

# MASTER GARDENER NEWS



Volume 11, Issue 4

July 1, 2009

## NORTHWEST REGIONAL MG NEWS

### EMERALD ASH BORER UPDATE

A multi-agency survey found 59 trees infested with emerald ash borer in and around the St. Anthony Park neighborhood where the pest was first discovered in May. All 59 trees are within a half mile of the first infestation site. Crews have already removed the 59 trees. [Read the recent news release.](#)

Monitoring efforts using purple cardboard traps and "trap trees" is underway.

Homeowners are asked to join the effort by watching their ash trees for signs of infestation. These signs include:

1. dieback of leaves in the upper third of the tree's branches
2. heavy woodpecker activity
3. D-shaped exit holes in the bark
4. S-shaped tunnels under the bark
5. water shoots on the trunk

If you think you might have Emerald Ash Borer [use his checklist](#)(pdf) to determine if you should get in touch with an EAB First Detector. MDA reminds homeowners that it is not necessary to remove healthy ash trees. Homeowners with questions about disposing of ash tree material should contact their city forester for guidance. Improper disposal of infested ash material could accelerate the spread of EAB.

Should you try to harvest your ash as quickly as possible? How should you manage your forest? Should you just let nature take its course? There are no simple answers to such questions, but the Michigan State University Extension put together a [helpful publication to help woodland owners prepare for EAB.](#)

Source of this article:

[MyMinnesotaWoods.org](#)

For more information go to:

[University of Minnesota Emerald Ash](#)



*Emerald Ash Borer*

[Borer Page](#) ,[MDA EAB Website](#),  
[for homeowners from emerald-dashborer.info](#) , [Pictures from ground zero St. Paul](#)

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### Special points of interest:

- Take a bland space to a magical one.
- Getting down and dirty with your children.
- Looks like stone but weighs less & takes whatever shape you want.
- Research-based recommendations for safer canning and better quality food at home.
- Storing tomatoes to make them last.
- Calendar of Events- [page 9](#)
- Summer Recipes - pages 8 & 10
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## Gazing Balls: An Old And New Fad

By Betty Magnan, [Beltrami County Master Gardener](#)



Gazing balls are said to have originated in 13th century Venice where they were hand-blown by skilled Italian craftsmen. During the 17th century in England, gazing balls were used to protect plants from the wicked witches who would come to steal them. Once the witches saw their ugly reflections, they fled the garden and the plants were

safe. During Victorian times, the Butler Ball served as a mirror so servants could see when guests were needing assistance without staring at them throughout the meal. Another practical use was in the foyer of the home. Parents could keep a close eye on their daughter and her beau as he bid her goodnight. One can tell the pur-

pose of a gazing ball, or gazing globe as they are sometimes called, by the various names attached to them: Good Luck Ball, Victorian Ball, Witch Ball or Globes of Happiness. Whatever they have been called in the past or are called today, when used in our landscapes, they can take a bland space to a magical one by adding color, depth and a new view.

## Gardening For Kids

By Elizabeth Hawksworth (from [Canadian Gardening.com](#))

**“Gardening is a great way to educate children about the importance of keeping green and saving the environment.”**

If you're looking for a great family project (and ways to get your kids outside and active), why not involve your kids in your gardening? It's a lot of fun and teaches them about responsibility.

We've compiled a list of ways your kids can get involved in the garden!

1. Start by creating a space where your child can plant and care for his or her garden. This can be a small section of the main garden or a small flowerbed that's all their own. Container gardening is a good indoor option where outdoor space is limited.

2. Browse the seed catalogues or search the Internet with your child to start choosing plants and seeds. Consider plants that are easy to grow. Tomato plants, mint or annual flowers,

such as colourful sunflowers, are some great options.

3. Before shopping for plants, prepare the soil. There's nothing worse than having to wait to start the fun - and the plants will appreciate a flowerbed that's ready for them, too.

4. Depending on how your child learns, you can choose to germinate plants from seeds or buy cell packs of ready-grown seedlings. Watching a plant grow from a seed teaches a child patience and responsibility, but if they can't wait, an easier way is to help them look after seedlings.

5. Help your child create a theme for the garden - it can be colour, flowers or favourite vegetables. Letting your child choose a garden ornament or

two can brighten up their flowerbed, and make it their own.

