23, 24
Cut hair to encourage growth: 10–12
Entertain: 18, 19
Get married: 23, 24
Have dental care: 20–22
Move (house/household): 13, 14
Perm hair: 4, 5, 31
Quit smoking: 22, 26
Straighten hair: 1, 27, 28
Travel for pleasure: 18, 19
Wean children: 22, 26



GARDENING BY THE MOON'S SIGN

Use the January dates shown in the Moon's Astrological Place calendar below to find the best days for the following garden tasks:

PLANT, TRANSPLANT, AND GRAFT: Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces, or Taurus

HARVEST: Aries, Leo, Sagittarius, Gemini, or Aquarius

BUILD/FIX FENCES OR GARDEN BEDS: Capricorn

CONTROL INSECT PESTS, PLOW, AND WEED: Aries, Gemini, Leo, Sagittarius, or Aquarius

PRUNE: Aries, Leo, or Sagittarius. During a waxing Moon, pruning encourages growth; during a waning Moon, it discourages growth.

THE MOON'S ASTROLOGICAL PLACE IN JANUARY

1 Sagittarius	9 Aries	17 Cancer	25 Scorpio
2 Capricorn	10 Taurus	18 Leo	26 Scorpio
3 Capricorn	11 Taurus	19 Leo	27 Sagittarius
4 Aquarius	12 Taurus	20 Virgo	28 Sagittarius
5 Aquarius	13 Gemini	21 Virgo	29 Capricorn
6 Pisces	14 Gemini	22 Virgo	30 Capricorn
7 Pisces	15 Cancer	23 Libra	31 Aquarius
8 Aries	16 Cancer	24 Libra	



TAP FOR
MERCURY IN
RETROGRADE
DATES



TAP FOR
JANUARY
MOON PHASES

MERCURY IN RETROGRADE

Sometimes the other planets appear to be traveling backward through the zodiac; this is an illusion. We call this illusion *retrograde motion*.

Mercury's retrograde periods can cause our plans to go awry. However, this is an excellent time to reflect on the past. Intuition is high during these periods, and coincidences can be extraordinary.

When Mercury is retrograde, remain flexible, allow extra time for travel, and avoid signing contracts. Review projects and plans at these times, but wait until Mercury is direct again to make any final decisions.

Mercury's 2022 retrograde periods:
January 13–February 3, May 10–June 2, September 9–October 1, and December 28–(January 18, 2023).

–*Celeste Longacre*

Celebrating its 45th anniversary in 2022, the best-selling Old Farmer's Almanac Gardening Calendar is filled with beautiful art, helpful tips, insightful quotes, and an easy-to-use grid with holidays and Moon phases. Order yours today at [Almanac.com/Shop](https://www.almanac.com/shop).

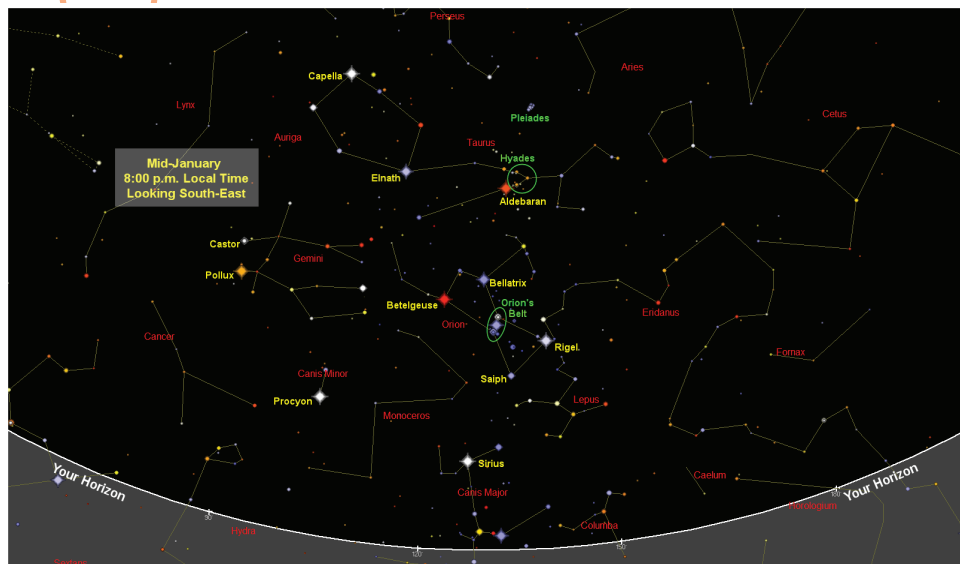
The 2022 Old Farmer's Almanac Moon Calendar



Find answers to these and other questions:

- What do we mean by the “dark side of the Moon”?
- How does the Moon affect the tides?
- What causes a deep red Moon?

ORDER NOW



THE BRIGHTEST SKY OF THE YEAR!

The combination of crisp, clear winter nights and a southeastern sky filled with celestial wonders makes it well worth bundling up and scanning the heavens in January.

Orion, the Hunter, is not the largest constellation, but it is unquestionably the brightest. It's home to a pair of the sky's Top 10 brightest stars, ruddy Betelgeuse and blue-white Rigel. Star colors are notoriously difficult to discern, but on a clear night, the differing hues of Betelgeuse and Rigel are plain to see at Orion's right shoulder and left knee, respectively.

Somewhat less luminous are Bellatrix at the Hunter's left shoulder and Mintaka, Alnilam, and Alnitak, which comprise Orion's Belt. Saiph, at his right knee, would be a noteworthy star in any other celestial neighborhood, but it doesn't even crack the Top 5 in mighty Orion.



