



Manhattan Community Gardens

Past newsletters are available on: <http://www.k-state.edu/ufm/gardennews.htm>

A Message from the President

I hope you are receiving the weekly Friday e-newsletter sent out by board member, Chuck Marr? It is packed full of gardening information specific to what's happening in the community garden each week. I'm especially excited about his guidance in planting a fall garden. Being from Wisconsin I've always been a hesitant Kansas gardener, fearing it's too hot to plant here during July and August. As a result, I usually plant too late, and get a poor fall harvest. This year Chuck is telling us each week when it's time to plant specific crops – and I plan to follow his advice and ignore the temperature. If you do not have a computer don't miss this wonderful source of information; ask a fellow gardener to print a copy and give it to you each week. To receive the weekly e-newsletter send an email request to: communitygarden@tryufm.org



The next community garden social is on August 1st at 8pm; come dressed in your gardening clothes, meet a few fellow gardeners and enjoy the treats. I know most of the gardeners in the southeast section, where my garden is located, but I rarely get to meet folk from the other sections. I hope you will join us for an hour of fun, food and the chance to talk about your garden. For more information, see the article in this newsletter.

If you want to share your love of gardening with the younger generation, check out the article about the after-school gardening clubs, called projectPLANTS that will begin this fall in the USD 383.

The garden sign up process has been refined by the Community Garden Board for the 2009 garden season. More information will be available in the next newsletter (Sept/Oct issue). Returning gardeners will have three opportunities to sign up for 2009 plots: Nov. 1st at the fall clean up and potluck, Dec. 3rd and Feb. 4th. You need to sign up at one of these three dates if you plan to continue as a gardener at the MCG. Any plots not registered and paid for by this last date – Feb. 4th, will be forfeit and rented to new gardeners.

This December will be the end of a three-year term on the Garden Board for two others and myself. It is time to start thinking about the gardeners that will replace us. If you feel you would like to help make a difference and keep the MCG moving in a positive direction – please contact a board member for more information.



➔ *Patty Zehl, President Manhattan Community Gardens*

Help Needed – To Deliver Garden Produce to the Breadbasket

Help is needed to deliver excess produce donated by our gardeners to the Flint Hills Breadbasket, which is located on Yuma street – a short drive from the community garden. If you can do this one day a week, please call Patty at 537-8306.



Dates to Remember

UFM – Fall Gardening Class, Saturday, July 19th, 10am-noon

Get extra mileage out of your garden space this year and take advantage of Kansas' great autumn weather to plant a fall garden. Class includes information on soil preparation, fertilizer needs, and helpful tips for obtaining maximum seed germination and crop yields. Instructor Colleen Hampton has taught gardening classes at UFM for 15 years. Call UFM, 539-8763 to register. Class #08BEN01

K-State Olathe Center Horticultural Field Day, Saturday, July 26th, 8am-3pm

Gardeners have the opportunity to talk to experts and get a look at what's new for yard and garden. Highlights include: flowering plant trials, hot pepper trials, ornamental grass display and potato variety taste testing. For more information visit:

<http://www.johnson.ksu.edu/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabid=681>

Community Garden Social – Friday, August 1st, 8-9pm

An informal gathering, to enjoy good food and the company of fellow gardeners near the shed area of the community garden. Don't miss an ice-cream and cookie social!

“Back to Gardening” Event, Wednesday, August 27th, 6-9pm

Gardening seminars at Pottorf Hall in Cico Park.

Master Gardener Training - Fall 2008

Classes run Sept. 5 thru Nov. 14. For more information, contact Gregg Eyestone at the Riley County Extension office, 110 Courthouse Square; 537-6350.

Fall Clean Up & Potluck – Saturday, November 1st, 8am to noon

Following the community garden clean up - enjoy bean recipe taste testing, a fabulous potluck and elect three new garden board members. New this year, will be a “returning gardener” sign-up held in the large garden shed from 8-11am.

Valuable Information from Past MCG Newsletters

Manhattan Community Garden newsletters from 2006 thru 2008 are available online by visiting the “community garden” section of the UFM website at www.tryufm.org

The following are articles that are pertinent to what is happening in your garden right now. If you do not have access to the Internet, but would like copies of these articles, contact board member Patty Zehl.

