



October 5, 2011 Volume 8, Issue 10

## Hello Gardeners!

This is our final newsletter of the 2011 gardening season! As you pack up the garden tools and put the shovels in their place, we want you to remember all that you accomplished this year. And what a challenging year it was in New England this growing season - a hot, dry period following by constantly wet soil since mid August! Whether your crops are on the ground, in the ground or above the ground, all have faced significant threats from disease.

We are always available to you by phone, email or letter if you have any questions over the next few months, so don't hesitate to contact us. It has been our pleasure working with you during the growing season. We hope you have discovered the delights of growing your own food and the secrets that a garden can hold for you. We look forward to seeing you in 2012!

*Your Friends at Growing Places*

## What's Happening...

- With the shorter days, garden production is winding down. However, don't forget to keep checking regularly for any of those last crops that might be ready: kale, cabbage, swiss chard, carrots, winter squash, pumpkin, and leeks to name a few.
- Garlic (if you asked for it) and compost (for all first and second year gardeners) will be delivered to your garden during the second week of October. Be on the lookout for a call, message, or visit from your mentor!
- **Your feedback is very important to us!** All first year gardeners will be receiving a survey. This survey **must be** completed in order for you to receive your seeds and seedlings next year.

### What you might not know about CARROTS

- ♥ They are an excellent source of beta-carotene which helps keep our eyes healthy
- ♥ Carrots contain more sugar than any other vegetable except beets.
- ♥ They are members of the parsley family
- ♥ Can develop a 'forked' shape if something impedes their growth. But they will still taste just fine!

*Excerpted from the USDA*

## Tips for a Better Garden...

- Remember to remove all the dead plant matter from your garden to discourage unwanted pests from overwintering in the beds.
- Spread that compost!! Once you have finished with all your harvest and cleaned out your garden, spread one bag of compost on each of your garden beds and work gently into the soil. This will provide food for your soil to absorb over the winter months so it is ready to go next spring.
- If you have them, you can also spread shredded leaves or grass clippings onto your gardens and dig them in. They will also turn into compost and enrich your soil further.
- If you have any clay and ceramic pots, they can crack over the winter if left outdoors with soil in them or if they fill with rain. When the water or wet soil freezes, it expands. Empty pots and store upside down under a tarp or bring them in out of the weather.
- Remember to disconnect and drain garden hoses on a warm day before they freeze solid for winter. Otherwise you may have openings in the spring not just at the ends!

## What should I grow next year?

To help you remember what things you liked and didn't like, fill out this chart and save it for planning your garden next year. Feel free to add things that we don't have on our list. Do it now – it's so hard to remember when it's cold outside!

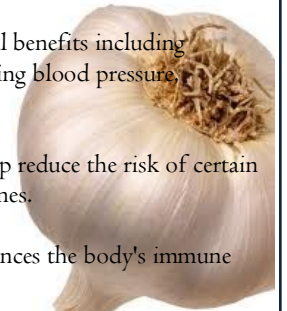
Crop	Liked	Did not like	Did not grow	Grow next year
Beans				
Beets				
Broccoli				
Cabbage				
Carrots				
Collards				
Cucumbers				
Eggplant				
Kale				
Lettuce				
Melons				
Peas				
Onions				
Sweet Peppers				
Hot Peppers				
Radishes				
Summer Squash				
Winter squash				
Spinach				
Swiss chard				
Salad tomatoes				
Sauce tomatoes				
Cherry tomatoes				
Basil				
Dill				
Cilantro				
Parsley				
Sage				
Shallots				



We love to hear from our gardeners! Watch for our survey coming soon.

## WHY YOU SHOULD EAT GARLIC

- ➡ The sulfur compound created from breaking the garlic cloves is an effective antibiotic on many organisms.
- ➡ It may help reduce salmonella that causes some food poisoning, and some intestinal infections including diarrhea.
- ➡ Heart-related studies indicate several benefits including possible cholesterol lowering, lowering blood pressure, lowering blood glucose
- ➡ Both cooked and raw garlic may help reduce the risk of certain cancers, including gastrointestinal ones.
- ➡ Studies are showing that garlic enhances the body's immune system.



Don't merely settle for supermarket garlic, grow your own instead!

