

GROWING TIMES

Growing Places Garden Project, Inc.

HELLO GARDENERS,

September is finally upon us which means cooler weather. As a result, your summer crops will produce more slowly








It also means that we will be dropping by your gardens with some more goodies—bags of compost and garlic (if you requested it). The compost is for you to spread on your beds—1 bag per bed—once you have finished with your garden for the season and removed all of the old plants. If you get garlic, put it in a safe place until late September. We'll include a reminder in the bag on when and how to plant it. We'll also include more about cleaning up your garden beds in another issue—you still have lots of eating to do!

Please let us know if you need any help or have any questions.

Cindy and Kate

THE WEATHER:

FROM WWW.WEATHER.COM

Tuesday	82° high/ 57° low	
Wednesday	85° high/ 60° low	
Thursday	85° high/ 60° low	
Friday	80° high/ 57° low	
Saturday	76° high/ 61° low	
Sunday	80° high/ 62° low	
Monday	78° high/ 60° low	

Did You Know...

That the cucumber is believed to be a native of India? It spread from there to Greece to Italy and was brought to Europe by the Romans. The cucumber finally made its way to North America in the mid-16th century. Quite a trip!

TO DO THIS WEEK:

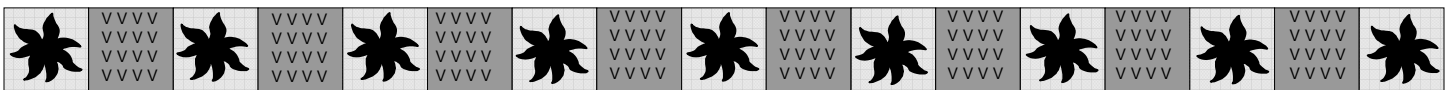
- √ Continue to water garden though not as much as in August. Cooler weather means less water—but not **no** water!
- √ Pull plants that are no longer producing any vegetables for you.
- √ Plant lettuce and spinach just in case fall is mild.

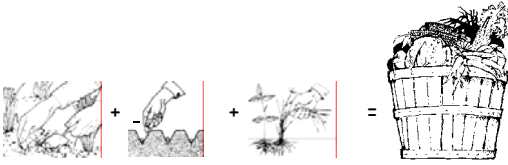
HARVESTING THOSE WINTER SQUASHES

The winter squashes – acorn, butternut, pumpkins, etc – are starting to ripen. They are great sources of nutrition that last into the winter and possibly spring. They often store very well for several months in a cool dry location. Acorn, delicata and spaghetti squash should be eaten first, since they do not last as long in storage as butternut and buttercup squash. So how do you know when to harvest these squashes? Two important characteristics indicate that winter squash is ready to harvest:

- The stem starts to shrivel up and dry;
- The skin is so hard that you can't cut it with your thumbnail. (Pumpkins are an exception as their skin tends to stay a bit soft even when ripe – the orange color is a good indicator, however.)

Cut squashes from vine with a sharp knife leaving 1-2 inches of stem. Store acorn, delicata and spaghetti squashes right away. Cure all other varieties in the sun for about 10 days to harden the skin for better storage. If there is a chance of frost, cover them or move them inside, then put them back outside to finish curing. Store when cured and eat at will!



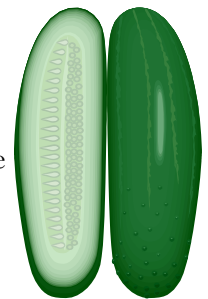


THE CUCUMBER STORY

According to the history pages, the Roman Emperor Tiberius enjoyed cucumbers so much that he insisted on eating them at every meal. Cucumbers have been used in a variety of ways: rubbed over the skin to keep skin soft and white, as a healing agent for skin irritations such as sunburn and rashes and the juice is now popular as a cooling and beautifying agent for the skin. And you only thought they were for eating!

Cucumbers come in many varieties—some are more suited to eating (often called slicers) and some are more suited to pickling. They also grow as bushes and as vines. Cucumbers love warm temperatures and full sun. If cucumbers are kept well picked, they will produce a large number of fruits (yes, cucumbers are technically a berry). They also seem to go from a little finger-length to ready-to-pick in a matter of a day or two. Therefore, you need to keep checking to see if they are ready. If they aren't picked and get too big, they signal the plant to stop producing and that is sad!

Pick cucumbers when they are of moderate size for their variety: for picking cucumbers that's about 3-4 inches in length, for slicers pick at about 6-8 inches in length. Rinse in cool water and store in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. You can pickle slicers if you harvest them when they are small and young.



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

EASY SWEDISH CUCUMBER PICKLES: MIDDLE EASTERN CUCUMBER-YOGURT SOUP:

This recipe comes from J.J. of Bolton, MA
Makes 4-6 servings.

2 cucumbers
2½ teaspoons salt
7 ounces of sugar
½ teaspoon pepper
2 Tablespoons fresh dill or 1½ teaspoons dried dill
2 cups white vinegar mixed with 2 cups water

If cucumbers have been treated with wax or oil, then peel them. Otherwise leave them unpeeled or score them lengthwise through the peel with fork tines. Slice the cucumbers and place in a colander to drain. Sprinkle each side with salt. Leave ½ hour.

Mix the sugar, pepper, dill and vinegar water.

Put the slices into clean glass jars and pour the vinegar mixture over the cucumbers. Chill overnight in the refrigerator.

A very easy no-cook soup from the Middle East also provided by J.J. of Bolton

Recipe adapted from [Vegetarian Soups for All Seasons](#) by Nava Atlas' vegkitchen.com

2 large cucumbers, peeled and seeded
1 pint plain yogurt
1/4 cup finely chopped mixed fresh herbs such as dill, parsley and mint
1/12 cups low-fat milk, or as needed
1 teaspoon granulated sugar
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
Juice of 1/2 lemon (optional)

Grate the cucumbers on a coarse grater, then place them in a colander. Place the colander over the container in which you serve the soup. Salt the grated cucumbers lightly and let stand for 30 minutes (the juice from the cukes will drain into the container and the cukes themselves will become pleasantly crisp).

Place the cumpers in the container with the cucumber juice. Stir in the yogurt, herbs and enough milk to give a slightly thick consistency. Stir in the sugar and seasonings, then add the optional lemon juice if you'd like an extra tangy flavor. Serve at once or refrigerate until needed.