July/Aug 2007 Issue:

- ➔ Harvest and storage guide for mid to late season vegetables
- ➔ Freezing guide - vegetables
- ➔ What makes a healthy soil?
- ➔ Squash bugs



Trash Pick Up



To help gardeners keep the community garden cleaner, the Garden Board has decided to hire Joe Mallon, who beginning Tuesday, July 15th will pick up our trash once every two weeks. If you have garden debris to be hauled away it must be bagged up, and placed to the east of the "Johnnie on the Spot" by the large shed. Please use "poly" trash bags and not paper bags, which would fall apart when it rains.

Garden Reminders

As members of a community garden there are cooperative things we all need to do when sharing garden space with others. Please be considerate of your fellow gardeners and follow these reminders – which are either simple garden etiquette or existing community garden rules.



Weeds and grass: Each garden must be weeded regularly and weeds and grass must not be allowed to go to seed. Tree seedlings on garden plots are considered to be weeds, and must be removed while less than 2 feet tall. Bindweed, Bermuda grass and weeds that are allowed to "go to seed" are a problem for all nearby gardeners; please do not create extra work for others by neglecting to control your weeds. If you don't have time to control the weeds, you shouldn't be in a community garden.

Path maintenance: Gardens paths should be kept passable for everyone. The vegetative growth should not exceed 4" in height. Gardeners are responsible for the maintenance of all the paths that border their plot(s). Please work with the gardeners on the other side of the path to keep it clean. If you have a path covered in grass/weeds, then mow it regularly; or remove the vegetation and lay down newspapers or cardboard and cover with wood chips. Wood chips are currently available at the end of 9th street by the railroad tracks.

Compost piles: Do not add evasive weeds you have just pulled from your garden into our public compost piles. Bermuda grass and Bindweed will just establish roots in the compost piles and create a problem for the nearby gardeners. I either haul mine away in trash bags, or lay the weeds to dry out in the sun before adding to my own compost pile.

Tool care: Please return the garden equipment to the sheds. It's best to do it before it gets dark, or you may not be able to open the padlock in the dark. Clean off all tools and equipment before returning the items to the shed. This means rinse the soil off of the tools, which will prevent rusting and increase their longevity. Any damage should be reported by hanging a repair tag on item with information about what is wrong. The repair tags are hanging on the back wall of the large shed.

2008 MCG Board Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Committee</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
Patty Zehl, President	Newsletter & Education	537-8306	pzehl@ksu.edu
Susan Peterson, Vice President	Records	537-0372	slpete@sbcglobal.net
Pam Been-Redeker, Secretary	Flower Bed Maintenance	537-8298	donreder@sbcglobal.net
Linda Teener, Treasurer	Finance	539-8763	lteener@ksu.edu
Lynda Bachelor	Garden Socials & Crop Walk, Flower Bed	539-9508	bachelor@ksu.edu
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Chuck Marr	Newsletter & Education	539-6825	cmarr@ksu.edu
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Stoner Smith	Equipment Maintenance	539-3821	stoner-2323@hotmail.com

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(Please do not call MCG Board Members after 9pm)

When to Harvest

Physiological processes occur in vegetables that permanently change their taste, appearance and quality if they are not harvested at the proper stage of maturity. Texture, fiber and consistency are greatly affected by stage of maturity. The stage of maturity at harvest, post-harvest handling, and the time interval between harvesting and serving affect the quality of all vegetables. Some vegetables are more highly perishable than others. Sweet corn and English peas are very difficult to maintain in an acceptable fresh state for even a very short time, while other vegetables may have a much longer shelf life.



Even after harvest, respiration and other life processes continue, and in most cases a slowing of these processes will increase the shelf life of the vegetable. Lowering the internal temperature helps to slow these processes. This is one reason for harvesting vegetables early in the day before the heat from the sun has warmed them. After harvest, most vegetables should be kept cool and out of direct sunlight until processed or consumed.

The following table gives suggestions to aid in determining the proper stage of maturity for harvesting many vegetables. Harvesting too soon may result in only a reduction in yield. However, harvesting too late can result in poor quality due to development of objectionable fiber and the conversion of sugars into starches.

