

Dandelion Harvesting Guide

Biodynamic Preparation 506

We use the common dandelion, *Taraxacum officinale*. The flowers should be picked with as little stem as possible. It is important to gather them when they first open early in the morning, as soon as possible after the sun comes out and before the insects have had a chance to pollinate them. At any rate, gather the flowers before the sun is in the zenith.

-Honeybees fly at about 50°F, but other bees, such as orchard bees, mason bees or leaf cutter bees also frequent dandelions, as do the common cucumber beetle and a small fly -- so picking unfertilized blossoms can be challenging.

-Observation of dandelions and their environment is the key to picking. You need to be careful to not collect the defective blooms that opened halfway the day before, got partially pollinated and then closed up again for the night, only to open again in the morning.

-These will get quite white and fuzzy when they dry and could fall apart. You want dandelions "young" enough so that they look like little yellow flowers when they dry. Remove over-mature blossoms from the batch after drying.



Before drying



After Drying
- Remove pollinated flowers or fluff before storing

DRYING AND SHIPPING: Blossoms need careful drying, which must be done in a warm, dry, shady spot. Avoid direct sunlight but the faster they dry, the better. A good method is to dry blossoms on a nonmetallic screen (fiberglass or nylon) as they dry faster with air circulation below as well as above. Another is to put them near a wood stove spread out on newspapers. Dehydrators are not recommended without a lot of checking for the blossoms tend to get over dried and fall apart. Store in either a paper bag or plastic bag if you are sure all the moisture is out of the dandelions. If stored in plastic or glass, monitor them occasionally to insure they completely dry.

Once Dry they can be brought to the Oregon BD group fall meeting or packaged and mailed to...

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12390 Sunnyview Rd NE
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If you plan to bring to the Oregon BD group Fall meeting please let us know in advance so we can plan accordingly.

-WHEN TO PICK: Pick the blossoms as early in the day as possible and as early in the Spring time as you can. It is best to pick no later than one hour meridian noon (that is the time when the sun is directly overhead where you are). Ideally pick on a flower day, those dates listed on the next page.

-WHAT TO PICK: Dandelion blossoms open one tiny petal at a time from the periphery, and often have a three-day cycle of opening and closing. The earlier the blossoms are harvested in the blooming cycle, the better will be the quality of the preparation that can be made. So long as a clearly distinguishable "bulls eye" of tight, unopened petals is visible in the center of the blossom, it is a candidate for harvest. As the blossom ages, its color changes from a bright yellow to a dull, or "muddy" orange, and eventually the white puff, or seed parachute, appears. A closed blossom in early bloom stage has rounded top, or crown, while an older blossom begins to assume a cone shape. Pick only the young blossoms with bull's eyes as described. Pop the flowers off the stems, and remove leaves or "trash."



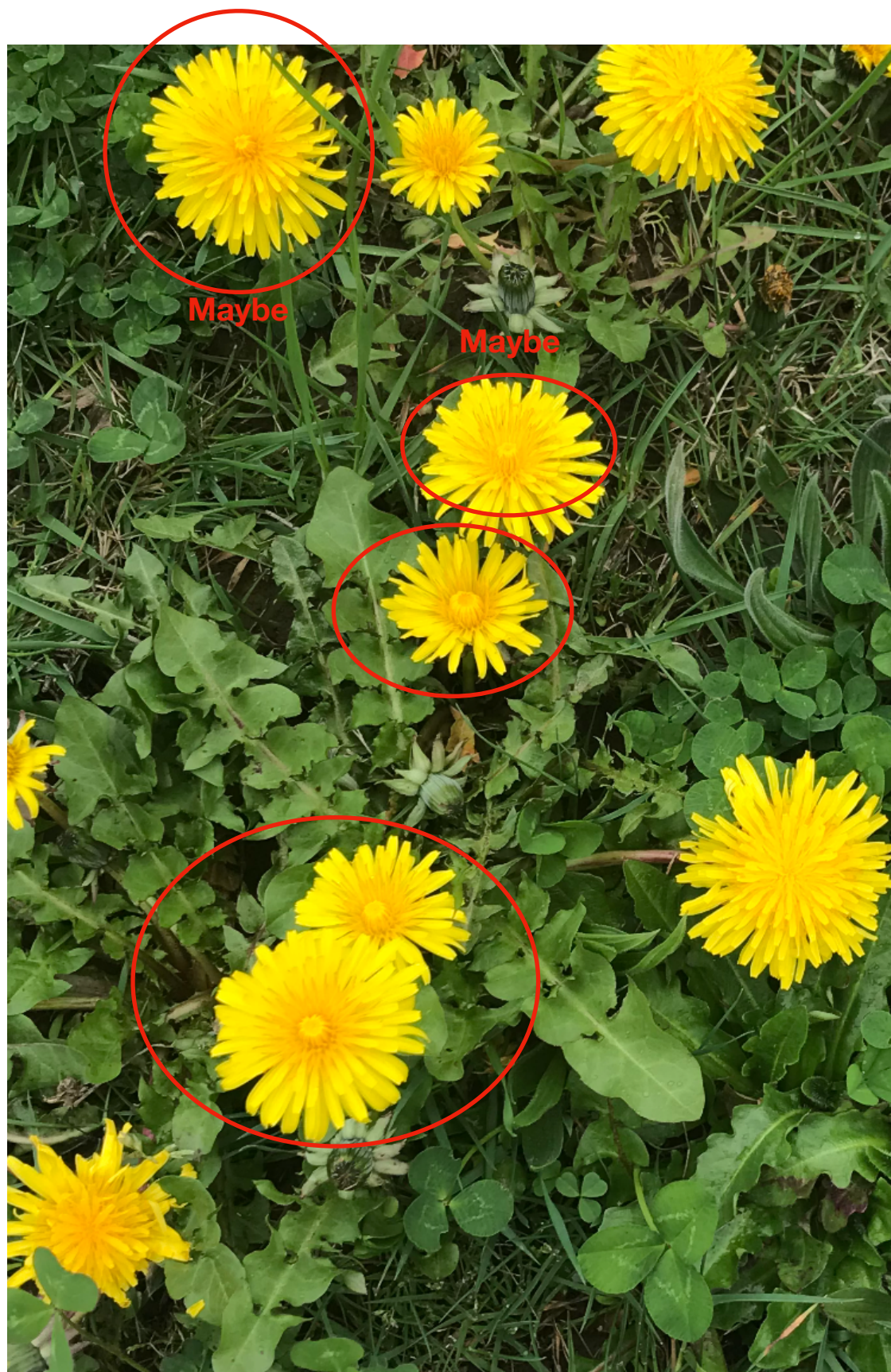
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Generally the unpollinated flowers still have the “Bull’s-eye” appearance.



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Get them before the slugs do!

Ideal Harvest Days for 2019

- Most importantly is to harvest the Dandelions when you have time, the weather is appropriate and the flowers are ready.
- Ideally we hope to harvest on Flower days according to the Biodynamic Calendar. Please make note date harvested.
- Ideal upcoming dates are...