



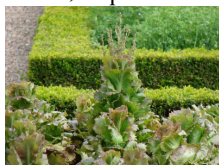
## Hello Gardeners!

This heat doesn't seem to want to break but it is so good for the veggies! As long as they have plenty of water that is. Even though it feels like summer just started, it is already half way over and the time has come to start planning and planting fall crops. Time is precious when you are trying to get as much as possible from the short New England growing season – typically only about 120 days in length. Hopefully those tomatoes will start to come in fast! Enjoy the latest recipes including some great ways to use your squash that are probably already starting to drive you crazy, and some gorgeous photos and comments from a mentor's garden.

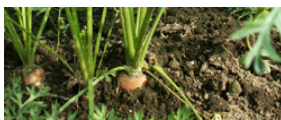
### *Your Friends at Growing Places*

## What's Happening...

- Most of the lettuce and greens that are not heat tolerant will have reached their end. If you notice that they have bolted (flowered), pull them out and get ready to plant a new batch. Bolted greens, including basil, take on a bitter, unpleasant taste.



- Tomatoes should be appearing on your plants and may even have begun to ripen. Removing lower leaves as they begin to yellow and die is a great way to deter disease, especially since Late Blight has been found in Mass. Use caution in removing upper leaves as this can expose fruit to direct sun and may lead to sunscald, a yellowing of the side exposed to the sun.
- Keep an eye out for carrots, onions, and beets to crest the soil. This is a good indication that they are ready. If you're unsure, gently remove some dirt from the top of the root and check the size of the root.



- Harvest beans, cucumbers and squashes frequently – it signals the plant to continue production.

## Tips for a Better Garden...

- Keeping tomatoes staked helps keep them off the ground and helps keep disease away. But when tying them up be gentle, you don't want to break branches or choke the plant. Strips of old cloth, like shirts, are great for their gentle quality. Feel like a fun craft? Try tie dyeing them to add an extra splash of color!



- Plant more beans, broccoli, lettuce, spinach, and carrots for late summer and early fall crops.
- Keep an eye out for squash bugs, Japanese and cucumber beetles – hand pick and destroy.
- Look for and remove green caterpillars (cabbage loopers) from your broccoli, kale, and cabbage.
- Check for blossoms and ripening beans on your bean plants. Try sampling a just picked bean in the warm sunshine.
- Grass clippings will keep soil moist during dry spells. Spread clippings between your plants but keep them away from stems.
- Peas are in their old age and production has slowed. Pull them out if you no longer get what you want.



## Recipes...

### Too Much Squash??

Sometimes zucchini and summer squash plants manage to grow huge fruit, seemingly overnight. Don't despair! Wash, dry and cut the squash lengthwise and remove the seeds. Shred the squash on a box grater or in a food processor. Freeze in 1 or 2 cup portions in closable bags.

### Zucchini Chocolate Cake

*Adapted from King Arthur Flour's Baking Companion*

Chocolate and whole wheat are a very companionable duo, and when you add grated zucchini to the chorus, the result is a moist, delicious cake that includes lots of healthy ingredients. When made with vegetable oil instead of butter, it's even cholesterol free!

2.5 cups whole wheat flour  
1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder  
1 tsp baking soda  
1 tsp baking powder  
1/2 tsp salt  
1 cup packed light or dark brown sugar  
1/2 cup granulated sugar  
1/2 cup unsalted butter or vegetable oil  
1/2 cup plain yogurt or buttermilk  
3 large eggs  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
2 cups shredded squash  
1 cup chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350F. Lightly grease a 9x13-in cake pan.

1. Whisk together the flour, cocoa, baking soda, baking powder and salt in a medium bowl.
2. Stir together the sugars and oil in a large mixing bowl until smooth.
3. Add the yogurt, eggs and vanilla; mix well.
4. Add half the dry ingredients, stirring until evenly moistened.
5. Stir in the zucchini, then the remaining flour mixture. Stir in the chocolate chips.
6. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Bake until the top springs back when lightly touched, 45 – 50 minutes.

