

Growing Times



Hello Gardeners!

Volume 7 Issue I

Welcome to the 2010 Newsletter from Growing Places Garden Project. We just completed another record season for the organization, and we're excited about our growth. With nearly 80 new gardeners joining GPGP and 47 entering their second year with us, we are providing more families and children with access to fresh produce and nutrition education now than any other time in the history of the organization. This is no small feat, and we could not have done it without the help and commitment of dedicated volunteers and community partners who put in countless hours with us this season. You'll be learning more about these GPGP Heroes in upcoming issues so stay tuned.

Yes, we're excited about all of the things that are happening at GPGP, and we look forward to keeping you informed regularly from here on out. Don't forget to also check out our website @ www.growingplaces.org. We will be updating it over the next few months to include our new products, programs and partnerships. Change is growth and GPGP continues to grow in more ways than one!

"Growing Times" will be sent out approximately every other week between now and mid-October. We'll provide you with gardening tips, recipes and other information to help you get the most out of your garden. Some of you may notice that this is a new format for us. We're using a new program so please bear with us as we learn how to use all its bells and whistles! We would **love to have you** give us recipes, pictures or stories about what is happening in your garden so that we can share them with our readers. Please phone or email us with any of these or if you have any questions or concerns about your garden..

It's great to be back in touch, and we look forward to working with you during what has already started off as a wonderful growing season.

Sincerely,

Your Friends at Growing Places

What's Happening



Pea plants are perhaps coming to an end in your garden. Snip the last of the pea shoots and enjoy them in a salad or sandwich, and replace the peas on your trellis with new plants winter squash, pole beans, cucumbers, or melons. Peas are at their sweetest and crunchiest immediately after harvest so eat them in the garden or at

Tips for a Better Garden...



WATER: aim for a thirst quenching drink once a week. The rain may graciously provide this, or you may have to do it yourself. Water can be recycled from the drippings of the air conditioner, the dehumidifier, even the kiddie pool. It is normal for many plants to look wilted in the heat of the day. If by morning they have not perked up it is time to give the garden a soak. It is best to water early in the day to keep leaf mold and fungus to a minimum.



MULCHING: is not a necessity, but it does provide substantial benefits- water conservation, weed control, and it helps keeps the soil cool in summer. Try grass clippings, (if no chemicals are used to treat the lawn), spread 1-2 inches thick, no more, and leave the area immediately at the base of plants bare. Or newspaper (only black and white, nothing glossy) can be layered 6-8 sheets thick and overlapped by neighboring layers; anchor with a thin layer of soil, rocks, or wood chips.



THINNING: is vital to the success of your plants. By removing seedlings which are too closely spaced, you are making room for those left behind to grow to their full potential. Scraggly radish, carrots, beets, spinach or Swiss chard are not appealing. It is hard on a gardener to pull out perfectly healthy seedlings, BUT they can be rinsed and tossed into your salad, so think of them as fancy "micro greens" and enjoy.



Try planting seeds of greens, carrots, or bush beans, at the base of tomato plants.



Onions and garlic are almost ready to harvest, keep your eyes on them; tops will begin to yellow and tip over. Pull up on a dry day, preferably after a few dry days, as it will allow them to keep longer. Let them dry completely in a cool airy place.

that evening's meal They will keep for up to 5 days unwashed, in plastic bag in the refrigerator.



Greens and spinach should be in abundance. Harvesting the outer leaves for eating today will allow the central leaves to become ready in another few days. Think: salads, stir fry, even a great addition to soups.



Radishes are raising their "shoulders" above the soil, a sure sign it's time to harvest! The roots can be used cooked or raw adding a tangy crunch to salad, slaw, sandwiches, and stir fry. Be tender with the tops as you pull them up, because they are "greens" and can be enjoyed cooked or fresh in salads.



Potatoes- keep hilling! It is important to keep mounding soil onto these plants so they will keep making more potatoes. Dig your hands deep in the soil and pull out a few "new potatoes" for dinner tonight.



GREAT IDEA: Ask friends and family who don't have a garden to give you the velcro bands from heads of lettuce, cut them in half, and use them to secure your tomato plants to stakes. That's what Karen G. does at the Daniel Heights Community Garden, and we think that's a great idea. Thanks, Karen!

Upcoming Classes & Events...



Growing Places has partnered with Agway to offer our gardeners FREE Canning Classes throughout the summer. The best thing about canning your own garden vegetables is you save a great deal of grocery money and your family enjoys healthy, nutritious food year round.