6. On rainy days when they can't get out to see how their plants are doing encourage your child to create a birdhouse or bird feeder (make sure to use non-toxic paint).

7. Help make your child's garden a place to play, too. A bean tepee or a sunflower forest offer little hideaways.

8. Be sure to include edible plants and flowers that can be tasted and touched. This makes gardening a truly interactive experience!

Getting down and dirty with your children in the garden can be a bonding experience as you watch the plants grow and flourish together.



*My gardening  
Grandson, Braden !*

## Wood Preservatives: Treated Lumber

Source: <http://www.solutions.psu.edu/>

The recent banning of wood preservatives is causing many gardeners to be concerned about using treated lumber in gardens and landscapes. Many of the old standard products such as creosote and pentachlorophenol are no longer used to preserve lumber due to health and environmental risks. So what is safe for your landscape and garden?

Use untreated lumber that is naturally long-lasting, and replace it as needed. Long-lasting lumber such as oak, cedar, and redwood may be more expensive, harder to find and may evoke other environmental concerns.

Some other alternatives include stone, cinder block, brick and other building material. Select long-lasting materials that don't change the soil's pH, but do complement your landscape design. Remember, you can mask building materials with vines, ground covers, and creeping perennials and shrubs.

If you do use treated lumber, use lumber that minimizes the potential harm to plants and the environment. Pressure-treated lumber is the easiest to find. This green-tinted lumber has been treated with either chromated copper arsenate or ammoniated copper arsenate.

Research indicates that these materials bind tightly to the wood and have a low tendency to leach into the soil. But remember, research on the uptake of these arsenate preservatives into fruits and vegetables or their appearance in the groundwater is limited.

Creosote also harms plants. It also leaches into the soil for several years and gives off vapors, in diminishing amounts, for seven to nine years. Limited research is available on the risks to plants and the environment from creosote. The safest alternative is not to use creosote-treated lumber in the garden or landscape.

Pentachlorophenol, also called "penta-treated lumber," is also off the market. Penta contains dioxin, which is a carcinogen. Like creosote, it gives off toxic fumes that harm people, plants, and animals.

Over-the-counter preservatives are also available. You can paint copper and zinc naphthanate on lumber. Lumber treated with these products won't last as long, but researchers consider it less toxic than previously mentioned products.

If you use treated lumber, reduce the human, plant, and environmental risk of wood preservatives by painting or sealing them into the lumber. This prevents the preservative from leaching into the soil and possibly the groundwater.

Always wear rubber gloves and a dust mask when sawing and handling treated lumber, and avoid extended contact with bare skin. Read and follow all label instructions on the product you use.

Finally, always consider the cost and potential risk to you, your plants and the environment before you buy landscape and garden materials.



Treated Lumber

**“If you do use treated lumber, use lumber that minimizes the potential harm to plants and the environment.”**



**I have a rock garden.**



**Last week three of them died.**



- Richard Diran



By Linda Tennesson

## My Favorite Tools

Beltrami County Master Gardener



Gardening would not be possible without tools and every gardener has his/her favorite. The first tool I recommend is a pair of gloves, actually two sets of gloves so that one pair can be used while the other is in the wash. Granted there are some jobs that require the sensitivity gained by using bare fingers, but a majority of garden jobs may be done while protecting your hands with gloves.

My second favorite tool is called a farmer's weeder. It has a 6 inch long blade that is smooth on one side and serrated on the other plus a strong, comfortable to hold handle. Mine was bought from a company that advertised the tool for treasure hunting on beaches, but I suspect that more of these tools are sold for gardening use than for any other purpose. This tool can pry weeds, roots and all out of the ground as well as dig holes for fall bulb planting. The inch markings on the blade make it easy to dig a hole of the proper depth for each kind of bulb. Bypass pruners are great for trimming plants as well as cutting stubborn roots and stems. The curved blades work like scissors holding and easily cutting small branches and rose stems. Felco is a well known brand name of bypass pruners. Other well-known brands include Corona and Fiskars

Gardeners can transport plants, soil or mulch using a wheel barrow or garden wagon. Wheel barrows are designed to make it easier to move and maneuver heavy loads because part of the weight of the load is carried on the front tire. The wheelbarrow bowl is also a convenient container to mix soil in. Wheel barrows may tip if the operator is not careful and some gardeners may prefer a cart or wagon to do their hauling. Carts with a front gate that drops will allow soil and other heavy items to be more easily removed.

