



Growing Times

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HELLO GARDENERS!

This is the time of the growing season when there seem to be many things to choose from in the garden. If you have extra, many vegetables can be frozen or canned to keep for later. There are many good resources at your local library – Ball's Blue Book is one of these; the internet is another. Or ask a neighbor, friend or relative who has experience to help you.

If you still have way too much to deal with, consider sharing your bounty with others – local food pantries and senior centers are often happy to receive fresh produce. Just make sure to call them before you bring your produce over.

Enjoy.
Cindy & Kate

TIPS ON...

Maintenance

Keep watering the garden – a good deep watering three times a week is better than a little every day.

Pests

Squash vine borers can be found at the base of your squash plants - see issue 8 of the newsletter tips on dealing with them. Plant more for a fall harvest if necessary

Harvesting

Summer squash and zucchini are ready to pick at 3-6 inches in length – smaller ones will be more tender. Use a sharp knife to cut the squash from the stem, for larger squashes you can often simply twist the squash and it will break away from the stem.

Peppers can be harvested green at any size you like or you can leave them on the plant to ripen even more to red (yellow or purple) – they will be sweeter (or hotter if they are hot peppers).

CROPS OF THE WEEK

THESE MAY BE READY TO HARVEST...

Cherry tomatoes, bell peppers, summer squash, squash blossoms, eggplant, zucchini, green beans



THINGS TO DO

- ✓ Harvest your garlic if you haven't done so yet – think of a new space in your garden if you plan to plant more this fall.
- ✓ Remove string bean plants that are no longer producing – plant a fall crop of something else.
- ✓ Keep checking for quick ripening squash, beans, cucumbers – don't let them get too big or they get tough and seedy – plants stop producing too ☹

RECIPES

Green and Gold Squash Casserole

- 1 medium onion, chopped
 - 2 Tbsp olive oil
 - 2 medium zucchini, grated
 - 2 medium yellow summer squash, grated
 - 2 Tbsp fresh parsley, chopped
 - 2 tsp dried oregano
 - ½ tsp ground black pepper
 - ½ tsp salt
 - 3 eggs, beaten (or egg substitute)
 - 1 cup cracker or bread crumbs
- Grated cheese for topping

Preheat oven to 325. In large skillet, sauté onion in oil until soft. Add squashes and sauté until much of the moisture disappears, about 15 min. Remove from heat and stir in seasonings, eggs and cracker crumbs. Blend well and place in a greased 9" casserole or pan. Top squash with grated cheese and bake for 45 minutes.

Baseball bat zucchini? Cut it in half long-way and remove seeds. Rub the shell with oil, stuff with tomatoes, corn, or other handy veggies or cooked rice and grated cheese. Bake in pan with sides in a 350 degree oven for 35-45 minutes. Or grate the whole thing and make zucchini bread. Grated squash can also be frozen in bags for later use.

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Cool as a Cucurbit

Did you know that squash, melons, pumpkins, and cucumbers are all in the same family – called cucurbits? Moreover, did you know that these plants produce two different kinds of blossoms? One, called the “male” produces pollen that fertilizes the “female” flower.



The male flowers appear on at the end of a long stalk from the main stem and are the first flowers that you will see on the plant.

Female flowers build the fruit after fertilization. They usually fall off before the fruit is ripe.



Female blossoms are found close to the main stem and often have a recognizable “baby” squash (or melon or cucumber) at their bases.

There are many ways to eat cucurbit blossoms – stuffed, sliced in salad, or fried. Pick the males in the late morning after they open and leave the females to make cucurbit fruits.