

## Winter Snow Crop

by Joan Black

2011 is shaping up to be a very good year. The crop, so far, has been above expectations- at least compared to last year. The 2 years prior produced excellent crops - I actually waxed poetic and wrote about them too, but even they could not compare with the pleasure at the sight produced by the most recent snows.

Every winter I wait for the snow to pile up on the roof of the building catty-corner across from me. The roof is located in the perfect position to catch the brunt of the flakes blowing in from the mountains and very soon the snow piles into softly rounded mounds anywhere up to 8 inches deep. Then the heat generated by the building melts the snow enough for it to drip, drip, drip off the eaves but the freezing temperatures quickly shape the drips into icicles, and they grow by the hour, becoming longer and fatter. Now I realize that these icicles are a hazard and could badly injure a body walking below should one break off. However the chances of that happening are very slim as there is no pathway and several inches of snow covering the grass. The afternoon sun strikes these multiple ice stalactites and they sparkle in all the colors of the rainbow protecting the windows like diamond security bars. There are just a few days to enjoy the sight of these natural Christmas decorations fashioned by Mother Nature and then POOF! Just like that, they are gone. But not forever - there will be more spectacles to cause wonder during the next few months and help to make the Christmas and the Winter, bright. I suppose we should enjoy them while we can, with the purported Global Warming maybe decorative icicles will go the way of the dinosaurs, only re-created in Museums and remembered in Wm. Shakespeare's poem "WINTER":

*When icicles hang by the wall,  
And Jack the Shepherd blows his nail,  
And Tom bears logs into the Hall and milk comes frozen in the pail;  
When blood is nipped and ways be foul and greasy Joan doth stir the pot.  
When all around the wind doth blow, and coughing drowns the Parson's saw  
And birds sit brooding in the snow and Marian's nose is red and raw.  
While greasy Joan still keels the pot.*