Rain does not always arrive when we want it and so watering cans and hoses are also essential tools. Hoses that are kink resistant and long enough to reach all parts of the garden will reduce some gardening frustration. Shorter hoses connected together may leak at the connection points. Soaker hoses have holes in the sides and are designed to allow water to slowly leak out and water the soil without washing it away from the plants. Watering cans should have a device known as a "rose" on the spout that allows the water to be gently sprayed on the plants rather than poured. The rose has many holes that keep the force of the water from damaging plants. A well designed watering can is balanced with handles that allow the user to control the force and accurate delivery of water even when the can is full.

Spades with a long narrow blades often used for digging drainage ditches make excellent tools for planting new plants or transplanting existing ones. Garden forks are also useful for lifting plants for division or moving without root damage. Kneeling pads are last on my list of favorite gardening tools. Experiment and see which tools will make your gardening job easier and more fun.

## Seduction At a Young Age

By Cathy Peck, Beltrami County Master Gardener

A comment by a young clerk at the grocery store prompted this article about the passing on of knowledge to the next generation. She asked what you could do with a domed loaf of bread, cut it like "regular bread?" If this lack of experience exists in youth about something this simple, we are also more than likely failing to educate our young about nature. My parents succeeded, but without a proscribed curriculum. Little did my parents know that they really taught me about horticultural seduction when I was a tiny girl. Don't get concerned; this is not a R-rated article but it is a description of how the intensity of early experiences can inspire a life - horticulturally. Memories of drives with my dad to wonder at azure fields of flax in bloom are as vivid today as then. Those experiences developed a passion for enjoying and growing beautiful flowers that has lasted all my life. Tromping out to the raspberry and strawberry patches is another poignant memory: not only were there tasty berries to gorge on but there was the camaraderie of my family interacting with the people who came to our u-pick operation. Through that I learned about the positive social rewards, the economic rewards, and the tasty rewards of raising garden fruits.

Visits to my grandparents introduced me to other aspects of gardening, - the charm of unusual vegetables such as the ground cherries that popped out of their papery skins. Shelling peas for dinner taught me that even though I was little, I could still be a productive helper. Eating vegetables out of the garden taught me that I was capable

**"Teaching children to protect the soil, the water, and our environment is essential . . ."**

## Seduction At A Young Age

(continued from page 4) of feeding myself. As I grew older, my mother's enthusiasm beguiled me out each day to see what was emerging from the ground, how plants grew and what was needed to get them to thrive. She pointed out the pink noses of peonies, the unusual and varied shapes of different vegetables, how mellow soil contributed to healthy plants. She personalized them and animated them. Hoeing, weeding, watering and spading became satisfying because I saw the results.

Winning a ribbon for exhibiting a flower I helped raise was another part of the allure of gardening. Praise and admiration of Mom's garden by her friends and mine introduced me to the social rewards that came from the beautiful,



fragrant flowers and the healthy produce we shared.

What we bequeath to our children by our enthusiasm and our interests can't be predicted, but it can lead to a lifetime of intergenerational sharing. Teaching children to protect the soil, the water, and our environment is essential for our world to survive and thrive. Teaching youth the interdependence of soil, insects, plants, and us animals for mutual benefit also means teaching responsibility, but it won't succeed unless we first teach them the fascination of nature, to love it, and to see themselves a part of it. It is like infatuation - intense, but often short-lived. True love of our natural world, initiated with enchantment, can be nurtured by older generations who understand it. It can also prevent young people from knowing how to eat a solid loaf of bread; they might even learn where the bread comes from and how to grow their own food.

### Master Gardener Online Class: The Best Practices for Residential Lakeshore Landscapes

\*Access this free, online continuing ed opportunity as follows:\*

1. Go to <http://webvista.umn.edu>
2. Click on WebVista C in the box on the right side.
3. Click Login
4. Enter the generic user ID and password:  
*User ID:* garden  
*Password:* SignIn123
5. Click Continue
6. Click the name of the course: /The Best Practices for Residential Lakeshore Landscapes/



## Informative Websites

- [National Center For Home Food Preservation](#) - This publication contains many new research-based recommendations for canning safer and better quality food at home. It is an invaluable resource for persons who are canning for the first time. Experienced canners will find updated information to help them improve their canning practices.



