

Healthy Farmer

November 2010

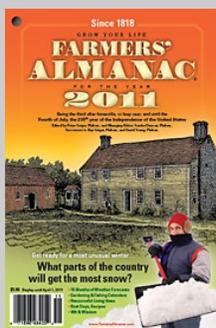
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Farmers' Almanac

It's the start of winter and a good time to pull out the 2011 *Farmers' Almanac*. This annual publication has been around as a resource for farmers and readers since 1818. The Almanac is probably best known for its weather predictions, but it also contains many other tips and advice for areas of home management as well as lots of humor and fun. The Almanac retains its homespun wisdom and yet has still managed to expand with the times. It now includes an interactive website with more than 4 million visitors annually and a television channel. An iPhone app is in development. The Almanac's popularity has continued to grow. As the weather is starting to turn colder, it can provide some good, snowy day reading.

Here are some facts about the *Farmer's Almanac* published on their website:

- The *Farmers' Almanac* is the only source for 16 months of long-range weather forecasts.
- Readers of the Almanac say the forecasts are 80-85% accurate.
- The *Farmers' Almanac* claims a total annual distribution of more than 2.6 million copies, and readership of nearly 7 million.



As part of its "Year of Friendship" initiative, the 2011 Almanac contains an emphasis on friendship and includes a story of ten women who have remained friends for more than 60 years. The Almanac's website is inviting readers to submit stories of their friendships for possible publication on its site. The 2011 Almanac also includes a number of feature stories about the ten worst winter and summer cities, the meaning of colors, invasive bugs, gardening trends and healing foods.

The Almanac has all kinds of wit and wisdom that is also updated on the website. The paper and website versions each contain tidbits such as these:

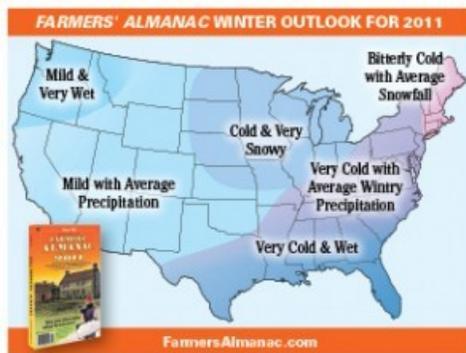
"The real secret of happiness is not what you give or what you receive it's what you share."

and

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“If you haven’t all the things you want, be grateful for the things you don’t have that you wouldn’t want.”

Of course, the *Farmers’ Almanac* is probably most well-known for its long range weather forecasts. According to information published on its website, the weather forecasts are made two years in advance. Forecaster Caleb Weatherbe (a pseudonym for the Almanac’s team of forecasters) uses a formula that accounts for many factors including sunspot activity and tidal action.



So, what about the 2011 winter—will it be a repeat of last year’s? According to a press release, the Almanac predicts this winter season will demonstrate a “split personality,” with the eastern third of the U.S. experiencing colder than normal temperatures while the western states will experience milder temperatures.

And what if you live in one of those colder, snowier states for 2011? The Almanac advises keeping shelled peanuts around to eat because the magnesium in nuts is known to help regulate stress hormones.

And, while waiting out the winter weather, you can always pick up the Almanac to read for a bit or visit their website for helpful tips, quizzes, humor, updated blog posts and information and even some warm drink recipes like Hot Buttered Apple Cider:

<http://www.farmersalmanac.com/>

Hot Buttered Apple Cider (by Farmers’ Almanac staff)

1/3 cup packed brown sugar
1/4 cup butter, softened
1/4 cup honey
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 gallon apple cider

Beat brown sugar, butter, honey, cinnamon, and nutmeg until well blended and fluffy. Heat apple cider in saucepan over medium heat until hot. Fill individual mugs with hot apple cider, stirring in 1 tablespoon butter mixture. Serve with cinnamon sticks for stirring. (Butter mixture can be stored in an airtight container in refrigerator for up to 2 weeks. Bring to room temperature before serving.) Makes approximately 12 servings.

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