## A SPECIAL THANKS TO GROWING PLACES' LOCAL PARTNERS AND SUPPLIERS!

We would like to extend a huge thank you to all of the special folks at our partner organizations. We're honored to work and live in and around communities with such generous and engaged citizens and businesses. Remember to support them by thinking local when shopping.

**Thank you so much!**



Applefield Farm, Stow



Dunn & Co., Clinton



## Recipes...

### **Roasted Squash Toss** (from *Growing Places'* mentor Diane Peterson)

Great for whatever squash you have in the garden; a combination or just one type, you can adjust the amounts below.



2 cloves garlic, minced	1 ( 1 1/2 pound) butternut squash, peeled, seeded and cut into 1/2-inch cubes (about 4 C )
1/4 C olive oil	
2 T dark brown sugar	1 (1 1/2 pound) acorn squash, seeded and cut into 1/2-inch cubes (about 4 C )
2 tsp ground cumin	
2 tsp red chili flakes	1/2 orange, zested and juiced (about 1/3 C juice and 1 T zest)
1/2 C almond slivers	
1 tsp cinnamon	

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.

In a large bowl, mix together garlic, olive oil, sugar, cumin, chili flakes and cinnamon. Add squash cubes and toss well to evenly coat. Season with salt and freshly ground pepper. Place on two sheet pans and bake until nicely caramelized and soft when poked with a fork, stirring squash halfway through baking, about 25 to 30 minutes. While baking, place almonds in a dry skillet over medium-high heat and toast, stirring often, until lightly golden, about 4 minutes. Transfer squash and almonds to a serving bowl, toss with orange juice and zest, and serve.



### **Carrot Ginger Soup** (from [www.slashfood.com](http://www.slashfood.com))

1 diced medium red onion	1½ C chopped carrots
1-2 T olive oil	3 C vegetable broth
4 T of minced fresh ginger	¼ C orange juice
2-3 cloves finely minced garlic	salt and pepper to taste

Heat olive oil over medium heat in the bottom of stockpot. Add onions and cook until soft, but do not brown. Add ginger and garlic and cook until soft and fragrant, about 2-3 minutes.

Add carrots, broth, and orange juice. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer until carrots are exceedingly tender, about 20-30 minutes. In batches, puree soup in blender (or do it in the pot if you have an immersion blender).

Thin with additional broth as needed. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

## Garden Spotlight

This week's spotlight section is set aside to acknowledge our Garden Mentors who have provided knowledgeable advice and support for their gardeners, to empower them and help them become skilled, confident growers.

<i>Carol Airey</i>	<i>George Davis</i>
<i>Joe D'Eramo</i>	<i>Penny Dickson</i>
<i>Connie Grabowy</i>	<i>Karen Green</i>
<i>Karen Juul</i>	<i>Laura Kischitz</i>
<i>Donna Mackie</i>	<i>Patricia McCord</i>
<i>Lisa Millette</i>	<i>Jane Moosbrucker</i>
<i>Gloria Ortiz</i>	<i>Barbara Pelkey</i>
<i>Diane Peterson</i>	<i>Julie Pratt</i>
<i>Miriam Ruiz</i>	<i>Alba Santos</i>
<i>Luci Simmons</i>	<i>Dolores Thibault-Munoz</i>
<i>Pat White</i>	<i>Liz Burns</i>

And, to all of the Growing Places gardeners, both past and present, who have worked hard to nurture and maintain their gardens, to grow fresh healthy food for themselves and their loved ones.

Acton	Lancaster
Ayer	Leominster
Berlin	Littleton
Bolton	Lunenburg
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Clinton	Pepperell
Devens	Shirley
Fitchburg	Sterling
Groton	Stow
Harvard	Townsend
Hudson	Westford

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Learn more about our volunteer opportunities by contacting us at [staff@growingplaces.org](mailto:staff@growingplaces.org)

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## Things to Remember

**S**PEAKING OF FREEZING: Vegetables (especially organic ones, yikes!) can be wildly expensive in winter, so while you have them left in the garden, think about putting some away for use in recipes like soups, stews and chili. It's easy! Wash, peel and core (depending on the veggie) and cut into an a manageable size for recipes. Pre-freeze, loose on a baking sheet and then stash in freezer bags. Produce that's pre-frozen in pieces before packing into containers is easier to separate, when only a small amount is wanted. Add to hearty, delicious recipes of all sorts to boost nutritional value for your family all winter long!

*(Excerpted from Freezing the Harvest, awaytogarden.com)*

