








GROWING TIMES

Growing Places Garden Project, Inc.

THE WEATHER:

FROM WWW.WEATHER.COM

Tuesday	71° high/ 48° low	
Wednesday	66° high/ 45° low	
Thursday	68° high/ 48° low	
Friday	71° high/ 47° low	
Saturday	68° high/ 48° low	
Sunday	66° high/ 45° low	
Monday	64° high/ 44° low	

HELLO GARDENERS,

Summer is officially over but we have had several days that make us long to go to the beach anyway. Ah well... The "Growing Times" newsletter will continue for a few more weeks and then we'll take a break after the gardens have been "put to bed" for the winter.

This week we ask you to start thinking about wrapping up this garden year (literally – see our "frost" section). We discuss cabbage, how to use your cabbage, and the changing weather. As promised, we will be bringing compost and garlic to your gardens in a few weeks.

We also need to start to plan for next spring. We would like you to fill out the survey that accompanies this newsletter and return it to us in the envelope provided. The feedback you give us helps us to make Growing Places Garden Project better. We want your gardening experience to be helpful, satisfying, and productive and we can only do that if you tell us what is working and what isn't. We use the first pages to learn more about how well the whole garden worked for you. The last page will tell us about how your vegetables worked this year and whether you want to grow them next year. **For those of you who received your gardens this past spring, this last page is your order form for next year so it's very important that you fill it out and return it to us.** For those of you who received your gardens in 2003 or earlier, please fill out the survey because we need the feedback and if we have extra donated seeds, we can set aside things that you like to grow and get those seeds to you.

The last reason that we need you to fill out the survey is that people who donate their money and time to GPGP need to know what you, the gardeners, think about the project.

Cindy and Kate

TO DO THIS WEEK:

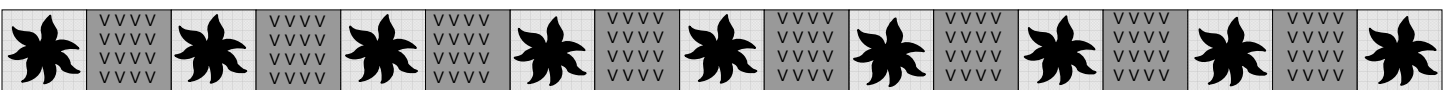
- √ Keep up with cleanup. If you have plants that have finished producing, pull them out. Pests hide in "garden litter."
- √ Try saving some tomato seeds for next year's windowsill seedlings. Remove the seeds and pulp from the tomatoes, and put them in a glass of water. Discard floating seeds and pulp and collect the seeds that have sunk. Rinse them, let them dry on a paper towel, and store them in a tight container until next year.
- √ Are you seeing holes in your kale, cabbage or broccoli? Look for green cabbage caterpillars on the leaves – they are hard to see. Pluck them off and destroy them.
- √ Check around the base of your carrot greens for nice plump carrots. You can harvest them now or leave them in the ground until late fall.
- √ Pick more herbs for freezing or drying – see Issue 10 for more guidance.

"NEW" CROP: CABBAGE

Last week we discussed kale; this week we will talk about one of kale's cousins, cabbage. Cabbage has been a staple in New England for a long time and it is easy to store. It needs moist, cool conditions to grow well – this summer was both. Cabbage plants take up a fair amount of room in the garden – one per square foot. Nevertheless, red and pale green cabbage heads look particularly beautiful in the autumn garden. Try growing "savoy" varieties too – their crinkly heads have a nice texture and a sweet flavor.

Here are some cabbage tips and facts:

- Cabbages should be harvested before a hard frost – see our "frost" section in this issue – but a light frost makes them taste even better.
- The chemicals that give red cabbage its color are called *anthocyanins* and they change color depending on the other chemicals around them.
- For the sweetest, mildest cabbage flavor, use moderate heat to steam or sauté cabbage. High heat breaks down other chemicals in cabbage that release sulfur and cause a strong taste and smell.
- Cabbage leaves can be used to wrap patties made from meat, rice and herbs. These cabbage "rolls" are then cooked in some broth – an eastern European favorite.





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Recipe: Cabbage Soup With Apples and Thyme

Thyme really shines in this soup; sautéed apples are an interesting sweet garnish. This recipe is adapted from www.epicurious.com.

3 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon olive oil
8 cups thinly sliced cored green cabbage (about 1/2 large head)
1 large onion, chopped
8 large fresh thyme sprigs or 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
6 cups low-salt chicken or vegetable broth
1 1/4 pounds Golden Delicious apples (2-3 apples), peeled, cored, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
Chopped fresh thyme

Melt 1 tablespoon butter with oil in heavy large pot over medium-high heat. Add cabbage and onion; sauté until vegetables wilt and brown, stirring occasionally, about 15 minutes. Add 8 thyme sprigs and sauté 1 minute longer. Add broth and bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium and simmer 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. (Soup can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate. Rewarm before serving.)

Melt remaining 2 tablespoons butter in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Add apples and sauté until brown and tender, stirring occasionally, about 12 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

Remove thyme sprigs from soup. Ladle soup into bowls; garnish with apples and chopped fresh thyme and serve.

AUTUMN FROST IS ON ITS WAY

Autumn has arrived and you may have noticed that the days and nights have become cooler. You may also have noticed that the coolest nights have had very few clouds and little wind. Clear, windless nights are the ones most likely to produce frost. By now many of the plants in your garden have slowed or stopped their growth and some of the area's trees are already shedding their leaves. Unlike the trees however, most of the vegetables and flowers in your garden are not built to survive Massachusetts' winters. In fact, most of them will die sometime over the next month or two – probably after the first hard (or killing) frost – when the outside temperature drops to 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below.

Frost occurs when water in the air becomes cold enough to form ice crystals on the ground and on plants. Sometimes this won't damage your vegetables. However, when it's cold enough, the water *inside* a plant turns into ice and destroys the plant's structure. Frost damage usually can't be repaired and the plant usually dies. Warm weather crops like tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, melons, and eggplant are the most likely

to be damaged first. Other crops like kale, carrots, spinach and cabbage resist frost damage and can even taste better after a frosty night.

In this area, there is a 50% chance that the first killing frost will occur between October 17th and 20th. The best way to beat frost damage is to be alert to weather forecasts in the autumn and then to protect your vegetables as well as you can. If a frost is forecast:

- Check your previous newsletters for storage tips and then harvest as many tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, melons, squash, basil, etc. as you can – even your green tomatoes can be wrapped individually in newspaper and placed in a cool dark area to ripen slowly (not the refrigerator; it's too cold).
- Cover your garden with large lightweight pieces of cloth, such as old bed sheets, in the evening before a frost is predicted and take them off the next morning.
- Put a mulch layer of hay over your root crops and leave it there until you are ready to harvest them.