TAP TO GET
A PRINTABLE
JANUARY
SKY MAP



TAP TO
FOLLOW
OHIOAN JEFF
DETRAY'S SKY
ADVENTURES



Above Orion stands Taurus, the Bull, his long horns jutting to the left and one baleful eye represented by the reddish star Aldebaran. Nearby lies a group of stars that make up the Hyades star cluster. The members of the Hyades lie fairly close together in space, but despite its apparent proximity, Aldebaran is *not* a part of the cluster. It is much closer to us than the Hyades (one reason that it appears brighter) and just happens to lie along the same line of sight. This is one of countless examples where celestial objects appear near one another from our point of view, but vast differences in distance mean that they are actually far apart.

Above the Hyades are the Pleiades, also known as the Seven Sisters, which are among the most famous of star clusters. This cluster is so distinctive and its location so prominent that dozens of ancient cultures found a place in their mythologies for the Pleiades. Most people with good vision can spot five stars when they gaze at the Pleiades. However, if your eyesight is especially acute and the sky is wonderfully clear, you may see seven or even more. If you do, you have “the eyes of a warrior,” as ancient lore decreed.

Off to the left is the five-sided figure of Auriga, the Charioteer. The star Elnath is shared between Auriga and Taurus, making it one of the few stars that belongs to two constellations.

Swinging downward, we find Gemini, the Twins. Their names are Castor and Pollux, with stars of those names representing the heads of the reclining twins. They lie holding hands, their legs and feet stretched out toward Orion.

Continuing counterclockwise around the sky, we reach Canis Minor, the Lesser Dog. Its only bright star is Procyon, a name meaning “before the dog.” This refers to the fact that on any given night, Procyon rises above the horizon a few minutes before the bright star Sirius, whose nickname is “the Dog Star.” Thus, Procyon rises “before the dog.”

We’ll skip over the dim constellation Monoceros to reach Canis Major, the Greater Dog. This figure is home to the aforementioned Sirius, which just happens to be the brightest star in the night sky—almost twice as bright as any other! Sirius appears so bright to us because it is both extremely luminous and relatively nearby.

Enjoy the January sky—the brightest of the year!

—Jeff DeTray



Wonderful Winter Squash Recipes

Winter squashes are nutritional powerhouses packed with vitamins and minerals.

They are an excellent source of vitamins A and C, fiber, magnesium, niacin, folate, iron, and potassium. All types are versatile in the kitchen—you can prepare them by roasting, steaming, pan-frying, or puréeing into a soup. Here you'll find some creative ideas to help to make squash the highlight of your winter meal.

FOOD

Stuffed Acorn Squash



PHOTO: BECKY LUGART-STAYNER

STUFFED ACORN SQUASH

- 1 large acorn squash, halved and seeded
- olive oil, to taste
- salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 pound ground sausage
- 1 apple or pear, cored and diced

Preheat oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil.

Place squash, cut side up, on prepared baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake for 30 to 45 minutes, or until flesh is tender.

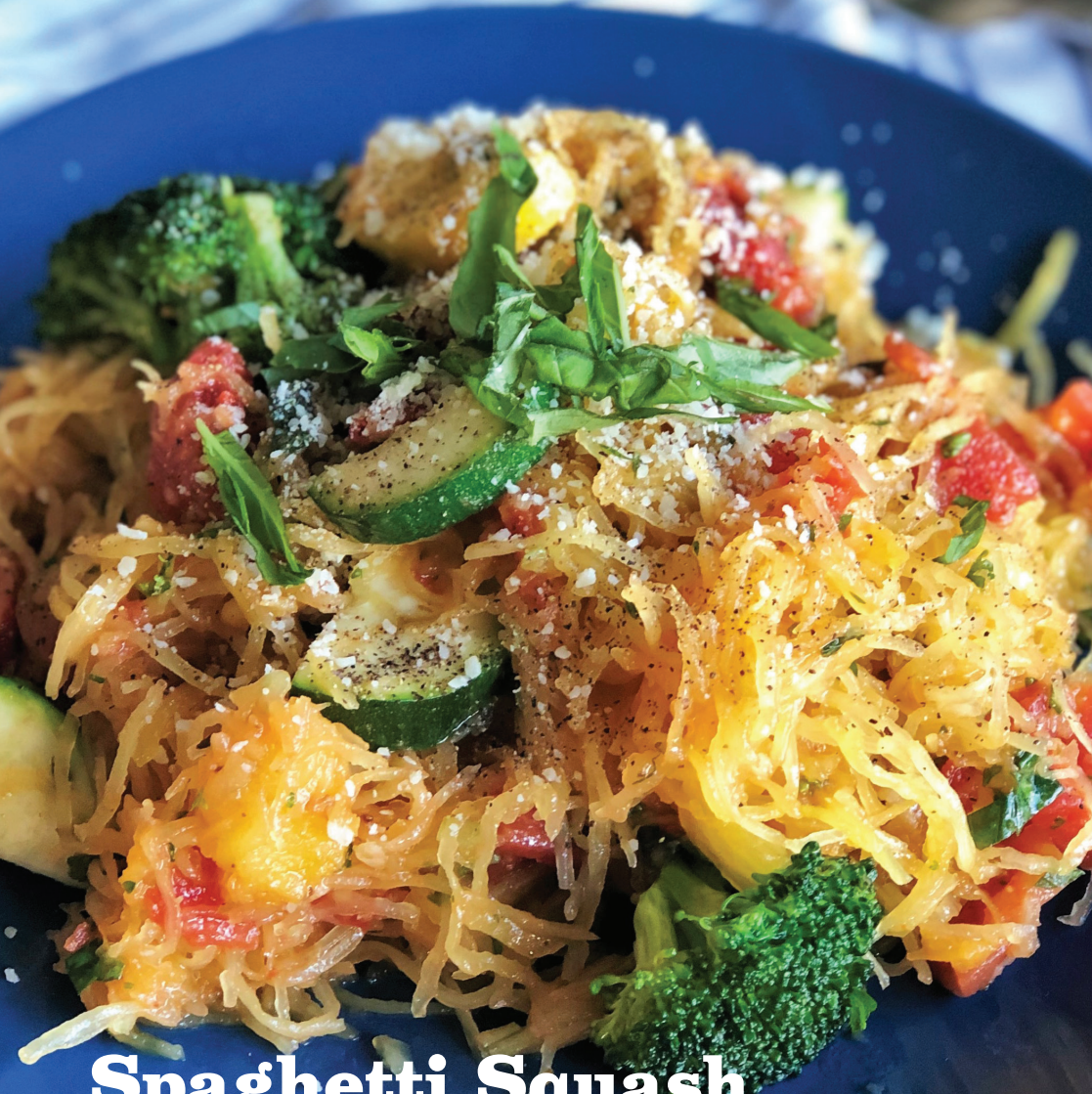
In a skillet over medium heat, brown sausage. When cooked thoroughly, add apples and stir until fruit is softened. Season with salt and pepper.

