



Hello Gardeners!

I just bet you are all thinking, WOW, all this watering and bug squishing, pinching and weeding, is really paying off! The tomatoes are getting to be a deep red color (or purple, or yellow) depending on the varieties you grow, the beans are bountiful and the peppers are really plumping up. If you are a first year gardener, we hope that you are enjoying your experience with your new garden and making contact with your mentor for advice. No questions are silly, remember one thing...your garden is an experiment. No two years are the same, the weather plays a huge factor in how seeds, plants, and crops turn out. For those seasoned gardeners, we hope that you are keeping your hands dirty, with this latest round of rain the weeds have exploded...*stay ahead of the weeds*...there is A LOT of garden season left to go! As always, we appreciate hearing your garden stories and seeing any pictures of your progress. Send your notes, pictures, share your recipes with us or through your mentor or you can share these things directly through facebook for all our followers to enjoy.

Lots of planning behind the scenes for the next Growing Places Garden Harvest on October 4th. This year the guest speaker will be Gary Hirshberg, co-founder and chairman of Stonyfield Farm on *Why Organic and Sustainable Agricultural Practices Matter*. Gary led Stonyfield Farm's transition from a small local farm in New Hampshire to the world's leading organic yogurt producer. He is the author of *Stirring It Up: How to Make Money and Save the World* (Hyperion, 2008) and frequently speaks on topics including sustainability, organic agriculture and the profitability of green business. The event will include delicious, local foods, cash bar, and an exciting raffle and will be held at the Barn at Gibbet Hill in Groton, MA, the area's premier farm- to-table event location. We hope that you and your friends will join us in this special event.

Happy Gardening, Share the Love, Share the Bounty!

Your Friends at Growing Places



The Summer Olympics of Garden Hydration!

Heat stress in garden plants was a real problem during July and appears August might be the same. Extended periods of high heat (particularly when the heat index roars over the 80 degree mark) can take a real toll on your garden (and the gardener). Here are a few tips for helping different plants in your garden through a hot, dry spell and keep them healthy and productive.

Vegetables need a reliable, steady water supply to stay productive. However, even with careful watering, your veggies may suffer from heat stress. The most common signs of heat stress in vegetables are sunburned foliage and fruits (usually yellow and crisp to the touch), blossom and fruit drop, and wilting. There are a few things you can do to help your vegetable garden through a prolonged hot spell:

Water regularly and deeply. Stick your finger into the soil after what you think might be enough water, if should be wet and damp at least a full inch and more!

Mulch the soil with an organic mulch to reduce moisture loss and help regulate soil temperature. This can be mulch hay, grass clippings, and/or shredded newspaper.

Shade certain crops, such as leafy greens and lettuces, to slow the bolting process (sending out a tall shoot from the center of the plant). They will bolt, no matter what, during periods of intense heat. However, giving them some shade may buy you a couple of days before plant quality is diminished. You can do this by tenting the plants using cheese cloth, old sheets, scrap wood, whatever you have handy that will work.

Don't forget to hydrate yourself...*Try the Recipe for a refreshing summer beverage on page 3.*

Tips for Gardeners...

It's easy to become complacent when your vegetable garden first starts producing in early summer. But to get the most out of your vegetable garden, plan on harvesting into the fall or even the winter, where weather permits.

Keeping your vegetable plants healthy is the first key to a long producing vegetable garden. Even the healthiest vegetable plants will finally exhaust themselves setting fruits and will need replacing. Eventually it will be time to put the garden to bed, but keep it going as long as you can. With a little planning, you can easily keep your vegetable garden producing in succession.

Here are some simple tips for a long producing vegetable garden and maybe even a whole new fall vegetable garden.

Keep Picking Don't give up and leave those over ripened zucchini or summer squash on the vines. Once a plants fruits have gone to seed, it thinks it is done for the season and begins to decline. Many plants, like squash, beans, peppers and egg-plant, will stop producing new vegetables if the existing veggies are left on the plants to fully ripen.

Water Regularly Vegetables don't just need water, they need regular, consistent watering. Irregular watering results in problems and diseases like blossom end rot and cracking and can often make the vegetables bitter tasting. Allowing plants to dry out will stress the plant and cause it to stop producing and to drop whatever blossoms it already has.

Control Insects & Diseases Stop problems while they are small. Plants can defoliate from fungus diseases and a plant with no leaves is not going to produce fruit.

Feed Lightly You've asked a lot from your vegetable plants and they could use a little food by mid-summer, no matter how rich your soil is. But feed them lightly, especially with nitrogen. Too much nitrogen will encourage a lot of leaf growth and inhibit fruit production.

Let the Sun Shine In Make sure the vegetables are getting enough sunlight. Sometimes by the middle of summer, there is so much foliage that the sunlight can't get through. Most vegetables ripen faster in sunlight and produce tastier fruits. Vegetables that languish in the shade of leaves are more susceptible to insects and diseases.

Weed It's easy to let things slide toward the end of summer, but weeds will compete with your vegetable plants for water and nutrients, just when they need it most. Weed on a regular basis as you walk through your garden inspecting for bugs and harvesting crop.