Vegetable	Part Eaten	Too Early	Optimum	Too Late
Artichoke, Globe	Immature bloom	Flower buds small	When buds are 2" to 4" in diameter	Buds large with scales or bracts loose
Asparagus	Stem	Insufficient length	6" to 8" long; no fiber	Excess woody fiber in stem
Beans, Lima	Seed	Insufficient bean size	Bright green pod; seed good size	Pods turned yellow
Beans, Pole Green	Pod and seed	Insufficient size	Bean cavity full; seed ¼ grown	Seed large; pods fibrous
Beans, Snap Bush	Pod and seed	Insufficient size	Pods turgid; seeds just visible	Pods fibrous; seed large
Beets	Root and leaves	Insufficient size	Roots 2" to 3" in diameter	Roots pithy; strong taste
Broccoli	Immature bloom	Insufficient size	Bright green color; bloom still tightly closed	Head loose; some blooms beginning to show
Brussels Sprouts	Head	Insufficient size; hard to harvest	Bright green; tight head	Head loose; color change to green yellow
Cabbage	Head	Insufficient leaf cover	Heads firm; leaf tight	Leaf loose; heads cracked open
Cantaloupes	Fruit	Stem does not want to separate from fruit	Stem easily breaks away clean when pulled	Background color of melon is yellow; rind soft
Carrots	Root	Insufficient size	½" to ¾" at shoulder	Strong taste; oversweet
Cauliflower	Immature bloom	Head not developed	Head compact; fairly smooth	Curds open; separate
Celery	Stems	Stem too small	Plant 12" to 15" tall; stem medium thick	Seed stalk formed; bitterness

Collards	Leaf	Insufficient leaf size	Bright green color; small midrib	Midrib large; fibrous
Corn, Sweet	Grain	Grain watery; small	Grain plump; liquid in milk stage	Grain starting to dent; liquid in dough stage
Cucumber	Fruit	Insufficient size	Skin dark green; seeds soft	Skin beginning to yellow; seeds hard
Eggplant	Fruit	Insufficient size	High glossy skin; side springs back when mashed	Seeds brown; side will not spring back when mashed
Lettuce, Head	Leaves	Head not fully formed	Fairly firm; good size	Heads very hard
Okra	Pod	Insufficient size	2" to 3" long; still tender	Fiber development; pods tough
Onions, Dry	Bulb	Tops all green	Tops yellow; ¾ fallen over	All tops down; bulb rot started
Peas, English	Seed	Peas immature and too small to shell	Peas small to medium; sweet bright green	Pods yellow; peas large
Peas, Southern (green)	Seed and pod	Peas immature and too small to shell	Seeds fully developed but still soft; pods soft	Seeds hard; pods dry
Pepper, Pimiento	Pod	Insufficient size	Bright red and firm	Pod shriveled
Pepper, Red Bell	Pod	Pods a chocolate color	Bright red and firm	Pod shriveled
Potato, Irish	Tuber	Insufficient size	When tops begin to die back	Damaged by freezing weather
Potato, Sweet	Root	Size small; immature	Most roots 2" to 3" in diameter	Early plantings get too large and crack; damaged by low soil temperature below 50°F
Rhubarb	Stem	Size small; immature	Stem 8" to 15" long best	Fleshy stem becomes fibrous
Soybeans	Seed	Seeds not developed	Pods thick; bright green	Pods dry; seed shatters out
Squash, Summer	Fruit	Insufficient size	Rind can be penetrated by thumbnail	Penetration by thumbnail difficult; seed large
Squash, Winter	Fruit	Rind soft	Rind difficult to penetrate by thumbnail	Damaged by frost
Tomatoes	Fruit	<p>May be harvested in three stages:</p> <p>Mature green – tomato firm, mature, color change from green to light green, no pink color showing on blossom end. These tomatoes will store one to two weeks in refrigerator.</p> <p>Pink – pink color on blossom end about the size of a dime. These tomatoes, at room temperature, will ripen in about three days.</p> <p>Ripe – tomato full red but still firm. Should be used immediately.</p>		
Watermelon	Fruit	Flesh green; stem green and difficult to separate	Melon surface next to ground turns from light straw color to a richer yellow	Top surface has dull look

Master Gardener Corner -

Harvesting Beans: When Do You Pick?

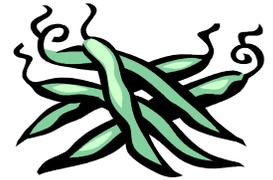


Growing beans is easy. But many gardeners wonder when do you pick beans. The answer to this question depends on the kind of beans that you are growing and how you would like to eat them.