## So When Can I Pick Those Tomatoes?

They are sitting on the vine, bright red and plump, looking simply delicious—but is it the right time to pick them? Tomatoes can be a bit tricky since their colors vary so much and they are often ripe before they are uniform in color. Pick a tomato too early and it is hard and not very sweet or juicy—too late and it becomes tough and flat tasting.

Ripening of tomatoes begins at the bottom so that's a good place to start looking. If the skin of the tomato appears to be losing its waxy smoothness and the skin yields slightly to finger pressure, go ahead and harvest it. The shoulders (top) of the tomato are the last part to ripen and may not be the same color as the rest of the tomato, but that is okay. Store tomatoes at room temperature, otherwise they will lose some of their flavor. If they are overripe, go ahead and put them in the refrigerator.

You can freeze tomatoes whole by rinsing, coring (removing the stem) and freezing on a cookie sheet. Once frozen, store in a closable bag in the freezer and use them for soups and sauces.

Some final thoughts: Remove tomatoes that have fallen to the ground since rotting fruit will create disease and attract insects that might affect the tomatoes on the plant.

**Most importantly—enjoy!!!**



## Squash Casserole

Adapted from Jeanette O'Hara

2 pounds of squash thickly sliced (7 cups)  
1/4 cup chopped onion  
1 10 3/4 ounce cream of (anything) soup  
1 cup sour cream  
1 cup shredded carrot  
1 cup mushrooms sliced  
1/4 cup butter or margarine  
4 cups herb-seasoned stuffing mix

1. Cook squash and onions in boiling water for 5 - 10 minutes. Drain well.
2. Combine soup and sour cream. Stir in carrots and mushrooms; fold in drained squash and onions.
3. Make stuffing to package directions.
4. Spread one half of the stuffing in a 12x7x2 baking dish. Spoon vegetable mixture on top. Sprinkle with remaining stuffing mixture.
5. Bake at 350 till heated through. 25 - 30 minutes. Makes 6 servings.

A great addition to this recipe is mozzarella cheese. You can sprinkle on top or put a layer over the bottom layer of stuffing.

Have a busy life? Make individual servings in small ovenproof dishes. Use Pyrex type dishes in the 2 cup size that come with covers so they can be stored, frozen, and transported with ease.

## Really Easy Squash Side Dish

Adapted from Amanda Dettloff

Squash and/or Zucchini cut into medium slices  
Onion cut into slices  
Butter  
Parmesan cheese grated

Steam the squash, zucchini, and onion for 5 to 10 minutes.

Add a pat of butter and mix in cheese. If you put the squash back into the pan it was cooked in and add in the butter and cheese they melt wonderfully and make a delicious side for any meal.

## Garden Spot Light



These beautiful photographs of the Community Garden on Prichard St. come from Gloria Ortiz. Gloria began gardening with Growing Places last year. This is her second year gardening and she is also volunteering as a mentor.

Here is what Gloria has to say, "The results have been amazing. I have been eating healthier, so far every day I make myself a fresh garden salad. The tomatoes, corn, squash are growing like crazy. I am enjoying the garden more this year. New things I am growing are corn, squash, cabbage, and broccoli that are doing great."



The squash sure is growing! Good luck, Gloria! Thank you for sharing these wonderful things about your garden.

## Visit Growing Places on the web at these three locations

### Our Website:

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## Volunteer Opportunities

Do you want to get more involved in Growing Places Garden Project? Contact us at [staff@growingplaces.org](mailto:staff@growingplaces.org) to learn more about our volunteer opportunities.

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E-mail: [staff@growingplaces.org](mailto:staff@growingplaces.org)

Growing Places Garden Project, Inc.  
PO Box 17  
Clinton, MA 01510

Recipient Name  
Street Address  
Address 2  
City, ST ZIP Code

## Things to Remember

Don't forget to make it to a canning class. Once veggies start coming in it is hard to eat all of them. Canning allows you to have your hard earned, home-grown food all year round and allows you to get the most from your garden.

### Summer 2010 Canning Class Schedule

Lancaster - Aug 19th  
Gardner - Aug 5th  
Chelmsford - Aug 3rd  
Littleton - Aug 18th

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 in the store the day of the class.

### *Don't Forget!*

*The best defenses against pests are*

- A clean garden (use or discard any fallen veggies; clear out old plants) and
- Regular harvests.