



Growing Times

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HELLO GARDENERS!

Well, it certainly has cooled down quite a bit these days. The cool nights and warmer days are just what the cool crops like, though the warm crops are a bit less happy about this. Despite that, tomatoes and peppers are ripening – a fresh tomato with a dab of mayonnaise, a shake of salt or a sliver of basil simply can't be beat! If you have extras, consider sharing with a friend or neighbor.

If you have any picture of your garden or stories that you would like to share, please send them along. It's always fun to hear what other people have been doing with their gardens.

Cindy & Kate

TIPS ON...

Maintenance

Remove and dispose of rotting produce to keep the garden disease free.

Pests

Slugs and snails have been showing up again with all the damp weather – keep a look out!

Harvesting

Winter Squashes are starting to ripen but how do you tell when they are ready to pick? First, the stem starts to shrivel up and dry and second, the skin becomes so hard that you can't cut it with a thumbnail (pumpkin skins, however, stay a bit soft so use color as an indicator for them). Cut from vine with a sharp knife leaving 1-2 inches of stem. Store acorn/spaghetti squashes, and other delicate squashes in a cool dry place. Cure other varieties in the sun for 10 days to harden skin more for better storage, but move inside if there's a chance of frost.

CROPS OF THE WEEK

THESE MAY BE READY TO HARVEST...

All tomatoes, bell peppers, summer squash, cucumbers, eggplant, zucchini, green beans



THINGS TO DO

- ✓ Keep weeding, especially the crabgrass which is starting to seed now; removing more now means less next year!
- ✓ Start a few squares of lettuce. It likes the cool weather and chances are you will at least be able to enjoy some great baby lettuce if it gets too cold before the heads form.
- ✓ Continue to harvest kale, collards, Swiss chard. They become sweeter as the weather cools. Add to soups and stews for extra vitamins.

RECIPES

Grilled Vegetables over Rice

VINAIGRETTE:

- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 garlic cloves, minced

VEGETABLES:

- 2 medium zucchini, halved lengthwise (about 1 pound)
- 1 red bell pepper, quartered
- 1 yellow bell pepper, quartered
- 4 (½-inch-thick) slices sweet onion
- 4 (4-inch) portobello mushroom caps
- Cooking spray
- 4 cups cooked basmati or other rice

Prepare grill.

For vinaigrette, combine first 6 ingredients in a small bowl; stir well with a whisk.

To prepare vegetables, combine ¼ cup vinaigrette, zucchini, and bell peppers in a large bowl. Brush remaining ¼ cup vinaigrette over both sides of onion slices and mushroom caps. Place vegetables on grill rack coated with cooking spray; grill 2 ½ minutes on each side or until vegetables are tender and browned. Place vegetables on a cutting board; cut each vegetable piece in half. Serve over rice; sprinkle with cheese (parmesan or feta are great).

Serves 8, Adapted from Cooking Light

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A few tidbits

You can grill most summer vegetables (even tomatoes). Just cut them and brush them with a little oil and grill them while you grill other things. Here are some tips for preparing:

1. Slice squashes lengthwise about ½ inch thick, 1-2 min. a side.
2. Cut large tomatoes crosswise in the middle and grill cut side down until outside is wilted.
3. Cut sweet peppers into quarters (see left) or grill sweet peppers or chili peppers whole. Turn them until the skins are blackened all the way around. Put peppers in a paper bag for 5-10 minutes and then peel off the skin. Remove seeds and stems and enjoy the meaty, smoky walls in salads and sandwiches.



Zucchini and summer squash in a Lancaster garden