Fall Planting The cooler weather and shorter days of fall make it a more ideal planting season than spring, as long as an early frost doesn't spoil everything. Peas, spinach, broccoli, cauliflower and greens can all be planted in August for harvest in September and October, harvesting can even extend into winter with root crops.

When seeding in late summer, plant your seeds a little deeper than you would in the spring, to take advantage of cooler soil and moisture. Shading the newly planted seeds and seedlings will help protect them from the summer sun. Mulch, row covers and taller plants, like your mature tomatoes, can be used for this.

Thinking about starting some fall crops? Prepare the soil now that was previously used by another crop. Add a couple tablespoons of Epsom salts, or bone meal, or a vegetable fertilizer such as Espoma Organic. Turn the top three to four inches of soil and wait out this heat for another week or two. Then reseed with any of these fall crops.

- Arugula
- Beans
- Beets
- Broccoli (Transplants>
- Brussels sprouts (Transplants)
- Cabbage (Transplants)
- Carrots
- Cauliflower (Transplants)
- Kale (Transplants)
- Leeks (Transplants)
- Lettuce
- Mache
- Mustard greens
- Peas
- Radishes
- Spinach
- Turnips



Don't Forget to Save the Date

Growing Places Garden Harvest

October 4, 2012

The BIG Event of the Year

Makes all the gardens possible!

Order your tickets today-call your friends!

Recipes Using the Harvest...

Watermelon Mint Lemonade

Ingredients

- 6 cups seedless watermelon, cubed in 1-inch pieces
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup fresh lemon juice
- 3/4 cup agave syrup
- 1/2 cup loosely packed mint leaves
- Lemon slices
- Fresh mint sprigs

Instructions

- Blend the watermelon and water in a blender until smooth. (You may need to do this in 2 batches.)
- Strain the pureed watermelon in a fine mesh over a large bowl. Discard the pulp and rinse the blender container out with water.
- Add the watermelon liquid, lemon juice, agave syrup, and mint back into the blender container and blend until the mint is completely blended.
- Transfer the Watermelon Mint Lemonade into a juice pitcher or pour directly over six tall glasses filled with ice. Mason Jars really add to the garden look. Garnish each glass with a sliced lemon and a small mint sprig.
- Serves 6...be creative.



Garden Spotlight on...

Another type of raised bed garden using debarked logs from the woods, stacked two high and filled with amended soil. The cucumber trellis is an old metal bedspring, I had to add the poles and ropes because there are foot long beans growing behind the cukes.



Savoy Cabbage is coming along, a challenge keeping up with the bugs!

This is a new variety of eggplant I am trying this year...will let you know how it comes out.

*From the Gardens of Mentor
Diane Peterson*



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eat your GREENS

makemesweatx.tumblr.com



Arugula inhibits cancer growth and improves immune defenses. It is an excellent choice for building healthy bones.

9 vitamins & nutrients
 A C E K
 folate
 calcium
 potassium
 magnesium
 phosphorus
 fiber



Collard greens help lower LDL cholesterol, regulate blood sugar, and combat osteoporosis. It also boosts the immune system against viral and bacterial infection.

11 vitamins & nutrients
 A B6 C E K
 folate
 calcium
 potassium
 magnesium
 phosphorus
 fiber



Although lowest of all leafy greens nutritionally, iceberg lettuce combats anemia, heart disease, and age-related illnesses.

8 vitamins & nutrients
 A C E K
 folate
 calcium
 potassium
 magnesium
 phosphorus
 fiber



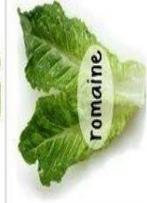
Kale is the most nutrient-dense of all leafy vegetables. It aids in blood clotting, promotes healthy vision and retinal function, and fights cancer.

24 vitamins & nutrients
 A B6 C E K
 folate
 calcium
 potassium
 magnesium
 phosphorus
 fiber



Mustard greens prevent arthritis and anemia, lower blood pressure, and help the body absorb iron. They also help protect against cancerous growths.

15 vitamins & nutrients
 A B6 C E K
 folate
 calcium
 potassium
 magnesium
 phosphorus
 fiber



Romaine lettuce promotes heart health and prevents strokes, well as cancer. It builds healthy bones, eyes, skin, and mucus membranes.

10 vitamins & nutrients
 A C E K
 folate
 calcium
 potassium
 magnesium
 phosphorus
 fiber



Spinach improves red blood cell function, strengthens bones, regulates heart rate and blood pressure, and combats free radicals.

17 vitamins & nutrients
 A B6 C E K
 folate
 calcium
 potassium
 magnesium
 phosphorus
 fiber



Swiss chard helps maintain connective tissue, controls heart rate and blood pressure, as well as sugar levels. It prevents anemia and boosts immunity.

17 vitamins & nutrients
 A B6 C E K
 folate
 calcium
 potassium
 magnesium
 phosphorus
 fiber



Turnip greens enhance collagen synthesis, build healthy bones, combat anemia, and boost immune defenses against cancer and illness.

18 vitamins & nutrients
 A B6 C E K
 folate
 calcium
 potassium
 magnesium
 phosphorus
 fiber