Stuff cooked squash cavity with sausage mixture. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes more. Cool slightly before serving.

Makes 2 servings.

Looking for more great recipes? Get a copy of our best-selling cookbook with recipes from you, our readers. *The Old Farmer's Almanac Readers' Best Recipes* is filled with tried-and-true recipes that keep folks coming back for more, plus the stories behind them! Store.almanac.com/cookbook-readers-best-recipes/

FOOD



Spaghetti Squash Vegetable Medley

SPAGHETTI SQUASH VEGETABLE MEDLEY

- 1 can (28 ounces) Italian-style tomatoes**
- 3 cloves garlic, minced**
- 1/3 cup plus 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided**
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh basil**
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano**
- 1 medium spaghetti squash**
- 2 cups broccoli florets**
- 1 zucchini, sliced**
- 1 summer squash, sliced**
- 1/2 cup scallions, white part only, chopped**
- 3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese**
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste**

Prepare sauce ahead of time: Drain tomatoes and place in a bowl with garlic, 1/3 cup of olive oil, basil, parsley, salt, and oregano. Cover and let stand at room temperature.

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Cut spaghetti squash in half, remove seeds, and drizzle with 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes, or until tender when pierced with a fork. Let cool, then use a fork to scrape strands of squash from shell into a large bowl. Cover and set aside.

Steam broccoli, zucchini, and summer squash until each is fork tender.

In a large skillet over medium heat, warm remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Add scallions and cook until soft. Add steamed vegetables and heat thoroughly. Add vegetable mixture to the bowl of squash along with tomato sauce and stir to combine. Sprinkle with Parmesan and season with pepper. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Makes 6 servings.

Butternut Squash Spice Cake



BUTTERNUT SQUASH SPICE CAKE

CAKE:

1 cup all-purpose flour
1-1/4 cups sugar, divided
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon ground allspice
1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
4 eggs, separated, plus 5 egg whites,
at room temperature
1 cup cooked, puréed butternut squash

FROSTING:

1 cup heavy whipping cream
6 ounces cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 cup toasted pecan pieces
1/2 cup caramel ice cream topping

For cake: Preheat oven to 350°F. Get out a 10-inch tube pan with removable bottom.

In a bowl, combine flour, 3/4 cup sugar, spices, baking powder, and salt.

In a separate bowl, combine egg yolks and squash. Add squash mixture to flour mixture and stir to blend.

In another bowl, beat egg whites with an electric mixer for 2 minutes, or until foamy. Gradually add remaining sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time. Increase mixer speed to high and beat until stiff peaks form.

Using a rubber spatula, fold 1/4 of egg white mixture into squash mixture, just until no streaks remain. Repeat with remaining egg white mixture.

Pour batter into pan. Bake for 55 minutes, or until toothpick inserted into cake comes out clean.

Cool for 5 minutes, then invert pan onto narrow-necked bottle. Allow to hang upside down until completely cooled.

Invert cake and transfer to cake plate or platter to be frosted.

For frosting: In a bowl, whip cream until stiff peaks form.

In a separate bowl, combine cream cheese, sugar, vanilla, and spices.

Using a rubber spatula, fold whipped cream into cream cheese mixture until combined.

Frost sides and top of cake. Sprinkle with toasted pecans.

Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Drizzle cake with caramel ice cream topping before serving.

Makes 10 to 12 servings.

GARDENING



Let's Get Growing!

The ground might be frozen and snowfall may be in the forecast, but for gardeners, it's time to start planning this year's vegetable crops. To help you through this heady time of new beginnings, we offer the following advice.

PHOTO: JULIJA KUMPINOVICA/GETTY IMAGES

WHEN ORDERING SEEDS

- **Obtain catalogs or peruse Web sites** from companies located in your part of the world as well as from distant businesses and compare their offerings and prices. Some of the small regional seed sources carry heirlooms and special varieties best suited to your area.
- Before you place an order, contact your local county **Cooperative Extension service** office and ask about varieties that are known to do well in your area. Discuss any specific problems that you've had with pests or disease.
- **Make a list** of what you'd like to grow but check it twice before you order. A pause or two will give you a chance to change your mind. Remember that the garden is actually one-quarter the size that you think it is. Plan to buy enough seeds to sow them thickly. Inevitably, you'll suffer some losses (to bugs, birds, weather), and

you can always thin later if you end up with an excess.