Harvesting snap beans: Edible pod beans – green, wax, bush and pole beans are harvested anytime the pods are firm, crisp and fully elongated, but before the seed within the pod has developed significantly. If you wait too long to pick snap beans, even by a day or two, the beans will be tough, woody and stringy.

Pick beans after the dew is off the plants, and they are thoroughly dry. Be careful not to break the stems or branches, which are brittle on most bean varieties. The bean plant continues to form new flowers and produces more beans if pods are continually removed before the seeds mature. Some gardeners like to pull up the whole plant and collect the pods. This is less bending but also ends the harvest.

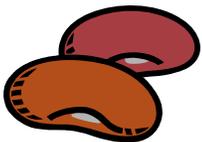
Strike and an unnamed green bean variety are the two “snap beans” in the demonstration garden. You are invited to harvest these two for a taste test. Just make sure you are picking from the right garden. All the beans are labeled with metal stakes in the two Master Gardener demonstration garden locations.



Harvesting fresh shell beans for their pods: Shell beans, such as kidney, black and fava beans, can be harvested like snap beans and eaten in the same way. The best time to pick shell beans for eating like snap beans is while they are still young and tender and before the seeds inside are visibly evident when looking at the pod.

Black Turtle is a shelling bean being grown in the demonstration garden that can be used as a snap bean when harvested young or left to dry.

How to harvest and dry shell beans: The last way to harvest shell beans is to pick the beans as dry beans. In order to do this, you will leave the beans on the vine until the pod and the bean is dry and hard. Once the beans are dry, they can be stored in a dry, cool place for many months, even years. Use these dry shell beans in dishes such as chili and baked beans.



The *Vermont Cranberry*, *Flagrano*, *Garbanzo*, *Pinto*, *Great Northern*, *Dixie Speckled Butter Pea*, and *Henderson's Bush Lima* beans being grown in the demonstration garden can be used as a fresh shell bean or dry shell bean. The *Cannellini* and *Red Kidney* beans are harvested when dry.

Please watch the progress of the shell beans, but do not pick these. We are allowing them to fully mature, and plan to harvest them when they are dry. The beans will be prepared and made available for taste testing during the Manhattan Community Garden Fall Clean Up & Potluck on November 1st.

→ Based on information provided by Gregg Eyestone, CEA – Horticulture, Riley County Research & Extension Horticulture Agent

Try Wide-Row Planting for your Fall Beans



For years, many gardeners have planted their bush bean seeds in single-file, straight-line rows with lots of room between the rows. Some gardeners consider this method a waste of valuable growing space and not the most productive way to grow beans.

Instead, these gardeners use a wide-row technique that allows them to double and sometimes even triple their bean crops. With this method, you simply spread seeds over a wide seedbed, instead of putting one seed behind another in a row. The wide area contains many more plants than a single row of the same length, so you can harvest much more from the same area. Wide rows work well for all bush varieties of shelling or snap beans, but not the pole varieties.

A row 16 to 18 inches across - about the width of a rake head - is very easy to plant, care for and harvest. With a little wide-row experience, you may want to try even wider rows.

The advantages to wide-row growing are many:

- You can grow two to three times as many beans in the same amount of space.
- Weeding is reduced to a minimum. As the beans grow, their leaves group together and form a "living mulch," which blocks the sun, inhibiting weed growth.
- Many gardeners spread mulch - organic matter such as hay, pine needles or leaves - around all their plants in the garden to fight weeds and retain moisture in the soil. Wide rows mulch themselves, so you only need to use small amounts of mulch to keep weeds down in the walkways and to help retain moisture. You'll also have fewer walkways using wide rows, so you really can save a lot of space, effort and mulch.
- Moisture is conserved by the shade because the sun can't scorch the soil and dry it out as much. Moist soil stays cooler, so beans in very hot climates don't wither as much or stop producing as quickly.
- The plants in the middle of the rows are protected from the full effects of hot, drying winds. They don't dry out rapidly like those in a single row. This can be especially important in water-short areas of the country.
- Harvesting is easier with wide rows. You can pick much more without having to continually get up and move down the row. It's pleasant to take a stool into the garden, sit down and enjoy picking beans by the bushel.

