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Read: **HUSBANDRY**, by Nathan Griffith

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From the editor:

And the verdict is...

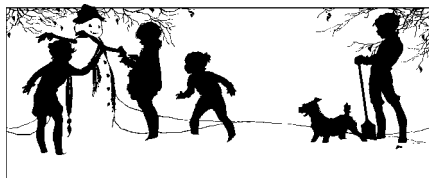
A number of readers called asking how our Sonic Bloom test went (see pg. 72, July/August 2002), and as far as I can tell, Dan Carlson is onto something. I'll admit it right now, this was about as unscientific an experiment as they come.

According to the directions, I was to foliar feed (roughly one teaspoon of the liquid nutrients mixed with 32 ounces of water), between 6:00 A.M. and 9:30 A.M., when the plants are still dewey. Ideally, the classical music-enhanced tape (or CD) should be played roughly one-half hour before spraying and one hour after spraying. And you should foliar feed several times a week. (I thought I was doing pretty good to spray once or twice a week, for a total of six or eight feedings.)

The most notable difference I saw was in the sweet peas. Those foliar fed were about a foot taller, had more pods per plant, and produced longer than those that weren't sprayed. Then I harvested 14 canteloupe off of two plants. (I've never grown them before, so I'm not sure if 14 is good or not, but the fruit was wonderfully sweet.)

The sound-enhanced CDs are familiar classical music pieces, with a ticking-type noise in the background. One gentleman said it resembled a bird chirping, unfortunately I don't remember which one.

Granted, the stuff isn't cheap—almost \$80 for the kit, which includes the foliar concentrate, a measuring spoon, a spray bottle, a CD and a tape. I had five 4'x8' raised beds which were sprayed, including miscellaneous flowers around the yard and plants not in beds, and at that rate I'll probably have enough concentrate to last another three years!



So, in my humble opinion, Sonic Bloom certainly won't hurt. If anyone decides to try it, let us know how it worked for you.

If you'd like to see some testimonial plants, check out Dan's website at www.sonicbloom.com.

By the way, Paul Oliver (who wrote the original article) said I shouldn't spray the plants at night—that's when they "sleep." Spraying at night will kill them. (Hmm, wonder if that would eliminate poison ivy and other weeds?)

Also, remember weeds are plants, too. They enjoy a good foliar feeding as much as the next plant!

There are some great goat cart plans and cheese recipes in this issue! We also have some, well, "funky" recipes. What else would you call a delicacy from Africa—salted caterpillar skins?(The recipe doesn't specify what species of caterpillar, but it's interesting to take a peek at other cultures once in awhile.) For a look at a Peace Corp Volunteer's life in Africa, see Laina Poon's article on page 30.

Readers also give tips on how they make a little extra money on their homesteads in this issue's Question of the Month (pg. 60).

So throw another log on the fire and brush aside those seed catalogs for a moment. We're sure you're going to enjoy this issue of *COUNTRYSIDE!*
— Anne-marie

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