- Pay careful attention to the **number of days to maturity** included in every catalog description. If your growing season has 85 predictable frost-free days, chances are that you won't harvest a watermelon that needs 120 days to ripen.
- **Avoid discounted seeds** sold at chain stores. They probably haven't been stored under ideal conditions, and you may find germination to be spotty.

MAKE A PEA-PLANTING BOARD

The key to growing peas is to plant them early enough in spring that they mature while the weather is still cool. This means planting in February, March (traditionally March 17, St. Patrick's Day), or April in most parts of the United States and Canada.

No matter where you reside, you can be assured of a perfectly

spaced crop—and keep clean fingers—with this clever tool. Start with a 1x6-inch board that is 46 inches long and draw a line lengthwise down the center. On both sides of the center line, 2 inches away from it, draw lines running parallel to the first one. Next, draw a horizontal line every 2 inches from the top of the board to the bottom. Where the lines intersect, drill a hole large enough to let a pea seed pass through. The finished board should have three holes across in 22 rows, or a total of 66 holes. Lay the board onto prepared soil and place a pea seed into each hole. Use a chopstick to poke the peas down into the soil.

3 INDOOR SEED-STARTING SECRETS

1. Start your tomato seeds 6 to 8 weeks before the average last spring frost. (Check the date for your location at Almanac.com/gardening/frostdates.) Delay until

early April in the Northeast and Midwest and then start them in a sunny spot at about 70°F. Keep the soil barely moist, watering in the morning and letting it dry throughout the day to prevent damping-off disease.

2. Peppers have the highest germination rate when the soil temperature is 70° to 80°F. Pamper them by watering from the top with warm water.

3. Get an early cucumber crop going by starting seeds indoors, giving them bottom heat at about 70°F. If you don't have a heat mat, put the seed flats on top of the refrigerator or perch a few 4-packs on top of the water heater.

TAKE SOME CHANCES

A pumpkin grower recommends this trick for an early and big crop: Sow some of your pumpkin seeds in the ground a few days before your last expected frost. Ten days later, when the sprouts

begin to appear, sow a second row about 6 inches from the first. If a late killing frost arrives, you can depend on the second crop. If it doesn't, pull out the second planting as if it were weeds.

As early as the soil can be worked in spring, sow some of your beets, Swiss chard and other greens, brussels sprouts, cabbage, lettuce, onions, parsley, peas, radishes, spinach, and turnips. These seeds will tolerate cool weather, so you might get a jump on the season. (Be more cautious with beans, carrots, corn, cucumbers, melons, and squash.)

GET SETS (OF ONIONS)

Onions are a cool-season crop. Think of them as a leaf crop, not a root crop. Plant onion sets (not seeds) as soon as the ground can be worked and temperatures will not decline below 28°F. (Onion seeds should be started indoors.) When planting sets, which are

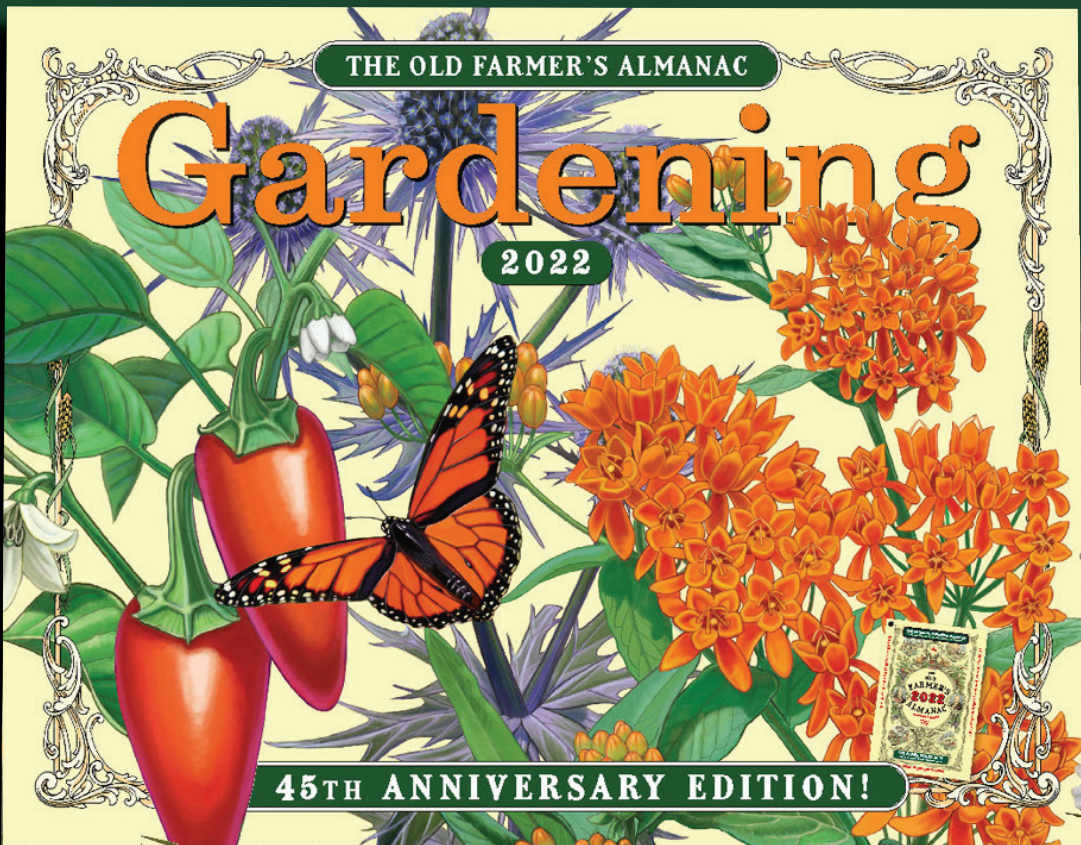
very small onions ideally about 3/4 of an inch in diameter, don't bury them in the soil; if more than the bottom third of the bulb is underground, growth can be restricted.