**Hypertufa Trough**

*Photo/Illustration:  
Michelle Gervais*

## Make A Hypertufa Trough

By Michelle Gervais of  
[Fine Gardening Magazine](#)

Containers made from hypertufa are wonderful for displaying rock-garden plants or succulents. Over time, the hypertufa ages gracefully, collecting a patina of mosses and lichens. In this article you will find the recipe and instructions for making hypertufa.

The process I use to

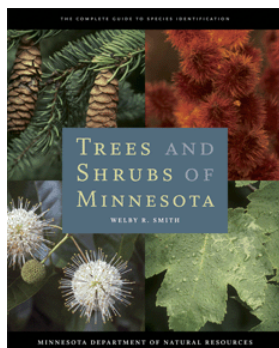
mold containers is much simpler than the usual box-in-box method that sandwiches hypertufa and some metal mesh in a frame. Instead, I simply pack hypertufa around an overturned plastic pot or planter. And because it's so easy to work with, hypertufa can be molded into many sizes and shapes.

Further Reading:

[Create a Hypertufa Container in 5 Easy Steps](#)

Other Hypertufa Recipes:

[Four Easy Recipes](#)



## New Book: *Trees And Shrubs of Minnesota*

Welby R. Smith, Author

This fully illustrated resource features:

- Easy identification: more than one thousand color photographs of fruit, flowers, bark, and leaves for every species, as well as more than one hundred illustrations by botanical artist Vera Ming Wong
- Distribution maps: more than five hundred maps, including state and North American range maps
- Interesting background: descriptions of each species' habitat, natural history, and ecology, which provide context to the entries
- Comprehensive coverage: includes all native and naturalized trees, shrubs, and woody vines in Minnesota from *Abies balsamea* to *Zanthoxylum americanum*.

Written for everyone from scientists and environmentalists to teachers and people interested in horticulture and gardening, *Trees and Shrubs of Minnesota* will engage and educate anyone with a curiosity about the natural world.

**Welby R. Smith** is a botanist for the Division of Ecological Resources at the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. He is the author of [Orchids of Minnesota](#) (Minnesota, 1993).

640 pages | 1027 color photos, 154 tables, 506 maps | 8 x 10 | 2008

\$59.95 through the [University Of Minnesota Press](#).

Also available at [Amazon.com](#) for \$40.46.

*“Trees and  
Shrubs  
of Minnesota  
will engage and  
educate anyone  
with a curiosity  
about the  
natural world.”*



### Storing Tomatoes

This was on the MAST-GAR listserv recently:

How can I prolong the shelf life of a tomato? We've heard that storing a tomato with its stem end facing down can prolong shelf life. To test this theory, we placed one batch of tomatoes we placed one batch of tomatoes stem-end up and another stem-end down and stored them at room temperature. A week later, nearly all the stem-

down tomatoes remained in perfect condition, while the stem-up tomatoes had shriveled and started to mold. Why the difference? We surmised that the scar left on the tomato skin where the stem once grew provides both an escape for moisture and an entry point for mold and bacteria. Placing a tomato stem-end down blocks air from entering, and blocks moisture from exiting the scar. To confirm this theory, we ran

another test, this time comparing tomatoes stored stem-end down with another batch stored stem-end up, but with a piece of tape sealing off their scars. The taped, stem-end-up tomatoes survived just as well as the stem-end-down batch.

Published July 1, 2008, from *Cook's Illustrated*



### 2009 Master Gardener State Conference

You will find information regarding the 2009 MG Conference being held in St Paul this year. Workshops in Plant Propagation, Diagnostics, Powerpoint, Food Preservation and more. Tours on urban agriculture, historic St. Paul landscapes, Lyndale Gardens and Lakewood Cemetery (a remarkable landscape, I tell you!) and more.

Sessions on cold hardy woodies, organic growing, inquiry learning for youth, shoreland plant buffers, how to use new technology (twitter, social networks, and University research resources online), update on EAB from the MDA, edible landscapes, growing orchids, natives for dry sites - and still more. Click here <<http://www.hcmg.umn.edu/conference/>> to find

about the great educational workshops, sessions and tours being offered. Dates and location: August 7-8, Continuing Education Conference Center on the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota. A big THANK YOU to the Hennepin and Ramsey County Master Gardeners who are hosts for this year's conference!