How to Plant Bush Beans in Wide-Rows: Prepare the soil for a fall crop of beans - using a steel garden rake, smooth out the seedbed during the month of July. Be careful not to pack the seedbed down by stepping on it. Do all your work from the walkway beside the row. If the soil is dry, wait to water until after planting. If you water before, you will pack the soil down.

Stake out a row 15 to 18 inches wide (or wider if you like) and whatever length you want. Drop the seeds three to four inches apart from each other in all directions in the row. One two-ounce package of snap beans covers roughly 10 feet of rake-width row. Firm the seeds into the soil with the back of a hoe, and cover the seeds with about 2 inches of soil in the spring, or 4 inches for a fall planting. Using a rake, pull the soil from the side of the row and smooth it evenly over the seeds. Firm gently the soil again with the back of a hoe. Leave a path or walkway wide enough to walk on once the plants have grown and spread out. You'll need at least 16 inches, and more if your cultivator or tiller is wider.

➔ *Based on a web article by the National Gardening Association Editors*

Keeping Up the Harvest – While on Vacation

The ‘dog days’ of summer mean that many in our community squeeze in that late summer vacation prior to the start of school. This can be a problem for community garden plots that are left unattended for 2-3 weeks in mid summer. Most vegetable plants respond to regular timely harvest. This keeps the plants producing more to replace what has been removed. When you stop harvesting, the plants stop producing. This is probably most evident in cucumbers and summer squash where harvested plants will produce 6-7 times more fruit than those that are allowed to develop fruit that is not picked. But regular harvest also encourages more production in peppers, eggplant, tomatoes, and beans (to some extent).

Summer heat means that crops may need to be watered. With the frequent rains and moderate weather we’ve had so far this year, plant roots are not very deep and plants will suffer with the first sign of a hot, dry period. A weekly watering would be very beneficial during this time.

Weeds can grow rapidly although many new weeds do not germinate after mid July. Hoeing or pulling large weeds can be very useful at this time of year (also especially with the wet weather we’ve had so far).

In short, make sure that you have someone look after your garden for you while you are gone. This may be a fellow gardener that has a plot near yours. Or it may be a friend or relative that might appreciate the extra produce from your plot. Make sure that you have them stop by the garden with you so there is no confusion about where your plot is located. It can get a little confusing to someone not familiar with the gardens to know where your specific plot is located. We don’t want someone harvesting out of someone else’s plot.

➔ *Chuck Marr- Manhattan Community Gardener and Professor (Emeritus) of Vegetable Crops at KSU*

Mowing Schedule:

Gardeners are responsible for mowing the grass/weeds in the commons areas of the gardens ONE TIME during the scheduled period. If for some reason you are not able to mow during your scheduled time, you will need to switch with someone else or ask a garden neighbor if they would be willing to do it for you. **If you are confused about where your area is, check out the map located in the glass case on the front of the large shed.** If you have questions about the mower, call the Equipment Maintenance Chairperson – Stoner Smith.



<u>WEEK OF:</u>	<u>Southeast</u>	<u>Southwest</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>
July 13 – 19	Rod Downey	Lambert & Seaton	Sudha Pisipati	Donald Adongo
July 20 – 26	Donn Leach	Jody Parsons	Habib Diop	Carl Hill
July 27 – Aug. 2	Donn Leach	John Exdell	John Exdell	Carol Blocksome
Aug 3 – 9	Butch Hitschman	Butch Hitschman	William Bunyan	William Bunyan
Aug 10 – 16	Michael Rhodes	Kent Hampton	Larry O’Neill	Andrew Mitchell
Aug 17 – 23	Michael Rhodes	Kent Hampton	Monte Johnson	Lawrence Davis
Aug 24 – 30	Bill Webber	George Brandsberg	Kathy Bleam	Lawrence Davis
Aug 31 - Sept 6	Bill Webber	Lambert & Seaton	Teresa Minton	Leroy Brooks
Sept 7 – 13	Sharon Davis	Jeff Lord	Francis Begnoche	Leroy Brooks
Sept 14 – 20	Elena Boyko	George Brandsberg	Francis Begnoche	Kathleen Tanona

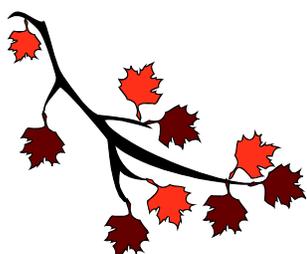
REMINDER: All gardeners who are not on the Board of Directors are required to mow a commons area. Gardeners with one plot mow one time; gardeners with multiple plots must mow at least twice during the season. Gardeners who did not sign up for mowing (or not enough mowing times) at registration have been placed in the schedule where there was an empty slot.

