Keep Cool With Old Fashioned Summertime Drinks That Help Lower Body Temperature

During long hot marches between conquests, Roman soldiers were given a healthful drink that also acted as an energizing liquid coolant. It was a fruit concentrate that was preserved in vinegar, sweetened with honey and added to a quantity of cool spring water to make a refreshing drink.

The recipe for this delicious thirst quencher came to America from the West Indies in the late 1600's. By the 1800's it was known in America as "Haymaker's Punch", "Shrub", or "Switchel". It was wildly popular as a heat-beating summertime drink. Farmers, especially during the hot and dusty haymaking season, enjoyed it as a cooling pick-me-up that quenched thirst better than water alone.

It was also given for feverish colds and flu to help lower the body tmeperature, and to bolster the body's ability to fight diseases.

These recipes can be easily tweaked to suit your personal taste preference. Enjoy!

Old Fashioned Berry Shrub I
One teaspoon of this liquid concentrate is added to a cool glass of water to make an instant summertime beverage.

Add to any quantity of blackberries, raspberries, or any kind of berries, enough good apple cider or malt vinegar to cover. Keep covered for 2 weeks in a cool location. Drain well, allowing the berries to drip from a strainer for several hours, or until the dripping stops. Stir in a pound of sugar for every 2 cups of strained juice. Bring the mixture to a gentle boil, stirring well until dissolved. Skim the surface clear of any solids that may float up. Pour into clean, hot jars, and seal. To use, stir one teaspoon of this into a glass of water.

Old Fashioned Berry Shrub II (my personal favorite)
Put a tablespoon of this liquid concentrate into a glass of cool water. Sweeten if desired.

Pack freshly picked berries (raspberries, blackberries or strawberries) into a jar. Add enough cider vinegar to fill it. Release any air bubbles with a knife inserted between the sides of the jar and the berries. Close or cover the jar. Tap the

bottom of the jar gently on the tabletop to help release any remaining air bubbles trapped among the berries. Keep in a cool, dark place for a month. Strain the liquid, pour into clean jars that have been made sterile by boiling.

Haymaker's Switchel I
1/2 c. sugar or honey
1/4 c. vinegar
Scant 1/4 tsp. ginger

Haymaker's Switchel II
1 c. light brown sugar
1 c. apple vinegar
1/2 c. light molasses or maple syrup
2 qts. cold water
1 teaspoon ginger

Haymaker's Switchel III
1 gal. water
2 c. sugar
1 c. molasses or maple syrup
1 c. vinegar
1 teaspoon ginger