### 2009 Northern Minnesota Annual Conference

#### Attention, Northern Minnesota Master Gardeners!

Mark your calendars for the "winter blitz"

It will be **October 10** in **Bemidji** and hosted by the Beltrami County Master Gardeners. (Roads are better in

the fall!) The program will include speakers on emerging issues in the morning and skills development in the afternoon.

We will also be honoring Will Yliniemi and Vince Cray

Brochures will come

out later this summer. We look forward to seeing you all and sharing the joy of Master Gardening together.



## How To Prune Tomatoes

By [Fine Gardening](#)

A tomato is a solar-powered sugar factory. For the first month or so, all of the sugar it produces is directed towards new leaf growth. During this stage, tomato plants grow very rapidly, doubling their size every 12 to 15 days. Eventually, the plants make more sugar than the single growing tip can use, which signals the

plant to make new branches and to flower. This usually happens after 10 to 13 leaves have expanded, at which time the plant is 12 to 18 inches tall. In the next few weeks, the entire character of the tomato plant changes. If unsupported, the increasing weight of filling fruit and multiple side branches forces the

plant to lie on the ground. Once the main stem is horizontal, there is an increased tendency to branch. Left to its own devices, a vigorous indeterminate tomato plant can easily cover a 4- by 4-foot area with as many as 10 stems, each 3 to 5 feet long. By season's end, it will be an unsightly, impenetrable, disease-wracked

tangle.

For information on how to prune your tomato plants go to: [How To Prune Tomatoes](#) on how to manage your plants for better health and better fruit.

There is also a video showing how to prune your tomatoes at:

<http://www.finegardening.com/how-to/videos/pruning-tomatoes.aspx?refer=80894>

## Fresh Tomato Salsa

2 pounds or 5 medium tomatoes, quartered and seeded  
 1 fresh jalapeno pepper, seeded and finely chopped  
 1/4 c. white onions, chopped  
 1/2 c. fresh cilantro, chopped  
 1 teaspoon minced garlic  
 1 teaspoon sugar  
 1 1/2 tablespoons lime juice  
 Salt and pepper to taste



Quarter and seed tomatoes. Cut tomatoes into 1/4 inch strips, dice and transfer to a bowl. Wearing rubber gloves, seed and finely chop chilies. Finely chop enough onion to measure 1/4 cup and chop cilantro. Stir chilies, onion, cilantro, and garlic into tomatoes with sugar and lime juice and salt and pepper to taste. Salsa may be made 1 hour ahead and kept at cool temperature. Yield: 2 1/2 cups.

## Hens And Chicks

The "Hen" is in the' garden,

And the "Chickens" are there, too;

They've travelled far to get here,

Across the ocean blue.

Of course, they do no scratching,

The reason is they can't;

They're not like other chickens,

For they are just a plant.

By John Carroll

**UPCOMING EVENTS OF THE  
NORTHERN PLAINS BOTANIC GARDEN SOCIETY**

**SEDUM CONTAINER  
GARDEN WORKSHOP**

JULY 25, 10 A.M. –  
NOON, NPBGS GREEN-  
HOUSE:

Cost is \$20 for members, and \$25 for nonmembers. Make a sedum table-top garden to enjoy on your patio or deck. Fill a 14-inch container with hardy sedum plants, of various leaf colors and shapes. The container can be over-wintered outside and enjoyed for years.

**NPBGS SEMI-ANNUAL  
MEETING**

SEPTEMBER 8, 7:00 P.M.,  
NRI ATRIUM

Speaker: Kathleen Pople, Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture, North Dakota

State University  
Topic: "Sustainable Residential Design"

**IVY TOPIARY WORK-  
SHOP**

SEPTEMBER 12, 9 A.M. –  
NOON, NPBGS GREEN-  
HOUSE:

Cost is \$25 for members,

and \$30 for non-members. Create an ivy topiary using pre-made heart or ball shaped wire forms. Learn how to make your own wire forms and how to prune and care for your topiary plants.

**The Neuropsychiatric  
Research Institute**

**Atrium** is located at 700 1<sup>st</sup> Ave S, Fargo. The NPBGS Greenhouse is located at 1201 28<sup>th</sup> Ave N, Fargo. For more information or to register for

a workshop, contact Lisa Brown: [peacelab@i29.net](mailto:peacelab@i29.net) or 232-3765.