Fall Gardening 101

Someone said the garden planting season is about over but I say it's just beginning. That is because one of the best times for gardening in Kansas is in the fall or autumn season. In the weekly MCG weekly electronic newsletter, I will do a weekly update on what you should be doing and when but this article is to provide an overview of the do's and do not's of fall gardening.

First of all, the process of fall gardening is backwards from the spring where we plant all of the cool season crops at once and they mature at various times through the spring and early summer. In the fall, we plant those things that take the longest first followed by those that take a shorter time.

Nearly every cool season crop can be replanted for a second crop in the fall. The exception is peas, which seem to rot in the warm soil temperatures. Several warm season crops such as summer squash and beans can be planted for fall. For a calendar of what to plant when see K-State's publication on Vegetable Garden Planting Guide at: <http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/hort2/mf315.pdf>



Spring gardening can be a little tough sometimes with freezes and storms and likewise fall gardening is not without it's problems. The main problem is some crops need to be established in intense summer heat. To deal with this you should plant about twice as deep as you do in the spring, lightly mulch with straw, hay, compost, or grass clippings, keep the soil moist until crops emerge, and (for those things that can be transplanted) consider starting transplants in a partially shaded location at home and transplant crops into the garden later.

Prepare the soil just like you would in the spring by mowing any weeds and vegetation followed by tilling. You may consider applying a very light application of fertilizer - usually only about ½ as much as you would in the spring season. Use the same spacing that you use for spring planting.

One of the big advantages of fall gardening is that weeds are usually less of a problem (that doesn't mean you won't have any weeds) and diseases and insects are far fewer. The flavor and quality of produce grown in the fall is outstanding. Warm season crops will be injured by the first freeze so your harvest will need to be completed by mid October. However, the cool season crops can be left until a hard freeze in mid to late November. So, get ready for fall gardening season. The fun is just beginning.

→ *Chuck Marr - Manhattan Community Gardener and Professor (Emeritus) of Vegetable Crops at KSU*

KSU - Student Farm Tour

Come see the new student farm at K-State on Thursday, July 17th. The Center for Hazardous Substance Research is hosting the *Third Annual Dialog for Sustainability* starting at 9:00am and ending with a potluck at Long's Park at 5:30. The day's activities will include a tour of the new student vegetable farm, which is located in the River Pond State Park. This event is free of charge and anyone is invited to attend any of the activities. Pre-registration is encouraged to ensure a seat – go to the following web site for more information - <http://www.engg.ksu.edu/CHSR/sustainability/>

The tour of the farm will be from 4:40 to 5:30. If anyone would like to come see the farm but cannot make it to the tour, please contact me at 785-443-2769 or jlguilfo@ksu.edu and I would be happy to provide directions and show you around.

→ *Jenny Guilford, Student Farm Manager, MCG Board Member*

Donate Extra Produce

By now you may be finding you have a surplus of garden vegetables. Please share your harvest with the Flint Hills Breadbasket by donating your extra vegetables, rather than allowing them to rot in your garden. It's really simple, just put your vegetables in the buckets labeled "PAR" (*Plant a Row for the hungry*) located in front of the large shed. Please only put good quality, clean, dry vegetables in the donation buckets. Volunteers will deliver the food to the Breadbasket from Monday thru Friday. Do not leave anything on weekends, as it will spoil in the heat.



If you would like to be one of the volunteers delivering the food to the Breadbasket, which is located on Yuma street, please call Patty at 537-8306.

After-school Gardening Clubs



New this fall will be after-school gardening clubs called projectPLANTS, for 4th and 5th graders in four USD 383 elementary schools: Amanda Arnold, Bergman, Ogden and Theodore Roosevelt. The purpose is to get kid's "turned on" about gardening at a young age, so they will be hooked for life.

The kids will have the opportunity to grow vegetables, fruit, flowers and herbs in both a school garden and a high tunnel – unheated, plastic covered greenhouse – for year round production. To reinforce what they learn in the garden club, they will take home plants to grow in family gardens.