TRY A CARROT OR PARSNIP PIT

Carrots and parsnips grow best in loose (not packed) soil that is free from stones. As soon as the soil can be worked, prepare rows of special holes for each of them: Stick a crowbar into the soil about a foot deep and rotate it to form a cone-shape pit about 4 inches across. Fill this hole with sifted soil, lay four seeds (of one vegetable; do not mix them) on the surface, and push them in about 1/2 inch deep. Make other pits 6 to 8 inches apart along the row. Note that parsnips have a much longer growing season than carrots.

For more gardening advice, go to Almanac.com/gardening.

The 2022 Old Farmer's Almanac Gardening Calendar



- A perennial favorite of gardeners for 45 years
- Advice, folklore, and gardening secrets!
- Size: 10 7/8" wide x 16 3/4" tall (open)

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AMUSEMENT



A Cursive Glance

... in honor of National Handwriting Day, January 23

PHOTO: PEOPLEIMAGES/GETTY IMAGES

Do the names Platt Rogers Spencer and Austin Norman Palmer mean anything to you? They are “penmasters” who developed methods of teaching handwriting. Theirs are the classic American hands, with varying degrees of loops and swirls and flourishes.

In the late 19th century, penmanship was taught to everyone as a basic skill. Uniform handwriting was essential in business and a mark of fine upbringing. The main style of penmanship taught throughout the 1800s was a descendant of British script called the round hand. Platt Rogers Spencer (1800–1864) gave the British round hand a slant and simplified the letters.

Austin Norman Palmer (1857–1927), along with other writing reformers of his day, streamlined the more ornate Spencerian system for practical business use

and for teaching children. After the Roman Catholic teaching order and the New York City school system adopted his method around the turn of the 20th century, Palmer’s career took off. By 1920, the majority of schools in the United States used Palmer materials—penmanship magazines and school lesson books, pens, paper, and even ink powder that dissolved in tap water.

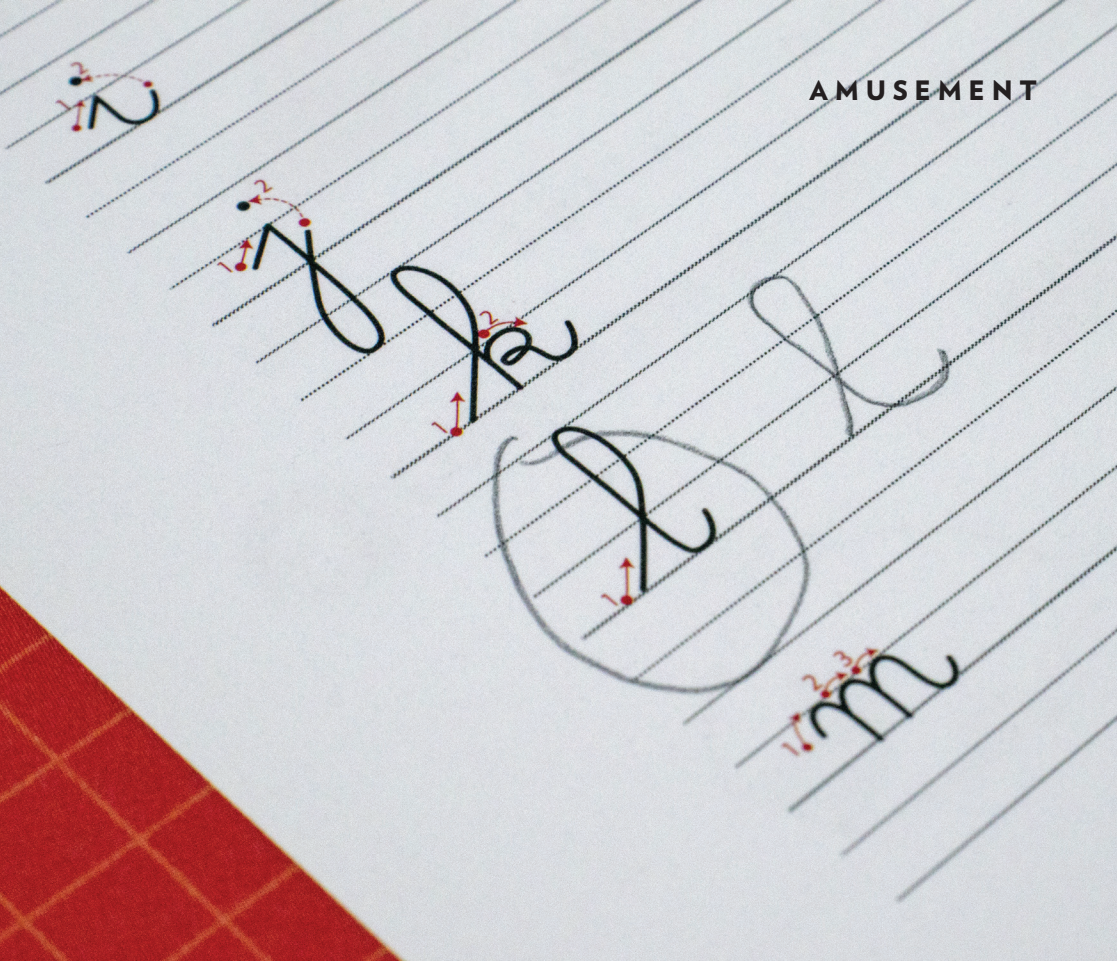
Many, if not most, children in elementary school from the 1920s through the 1950s learned the Palmer method of handwriting, involving endless drills at the blackboard and on paper. If you were left-handed, you probably were corrected and coerced into using your right hand instead or you were taught to slant your paper and letters as if you were right-handed.

