








GROWING TIMES

Growing Places Garden Project, Inc.

THE WEATHER:

FROM WWW.WEATHER.COM

Tuesday	78° high/ 58° low	
Wednesday	80° high/ 57° low	
Thursday	78° high/ 58° low	
Friday	83° high/ 61° low	
Saturday	81° high/ 61° low	
Sunday	83° high/ 64° low	
Monday	82° high/ 64° low	

HELLO GARDENERS,

Just wanted to share a funny story from a very close friend—the other day she was out in her garden and found a tomato hornworm eating her plants. Not just any old hornworm, but one that was longer than her middle finger and he had a friend of about the same size to boot! Well, she put one on the bird house hoping the bird in residence would have a nice supper for its babies, but the bird was too frightened by the size of the worm to even try a bite! Oh well.

The nice cool weather and rain brought some welcome relief to both people and gardens. More hot and dry weather is in the forecast, so make sure those gardens stay watered.

In other news, Cindy has never been hugely fond of eggplant but has grown it successfully this year and loved the recipe from the Globe. We also have a delicious baked eggplant recipe from a Clinton gardener. You can them both on Page 2.

We hope you are enjoying your gardens. If you need help or have questions, please let us know. *Cindy and Kate*

Did You Know...

That determinate or "bush" tomatoes end with a flower cluster while indeterminate tomatoes (or those that seem to grow forever) don't end at all and keep growing right up until the frost kills them? If you pinch the top of the indeterminate plant, it will stop growing and concentrate on ripening the fruit it has. Check out your vines today!

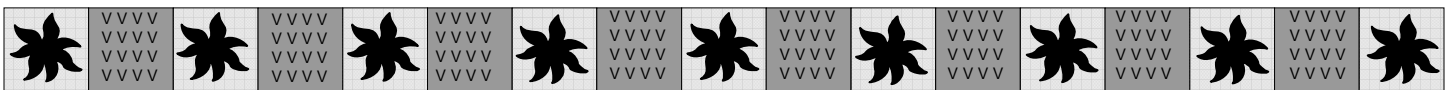
TO DO THIS WEEK:

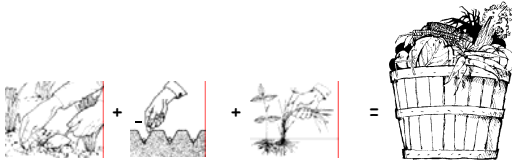
- √ If you haven't done so already, harvest your garlic (see Issue 7 of the newsletter)
- √ Plant lettuce and spinach for a fall crop and mulch lightly with grass clippings to keep them moist.

WHAT IS THAT MONSTER IN MY GARDEN?!

If you haven't figured it out already, winter squash (butternut, acorn, delicate, pumpkins, etc.) take up a lot of room. If they seem to be taking over a garden bed, gently encourage them to run outside of your bed. You could also let them climb up your fence (and probably down the other side). You might have to unwind or cut some of the grabby curling tentacles they send out to help them cling, but don't worry, it won't damage the plant.

By now, you are likely to see some squashes forming on the vines. If you have any fruits on the part of the plant climbing up your trellis or fence, you can create a support or "sling" (just like you would do for a broken arm) out of cloth, mesh bags or old pantyhose. The fruits ripen for a long time on the vine, so don't pick them. None of them will generally be ready much before mid-to-late September. The nice thing about these squashes is that most of them can be stored for several months—hence the name "winter" squash. We'll write about this crop in a future issue.





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We're on the Web!

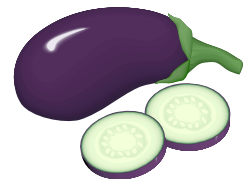
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"Growing Times" is produced by Cindy Buhner and Kate Deyst of Growing Places Garden Project.

THOSE PURPLE BEAUTIES—EGGPLANT

This is the first year that I (Cindy) have ever gotten eggplant to grow in my garden, so I'm pretty excited about this crop. Eggplants can be harvested when they are about 1/3—1/2 of their final size. Since most of you have traditional Italian eggplant, that would mean you can start using them when they are 2-3 inches long if you want a baby variety or wait until they reach 6-8 inches in length. The younger they are, the more tender they will be. Harvesting them young will also tell the plant to produce more fruits. Cut the stem between the fruit and the main plant with a knife or sharp scissors, leaving about 1 inch of stem still attached to the fruit. Harvest all eggplants when they are firm and have shiny skin. To make sure you are harvesting them in time, examine the eggplant's seeds—if they are brown or hard, you waited too long.

Eggplant doesn't store well in the refrigerator so use it quickly. You can also freeze eggplant. Wash, peel (or not) and slice 1/3 inch thick. Prepare quickly, enough for one blanching at a time. Blanch 4 minutes in 1 gallon boiling water containing 1/2 cup lemon juice. Cool, drain and freeze in Ziploc-type freezer bags leaving 1/2 inch headspace. To prepare slices for frying, place freezer wrap between the slices before packing into freezer bags. Eggplant also freezes well when in a stew or other recipe.



BAKED EGGPLANT:

- This recipe comes from Karen H. of Clinton, MA
- Makes 4-6 servings
- 1 med-large onion
- olive oil
- 2 or 3 small-medium eggplants
- 3 garlic gloves, crushed
- 3-4 medium tomatoes, peeled and chopped
- 3 tablespoons chopped parsley
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice

Sauté the onion in a little oil. Add garlic, tomatoes, parsley, salt and pepper. Cook until mushy. Cut the stems off eggplants and cut in half. Lay in casserole that has a cover, cut side up. Spoon tomato mixture on eggplant, sprinkle with sugar, lemon juice, and 1/2 cup oil. Cover and bake in preheated 350 degree oven for 40 minutes, or until tender. *Optional:* When done, sprinkle grated mozzarella on top of eggplant.

EGGPLANT AND GARBANZO STEW:

- Recipe courtesy of Boston Globe
- Makes 6 servings
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 onions, chopped into 1/2-inch chunks
- 2 gloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon each ground coriander and ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt, or as needed
- 2 eggplants, diced into 1-inch cubes (6 1/2 cups)
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 1 3/4 cups canned or fresh crushed tomatoes
- 3 cups drained, canned garbanzo beans (chickpeas)

In large pan over medium heat, heat oil, add onion and sauté until slightly soft. Stir in garlic, coriander, cumin, paprika and salt. Add eggplant and stir until well-coated with oil and spices and beginning to soften. Add wine and bring to a simmer. Add tomatoes and garbanzos and stir well. Bring to a boil, cover and reduce heat to low. Simmer, stirring occasionally for 40 minutes. Allow stew to cool for a bit and then serve warm. Great served over rice!