To make this opportunity for the kids a success, community volunteers are needed to either share their gardening knowledge with the kids or to help with the care of the school gardens. Please call Patty, at 537-8306/nights or 532-3193/days for more information on how you can be a part of this exciting opportunity.

Garden Social - Friday, August 1st from 8-9 pm

It's going to be the **Dog Days of Summer** soon, so let's bring it in with some old fashion ice cream and cookies. On Friday, August 1st at 8 p.m., bring your favorite ice cream topping and cookies to share and join us as we place our poor "dogs" (our feet) into our "homemade" swimming pool and enjoy dessert.

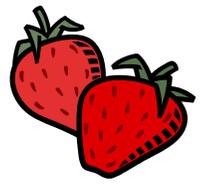


This is definitely not the ice cream socials you are use to! Come enjoy our last summer social with committee members and other gardeners. You are encouraged to wear your garden hat and gloves! This event is hosted by the Garden Social and Crop Walk committee. Hope to see you there!

Wheelbarrows – Keep Away from the Railroad Tracks!

NEVER, take the wheelbarrows anywhere near the railroad tracks, with the exception of the railroad crossing. A very small burr found along the railroad tracks can actually puncture the wheelbarrow tires. This is a problem we have every year, and it is very difficult to push a full wheelbarrow when it has flat tires.

Summer Care of Strawberries



Taking good care of strawberries this summer and fall will make a difference in the amount of fruit you harvest next spring. Next year's fruit buds will be set in September and October. Larger, healthier plants set more fruit buds. If you use a garden cultivator, rototiller, or hoe for weed control in the rows and between rows, throw about a half-inch of soil over the crowns.

Strawberry plant crowns continue to develop at the top, and new roots are initiated above old roots on the crown, so they need about a half-inch to an inch of soil covering the crown. You will provide a good rooting medium for new runner plants by keeping the soil pliable or resilient rather than allowing it to harden on the surface. Remember to keep soil moist. Strawberry plants need about 1 ½ inches of moisture each week when temperatures reach 90 degrees.

→ *Ward Upham, Extension Associate, Horticulture 2008 Newsletter*



Fennel Facts

History: The name for fennel in Greek is 'Marathron', which is how the city of Marathon got its name (means 'place of fennel'). It is also how the sport got its name. After the battle of Marathon in 490 BC, a long distance runner ran all of the way to Athens to herald the news of the victory. From that time forward a long distance run was called a Marathon. Fennel is one of the nine herbs held sacred to the Anglo Saxons. It is an essential ingredient in the Middle and Far East in Five Spice Powder.

In early America, among the Puritans, the seed was known as 'meeting seeds' and were chewed during church services. There were many suggestions on the reasoning for this procedure but the most common was that it was believed to control hunger (or flatulence!) during the long services.

Culinary Use: All parts of the Fennel plant can be used. Seeds and leaves are a great seasoning for eggs, sauces and fish. They also can be bruised (crushed slightly) and made into a refreshing tea that is good for the digestive system. Leaves are used in salads, soups, and put on sandwiches. Bulbs can be sliced and eaten as a vegetable, fresh, stir fried, braised, blanched, marinated and added to other dishes. Fennel has a taste and aroma similar to licorice, which comes from the compound anethole, also found in anise.

Medicinal Use: The anethole in Fennel has antispasmodic properties. This causes it to be beneficial in treating smooth muscle tissues in the body, such as the digestive tract and women's reproductive. Seeds chewed, or made into tea (1 tsp bruised seed/cup hot water) ease both diarrhea and constipation and allay hunger. Leaves and seeds can also be infused into vinegar or oil. Fennel is believed to be mildly estrogenic so is good for use with both menopause and other women's health issues. Caution Note: Due to its mild estrogenic qualities, people who are prone to abnormal blood clotting or estrogen dependent breast tumors should not take large medicinal amounts of Fennel.

Cultivation: Fennel grows very easy from seed. Hilling over Fennel bulbs for about 10 days causes them to blanch and results in a milder flavor. Fennel grown next to Dill will cross-pollinate. Grown next to Coriander, Fennel will not set fruit. Other plants that might be affected by neighboring Fennel are: bush beans, tomatoes, caraway and kohlrabi. In the wild Fennel and Poison Hemlock can sometimes be mistaken for each other, so it is best for the average person to 'grow your own'.

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