To those who could do Palmer’s infamous loops and coils up to his standards

and who submitted writing samples to his magazine, *The Western Penman*, the penmaster awarded beautifully engraved certificates of recognition. Exceptional talent won a Palmer medal.

Complicating the handwriting scene in the era between the World Wars was the insistence among many educators that students learn to print in grades 1 and 2, then switch to cursive in grade 3. Before this, all children had to learn cursive from the start. The transition was, according to one handwriting historian, “like teaching math entirely in Roman numerals up into third grade, then turning to Arabic numerals.”

In the last decades of the 20th century, penmanship classes and the Palmer method fell out of favor. Lefties were allowed to do their own thing, and no one style prevailed. In the 1960s,



forms of the D'Nealian system were adopted in many schools, but this simplified form of cursive still required the third-grade switch.

The next innovation in handwriting came in 1974, with Charles Lehman's Simple Italic Handwriting. Lehman's

system used the same letters for both printing and cursive, simply joining the printing with short lines. This variation of italic handwriting grew in popularity. Two of its proponents—Barbara Getty and Inga Dubay of Portland, Oregon—developed a simple

system for teaching rapid, legible handwriting to children and adults, with special legibility workshops for doctors because, says Getty, “If the pharmacist misreads the prescription, it can be deadly.”

—Barbara Getty and
Art Maier

LIVING NATURALLY



The Art of Portion Control

Public health officials tell us that the “portion size” in American meals is way out of whack.

It’s out of whack with our metabolic needs that plate size, bowl size, cup size, muffin size, restaurant serving size, and movie-popcorn-bucket size have all expanded dramatically in recent decades—and, along with this, the sizes of our hips and tummies.

Some experts suggest shrinking the size of our plates and bowls or eating healthier meals from a large plate and calorie-dense, less healthy choices on smaller plates.

Others suggest reducing portions by sticking to relatively tasteless foods, allowing ourselves only one or

two tastes per meal, or adhering to a low-fat, high-fat, or high-protein diet.

Whether artfully arranged on a large plate or nestling against each other on a small plate, small portions make me feel anxious. Confronting those endless amounts of food at buffets gives me fits. If I try to limit how much I’ll take from the delicious foods available, I’ll feel beset by intrusive thoughts of wanting to eat them. If I do indulge, I’ll eat myself into a stupor and feel lousy for a day or two.

That’s been true ever since I can remember having thoughts about food. It doesn’t matter how peaceful the setting, how beautifully composed the dishes, how pleasant

the company, how unappealing the food, or even how hungry I am. I invariably feel uncomfortable when I see only small portions on my plate.

Over many years of reading and thinking—not to mention eating, cooking, growing and writing about “healthy” food—I’ve discovered three simple rules for managing my own portion distortion and the anxiety that comes from thinking about how to eat in moderation.

1. I stay away from all-you-can-eat buffets and bottomless-bowl establishments. I know all too well how I’ll feel if I try to eat less and how I’ll feel if I eat what I want.

2. I plan almost all of my meals and fill my plate (or stuff my soups

Whether artfully arranged on a large plate or nestling against each other on a small plate, small portions make me feel anxious.

The snacks that I keep available are raw, unsalted nuts; sunflower seeds; and raisins. Nothing too delicious.

and chilis) with large portions of green, red, and yellow vegetables, dressing them lightly with a dab of butter or olive-oil dressing. This leaves just enough room on the plate or bowl for tucking in a normal serving of fish or chicken (the size of a deck of cards) and a small mound of rice, beans, or quinoa (1/3 to 1/2 cup).

3. I especially love piling my plate with roasted vegetables, which need no dressing other than a bit of olive oil to keep them from sticking to the roasting pan.

Research that I've seen has convinced me that eating a wide variety of raw and cooked vegetables is important for preventing disease and having an abundance of energy.

I've never seen research that cautions about overdosing on colorful vegetables. If anything, an abundance of research urges people to eat more, a lot more, of them. I feel grateful that I love vegetables and that I have the ability to grow most of my own.

Since I know I won't control my "portion size" of snacks, desserts, and rich entrées, I take a zero-serving approach to these foods in my home. I simply don't buy or make them, except on the special occasions noted below. The snacks that I keep available are raw, unsalted nuts; sunflower seeds; and raisins. Nothing too delicious.

I will admit that on rare, special occasions, like fall/winter holidays

and birthdays, we don't restrain ourselves. Eat a whole pint of New York Superfudge Chunk? Atop a homemade brownie? Finished off with hot fudge sauce, whipped cream, and walnuts?

Why not?!