Northern Plains Botanic Garden Society\*

P. O. Box 3031, Fargo, ND 58108

[npbgs@lycos.com](mailto:npbgs@lycos.com) web site:  
<http://npbgs.tripod.com>



**Other Events**

**\*\*July 16  
6<sup>th</sup> Annual Garden  
Tour**

Altru Clinic Lake Region  
Relay for Life  
Devils Lake, ND  
4 - 9 pm.

**\*\*July 18-19  
Garden Tour, Plant  
Sale & Gardener's  
Garage Sale**

Grand Forks Horticultural  
Society  
Greater Grand Forks  
Area & MN  
Saturday 10 am - 4 pm  
Sunday noon - 4 pm  
Help us celebrate our  
Silver Anniversary of the  
Grand Forks Horticultural  
Society Garden Tours  
Tickets \$10 and available  
ONLY at Garden Centers  
in advance or on the day  
of the tour at the Myra  
Museum and Tabor, MN  
garden site.

Start early for driving time  
to take in all the gardens  
and enjoy the special  
touches at each location,  
including refreshments,  
music, Bur Oak at the

Myra Museum that commemorates our anniversary and more!

Karon Miller, President  
(701) 772-2835

email: [Karo-nadnd@aol.com](mailto:Karo-nadnd@aol.com)

Zona Pearson, Planning  
Coordinator (218) 773-  
9180  
email:

[candz@infionline.net](mailto:candz@infionline.net)

**\*\*August 4th and 6<sup>th</sup>  
Mosaic**

The Flower House Garden  
Center  
Mohall, ND  
7 pm. Use broken bits of  
pieces of glass, china or  
other stuff to decorate a  
pot, stepping stone or etc.  
Limit of 8. \$40

One mile west and ½ mile  
south of Mohall.

(701) 756-6072

Email: [flower-house@srt.com](mailto:flower-house@srt.com)

**\*\*August 6-9  
30<sup>th</sup> Annual Confer-  
ence "Putting Down  
Roots"**

American Community

Gardening Association  
Franklin Park Conserva-  
tory

Columbus, Ohio

[www.communitygarden.org](http://www.communitygarden.org)

1-877-ASK-ACGA

**\*\*August 8  
Bergeson Gardens  
Open House**

4177 County Hwy 1  
Fertile, MN  
Food, music and La La  
Homemade Ice Cream.

Three miles south and  
five miles east of Fertile.

[www.bergesonnursery.com](http://www.bergesonnursery.com)

(218) 945-6988

**\*\*September 12-13**

**Fall Plant Sale**

Grand Forks Horticultural  
Society

Home of Economy

Grand Forks, ND

Bonnie Durrenberger

(701) 746-7652

email: [notenough-hostas@msn.com](mailto:notenough-hostas@msn.com)

Sharon Criswell (701) 746

-4179

email:

[scriswell\\_@msn.com](mailto:scriswell_@msn.com)

**NORTHWEST REGIONAL MG NEWS**

44144 US 71  
Laporte, MN 56461-4733  
Phone: 218-224-3643  
E-mail: verna@paulbunyan.com

**U of M Extension Master Gardener**

Master Gardeners are University of Minnesota-trained volunteers whose job is to educate the public about a variety of horticulture subjects using readily-available, up-to-date research-based information. This educational effort is designed to enhance the public's quality of life and to promote good stewardship of the environment.

The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
**EXTENSION**

**We're on the Web at**  
[U of M Garden Info](#)

**Recipe Corner**



**Fresh Strawberry Pie I**

2 (8 inch) pie shells, baked  
2 1/2 quarts fresh strawberries  
1 cup white sugar  
2 Tablespoons cornstarch  
1 cup boiling water  
1 (3 ounce) package strawberry  
flavored gelatin

**Directions**

In a saucepan, mix together the sugar and corn starch; make sure to blend corn starch in completely. Add boiling water, and cook over medium heat until mixture thickens. Remove from heat. Add gelatin mix, and stir until smooth. Let mixture cool to room temperature. 2. Place strawberries in baked pie shells; position berries with points facing up. Pour cooled gel mixture over strawberries. Refrigerate

until set. Serve with whipped cream, if desired.

(printed from [AllRecipes.com](#))