Summer 2010 Canning Class Schedule

Lancaster	-	July 15th and Aug 19th
Gardner	-	July 8th and Aug 5th
Chelmsford	-	July 6th and Aug 3rd
Littleton	-	July 7th and Aug 18 th

Peggy Corbett, a competitive canner who provides canned goods to local shops will put on a number of canning classes at Central Mass Agway this summer. All classes are 4-6pm in store. Discounts available that day after the class.

2010 Farmers' Markets



Find the Bounty of Massachusetts Agriculture at your Local Farmers' Market!

Whether you live in the city or suburbs, a Massachusetts farmers' market is not too far from you. From spring until late fall, you can find local growers set up with their canopies and colorful displays of just-harvested fruits and vegetables in town squares, parks and other public spaces.

At many farmers' markets you will also find an array of other farm products, including baked goods, jams and jellies, maple products, honey, farmstead cheeses, flowers, turkey products, eggs and more! The festive atmosphere and fresh foods will certainly please all your senses Click on the link below for the Massachusetts Farmers' Market 2010 Guide for local schedules:

<http://www.mass.gov/agr/massgrown/docs/farmers-mkt-directory.pdf>

Awards and Recognition

In April and June, Growing Places was awarded the 2010 Wachusett Chamber of Commerce Environmental Award and the 2010 Massachusetts Nonprofit Network's Excellence Award in Nonprofit Collaboration respectively. We are proud to be recognized for our achievements, and we wish to thank all of our donors, volunteers, and partners for helping us reach new milestones.

Remember.... Use those herbs, not only do they add a new dimension to your cooking and salads; they also add lots of valuable vitamins too. AND the plants benefit too - as you pinch or cut back the plants they will reward you by coming back chubbier and happier!

Be sure to plant your squash, bean and cucumber seeds. Check your Growing Guide!

Recipes **Spring Peas with Mint or Thyme**

(adapted from Nikki, GPGP Volunteer)

This simple recipe is not only light and wonderful but can also use lettuce that is "past its prime," and can be made with shucking peas, snow peas (trimmed) or sugar snaps (unzipped) or a combination.

Bring **½ cup chicken or vegetable broth** to a boil. Add **2 cup peas** and simmer until heated through, about 4 minutes. Stir in **1 cup thinly sliced romaine lettuce** (or a variety of lettuces with milk in the leaves) and **3**



Left to right: Suzanne Hays(GPGP volunteer), Jodi Breidel (GPGP ED), and Lisa Hamaker and Linda Russell (GPGP Trustees) at the State House.

Local Press

Here are some links to some of the articles that were written about Growing Places and some of the gardens we installed throughout our service area:

2010 Massachusetts Nonprofit Network Excellence Award in Nonprofit Collaboration:

http://findarticles.com/p/news-articles/telegram-gazette-worcester-ma/mi_8005/is_2010_June_18/recognized-collaboration/ai_n54128597/

School Garden in Partnership with the Luther Burbank Middle School, Lancaster, MA :

<http://www.wickedlocal.com/lancaster/features/x157343509/Lancasters-Luther-Burbank-Middle-School-grows-gardening-skills>

2010 Wachusett Chamber of Commerce Environmental Award:

http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_8005/is_2010_March_26/ai_n52942558/

Nutrition Education & Cooking Workshops in Partnership with Share our Strength Operation Frontline MA and Cleghorn Neighborhood Center, Fitchburg, MA:

http://www.fitchburgpride.com/news/2009-11-20/Neighborhoods/Healthy_choices_healthy_future.html

Winter Volunteer Opportunities:

<http://www.wickedlocal.com/harvard/fun/gardening/x1301082829/Growing-Places-Garden-Project-plans-gardens>

Tbs. fresh mint or thyme. Season to taste with **salt**.

Note: Milk in lettuce leaves is the white liquid you see when you cut the lettuce from the plant.

Orange Mustard Dressing

3/4 cup orange juice
1/3 cup mustard
1 cup olive oil
Salt/pepper to taste
blend and serve

Greek Yogurt Dressing

1 cup plain yogurt
1/4 c. minced, fresh dill (can substitute mint)
1 cucumber, seeded and chopped,
Salt/pepper to taste
blend and serve

Sesame Vinaigrette

2 tbsp sesame oil
2 tbsp soy sauce
2 tbsp dijon mustard
3/4 cup apple cider vinegar, 2 1/2 cups vegetable or olive oil, blend and serve

Visit Growing Places on the internet @ these three locations

Our Website: www.growingplaces.org



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[@GrowingPlaces](https://twitter.com/GrowingPlaces)

Volunteer Opportunities

Do you want to get more involved in Growing Places Garden Project? Contact us @ staff@growingplaces.org to learn more about our volunteer opportunities.