



## From the Broker's Desk

Nancy C. Rowe

Enjoy these beautiful fall days by being outdoors getting your landscaping ready for those harsh winter months that are approaching. If your house is on the market or you anticipate selling in the spring, your landscaping can be a valuable asset. Many buyers will drive by a house before calling for an appointment so the curb appeal is very important. A well maintained lawn indicates a well maintained house to that potential buyer. Be sure that all the lawn art that you have displayed is not excessive or offensive as it can influence a buyer's perception of the interior of your house. Everyone loves to view a lawn with beds of flowering plants and shrubbery but few like the work involved in maintaining this look so don't go overboard in landscaping your yard. Stay with the basics. Use landscaping that best matches the style of your house, be selective in your choice of plants and shrubs so they complement each other yet offer some diversity, plant for the seasons so something is always blooming during the growing seasons and always take time to maintain your existing lawn. Start your maintenance with your soil. Periodically test your soil to be sure that the fertilizer you are using is addressing its pH and nutrient needs. If you have grass that is showing stress or worn down, aerate the areas and reseed. Once grass stops growing, give your lawn one last mowing as blades longer than 3" can damage your lawn during the winter months. Trees and shrubs need annual trimming to prevent damage from snow or ice storms and to control their size. Check the mulch level in your beds and maintain at 2" to 3". Often you can turn existing mulch which will fluff to a level that doesn't require new mulch. If you have an abundance of leaves, you could create your own mulch by mowing over the leaves to break them down and adding to beds as leaves are an excellent source of organic matter. You can also create a compost bin for your leaves so that next year you will have your own fertilizer to use on your lawn and beds. The secret to good compost is turning the leaves frequently to aerate. Flower beds need attention because dying annuals need to be removed as they attract snails and slugs, perennials need their foliage cut back to ground level so there will be no impediment to spring growth and tuberous plants need to be divided for better growth. Maintenance may be needed on retaining walls, walkways, patios, terraces and other focal points in your lawn. One area often overlooked in lawn maintenance is edging which gives a well-defined, neat edge to any ground surface. If you have an irrigation system don't forget to winterize to prevent water freezing and bursting the lines. Likewise, don't forget to unhook your water hose and remove the nozzle to prevent damage from freezing. Once the outside work is completed, it's time to address any repairs to your lawn equipment so you will be ready when next spring's growth starts. Remember that the Agents of WILLOW Realty are always available to answer your questions and assist with your buying or selling.

## 7 Common Food Allergy Culprits

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Theoretically, any food containing protein can contribute to a food allergy. In reality, the following seven foods account for the vast majority of food allergies:

**1. Peanuts.** These are the leading cause of severe allergic reactions to food, including food-related anaphylaxis.



**2. Seafood.** If you have a seafood allergy, the chances are you react to shellfish, generally prawns, crayfish, lobster, or crab. Some people, however, are also allergic to both fresh and saltwater fish. Once you have a seafood allergy, you will probably have it for life.



**3. Tree nuts.** Almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, and walnuts are included in this category.



**4. Eggs.** The whites, in particular, cause reactions. More children than adults have an allergy to eggs, and children with atopic dermatitis (dry, scaly, itchy skin) have an increased risk of an allergic response to eggs.



**5. Cow's milk.** The principal culprits are the proteins in milk, such as lactoglobulin, lactalbumin, casein, and whey. Milk allergies almost always begin in the first year of life, soon after cow's milk or cow's-milk-based formula is introduced to a child's diet. Between 2 and 7 per cent of infants under one year old suffer from cow's milk allergy, making it the most common food allergy of childhood.



**6. Soy.** The prevalence of soy-based formulas and baby foods today is leading to an increase in soy allergies among babies, with gastrointestinal symptoms most common.



**7. Wheat.** Don't confuse a wheat allergy with gluten sensitivity. Gluten is the component of wheat, barley, rye, and other grains that provides the 'glue' that holds the grain together. It is associated with a disease called gluten-sensitive enteropathy, or celiac disease, caused by an abnormal response to gluten. A wheat allergy, on the other hand, means that you are allergic to certain proteins in wheat. If you eliminate wheat from your diet and your symptoms disappear, you have a wheat allergy; if the problem persists even after you substitute other grains, the chances are your symptoms are related to gluten. Of course, an allergy test is generally the best way to find out what's plaguing you.



When you rise in the morning, give thanks for the light, for your life, for your strength. Give thanks for your food and for the joy of living. If you see no reason to give thanks, the fault lies in yourself.

~Tecumseh

## Festive Kale with Fennel, Cranberries, and Walnuts

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- 1 fennel bulb
- 2 lbs kale (roughly 8 c packed)
- 2 tbs olive oil
- ¼ c sherry
- 1 pinch red pepper flakes
- ½ c dried cranberries
- ½ c chopped walnuts
- Salt and pepper to taste

Remove stalks and fronds from fennel. Chop fennel bulb into bite-sized cubes and pieces. Remove stems from the kale leaves, and cut the kale into bite-sized pieces or strips. You can discard the stems, or slice them very thinly and use as well. Heat oil in a large pot over medium high heat. Add chopped fennel to pot and sauté for 8 to 10 minutes, or until tender. Add kale by the handful, stirring gently until wilted, but still bright green, about 8 minutes. Stir in sherry, pepper flakes and cranberries. Spread walnuts on a rimmed baking sheet. Toast for 10 minutes in a 350 degree F. oven or toaster oven until golden brown and fragrant. Or, you can toast them on a dry skillet over medium heat. Let the walnuts cool briefly, then stir into the fennel and kale mixture. Season with salt and pepper, transfer to a bowl, and serve.