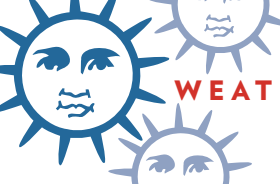
These special indulgences at home and occasional celebrations with friends or relatives keep us from becoming rigid or holier-than-thou about our dietary habits.

There's a trick to it, though: I buy or make only enough delectables to finish them all off in that one big splurge. And when we're eating out, we don't take home leftovers.

—Margaret Boyles



TAP TO READ MORE OF MARGARET BOYLES'S POSTS IN HER "LIVING NATURALLY" BLOG



WEATHER FORECASTS

IF JANUARY CALEND BE SUMMERLY GAY, IT WILL BE WINTERLY WEATHER TILL THE CALEND OF MAY.

HOW WE MAKE OUR PREDICTIONS

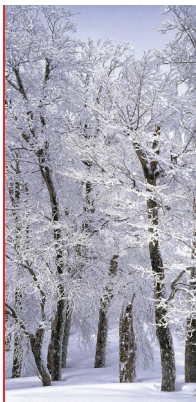
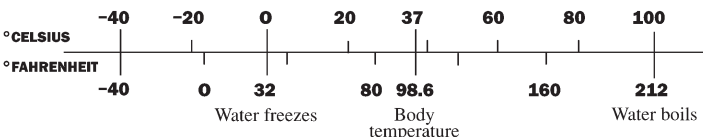
We derive our weather forecasts from a secret formula that was devised by the founder of this Almanac, Robert B. Thomas, in 1792. Thomas believed that weather on Earth was influenced by sunspots, which are magnetic storms on the surface of the Sun.

Over the years, we have refined and enhanced this formula with state-of-the-art technology and modern scientific calculations. We employ three scientific disciplines to make our long-range predictions: solar science, the study of sunspots and other solar activity; climatology, the study of prevailing weather patterns; and meteorology, the study of the atmosphere. We predict weather trends and events by comparing solar patterns and historical weather conditions with current solar activity.

Our forecasts emphasize temperature and precipitation deviations from averages, or normals. These are based on 30-year statistical averages prepared by government meteorological agencies and updated every 10 years. Our forecasts are based on the tabulations that span the period 1981 through 2010.

We believe that nothing in the universe happens haphazardly, that there is a cause-and-effect pattern to all phenomena. However, although neither we nor any other forecasters have as yet gained sufficient insight into the mysteries of the universe to predict the weather with total accuracy, our results are almost always very close to our traditional claim of 80 percent.

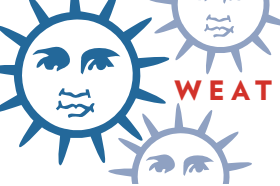
CELSIUS-FAHRENHEIT TABLE



TAP TO FIND OUT THE WEATHER HISTORY OF THE DAY

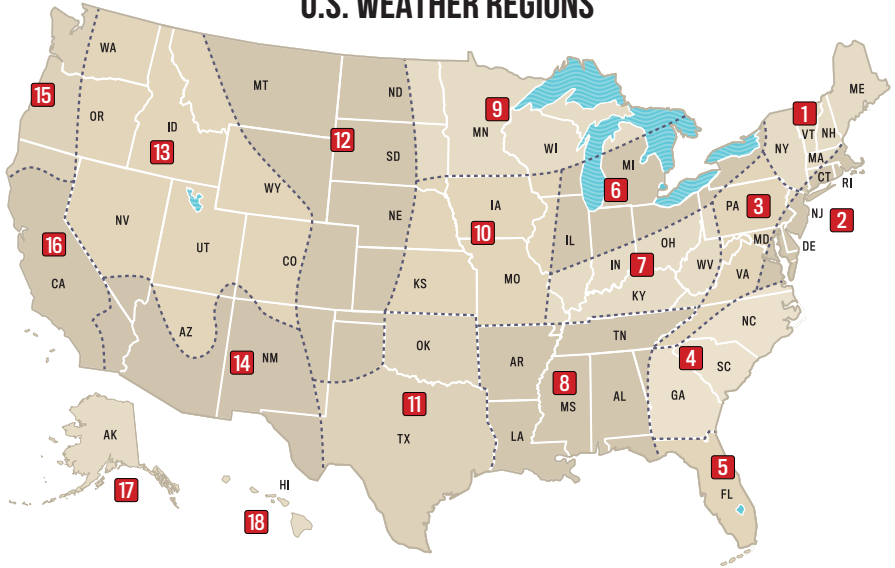


LOVE ALL THINGS WEATHER? TAP FOR THE WEATHER FOLKLORE OF THE DAY



WEATHER FORECASTS

U.S. WEATHER REGIONS



CANADIAN WEATHER REGIONS



CLICK HERE TO
FIND JANUARY
WEATHER
PREDICTIONS
FOR THE U.S.
AND CANADIAN
REGIONS





HAPPY, CHEERFUL, DELIGHTED, ELATED, JOYFUL, AND UPBEAT NEW YEAR!

If you venture outdoors on New Year's Day, you can expect dry weather in New England, Florida, and the Pacific states, with rainy periods elsewhere in the southern states and snow or flurries across most of the northern states and Canada.

January 2 is National Science Fiction Day, and my understanding is that this is the day when Martians will be attacking Earth. As the Martians have learned how to control our weather, their plan is to disrupt our defenses by bringing snow to most of the states and provinces that normally receive it, although they will allow sunshine to prevail in the Pacific states, as that is where their main military bases are located.

Elvis's birthday falls on January 8, and although he always said "Don't Be Cruel" with the weather, "It's Now or Never" for a snowstorm in the Northeast, mid-Atlantic, and Ohio Valley states. Elsewhere in the U.S., many folks will be "Crying in the Chapel" due to snow showers, but our "Burning Love" will make it warm enough for rain showers in Florida, the Southeast and Gulf



states, and Texas and from Washington to California. Meanwhile, folks in the Desert Southwest and Alaska will find that they “Can’t Help Falling in Love” with the sunny weather there. Canadians will find themselves not really “All Shook Up,” as nothing more than snow showers is expected, and we can handle that with “A Little Less Conversation.”

January 17 is the U.S. holiday celebrating Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday (on January 15), as well as the birthday of Benjamin Franklin, whose *Poor Richard’s Almanack* was a best-seller in the American colonies. I have a dream that on this day there will be a snowstorm in the Ohio Valley, rainy periods in Florida and the Gulf states, and snow showers in most other states east of the Mississippi. In the West, since haste makes waste and a penny saved is a penny earned, sunshine will be rewarding most folks for their good endeavors.

Finally, at long last, in conclusion, once and for all, conclusively, beyond a shadow of a doubt, assuredly, and inescapably, January 18 is National Thesaurus Day. Folks in most areas will find the weather on this day to resemble, be similar to, highly correlate to, be much the same as, parallel, be coincident with, align with, and be kindred to the previous day’s conditions, whatever they might have been.

January temperatures will be colder than normal, on average, across most of the United States, although Montana, Alaska, and Hawaii will have above-normal readings. Canadian temperatures will be colder than normal in Nova Scotia, from western Quebec across to Manitoba, and in British Columbia, and near or above normal elsewhere. Precipitation will be above normal in Maine and from Texas and New Mexico northward to Montana and generally below normal in other states. Across Canada, precipitation will be mostly above normal, although Newfoundland and Labrador and British Columbia will be relatively dry.

Important factors in the winter weather pattern include a weak La Niña, a continued warm phase in the Atlantic Multidecadal Oscillation (AMO), a neutral to positive phase in the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO), and the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) in the early stages of its warm cycle. Oscillations are linked ocean atmosphere patterns that influence the weather over periods of weeks to years. This should lead to a colder-than-normal winter across most of the United States with milder-than-normal temperatures across most of Canada.

—Michael Steinberg, *Old Farmer’s Almanac meteorologist*



HUMOR ME

GRINS AND GROANS FROM THE ALMANAC



A CYCLOPEDIA KNOWLEDGE

A college student wishing to earn an honest penny during his vacation decided to sell encyclopedias door to door. At one place, he found an old farmer

working in the field.

"I'd like to sell you a new 'cyclopedia," said the young man.

"Well, young fella," replied the farmer, "I'd like to have one, but I'm afear'd I'm too old to ride the thing."

ASTUTE DIAGNOSIS

A teacher was instructing his class on the body's circulatory system. To make sure that they had understood him, he asked:

"Can you tell me



why it is that if I stood on my head, the blood would rush to my head, but when I stand on my feet, the blood doesn't rush to my feet?"

"Simple," replied one boy. "It's because your feet aren't empty."

GOOD QUESTION

Two judges disliked one another. At a bar supper, one was recounting his circuit rides in the early days of Wisconsin, on one of which he was beset by a fierce thunderstorm.

"At every moment," dramatically recalled the judge, "I expected that lightning would strike the tree under which I had taken shelter!"

Interrupted his nemesis: "Then why in thunder didn't you get under another tree?!"

FITTING COMMENT

A matronly city woman approached two small boys playing near a country road.

"Can you tell me," she asked, "if I can get to the pike through this gate?"

"Yes, ma'am, I think so," answered one. "A load of hay was able to get through 5 minutes ago."

NOT LOST IN TRANSLATION

"Well, Tommy, how are you getting along with your French?"

"Very well, Uncle!" replied the boy. "We're translating real-life sentences now, like 'My uncle never allows my birthday to pass without giving me a present' and 'It is quite certain that my uncle will give me something quite splendid this time.'"

HELPFUL HONESTY

A small boy had taken the prize for an exceptionally well-drawn map. After the examination, the teacher, a little doubtful, asked the lad:

"Who helped you with this map, James?"

"Nobody, sir."

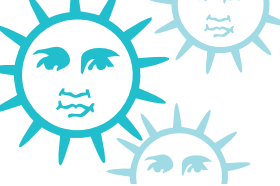
"Come, now, tell the truth. Didn't your brother help you?"

"No, sir. He did it all."

BEEN SOUP

An Englishman went into a restaurant in a New England town and was served for his first course a delicacy unknown to him. He asked the waiter what it was, the reply to which was, "It's bean soup, sir."

"I don't care what it's been," shot back the visitor. "I want to know what it is!"



WHAT'S NEXT



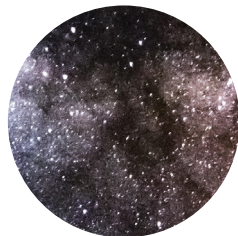
GARDENING

28 Tips for a Garden That's Tops



CALENDAR

Moon phases; February birthstone, holidays, and full Moon names



ASTRONOMY

Explore with our Sky Map



AMUSEMENT

The 12-Step Program for Giving Your Cat a Pill



FOOD

Time for Soup, Stew, and Chowder!



LIVING NATURALLY

Soothing Silence

Plus: Weather Update • U.S. and Canadian Weather Forecasts • Gardening by the Moon's Sign • Best Days to Do Things • Humor • and much more in the February *EXTRA!*

CELEBRATING THE ALMANAC'S 231ST YEAR!