WELCOME GARDENERS!

In order to save time and postage, we have changed the format of our newsletter this year. We looked at the results of last year’s survey and tried to keep the items you found most useful. If you have comments, please send them to us.

We are looking forward to a great gardening season, despite the soggy weather. Some seeds may have rotted due to all the rain. So, if nothing is coming up, plant some more. If you need help, please give us a call.

Cindy and Kate

TIPS ON...

**Maintenance**

*Tomato staking* — use yarn, old pantyhose, soft string, make a *loose* loop or figure 8 around main stem and stake. Do **not** tie stem tightly to stake. Place loops 8-12” apart up the stem as tomato grows.

**Pests**

*Cabbage worms* — small green caterpillars found on broccoli, cabbage, kale, etc. Pull off and squish or dump in jar of soapy or salty water. Do the same with *slugs* (snails without shells) that are on almost everything these days!

**Harvesting**

*Lettuce and spinach* can be harvested when the leaves are the length of your palm or larger. Smaller leaves will have a more delicate flavor. Do not harvest the entire plant as it will keep producing more leaves if only the outer ones are used. Pull out some radishes and munch. All of these are great in salad.

GARDEN TALES...

We thank all of the garden builders and planters. They installed and planted raised-bed gardens for 29 clients this season. GPGP appreciates all the time and hard work of every garden helper!

*Our 70+ volunteers worked approximately 160 hours.*

*Many thanks to all of you!*
Marinated Chickpeas with Radishes and Cucumber

¼ c. olive oil
2 tbsp. lemon juice
1 garlic clove, minced
¼ tsp. ground cumin
19 oz. Can of chickpeas, drained (garbanzo beans)
2 cucumbers, halved & thinly sliced
6 radishes, thinly sliced
½ red onion, thinly sliced
¼ c. parsley, chopped
Salt and pepper, to taste

In a large bowl, combine the first 4 ingredients, add the chickpeas and let marinate for 30 min. Just before serving, stir in the cucumbers, radishes, onion and parsley. Season with salt and pepper.

THINGS TO DO

Thin lettuce, carrot and radish seedlings. Toss washed thinnings into your salad.

Check for slugs and cabbage worms.

Weed every day!
Do a square at a time.

Water towards the end of the week, earlier if rain doesn’t come.

Plant a square of spinach, lettuce, radishes, and carrots for continuous harvest.

CROPS OF THE WEEK

Radishes – Spinach – Lettuce
WELCOME GARDENERS!

Let’s hope that the next few weeks are drier and sunnier. Maybe it will just rain at night…

All first and second-year gardeners should have received their transplants by now. Please make sure to continue to water them if they droop. We want them all to develop strong root systems so that they’ll produce plenty of vegetables this summer.

Many of you may be seeing blossoms on your peas. Look for them at the tops of the vines. Peas may appear as early at July 4th! Kate doesn’t have those yet but the garlic she planted last fall is forming scapes (blossoms). We’ll tell you more about those next week; they are delicious.

Cindy & Kate

TIPS ON…

Maintenance
Carrot planting—surface soil dries out quickly and carrot seedlings may need extra protection from sun and wind to germinate well. After planting carrots, water gently and place a thin wooden board over the soil. The board will protect the soil from drying out. Check every few days, keep soil moist and remove board when seedlings appear.

Pests
Flea beetles have been spotted on eggplant, peppers and chard. Check your Growing Guide for a detergent and water pest spray. Add a teaspoon of hot sauce if you need to.

Harvesting
Keep picking lettuce, spinach and radishes. The weather has turned hot so spinach will soon turn bitter. Cut some onion greens to use like scallions; many herbs can easily spare a few leaves for salads and cooking.

GARDEN TALES…

Gardening Journals
Keeping track of your garden experience is a wonderful way to learn and explore! Here are some suggestions of what to include in your journal:

- Chart plant growth
- Record weather
- Draw pictures
- Record observations

Share your experiences with family and friends… Be creative and have fun!
**Spinach and Rice Side Dish**

½ cup olive oil
6 green onions, finely chopped
3 lbs fresh spinach (wash, trim stems, chop leaves)
1 ½ cups long-grain white rice
3 tbsp. finely chopped fresh dill
2 cups water
salt and pepper

Heat the oil in a large pot.
Sauté the onions until soft, about 3 min.
Stir in the spinach and sauté until wilted, about 3 min.
Add the rice, dill, water, salt and pepper. Stir thoroughly, and cover.
Simmer about 15 - 20 minutes until the rice is cooked and the liquid is absorbed.
Serve warm, garnish with lemon wedges or as a cold salad with Greek dressing.

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**THINGS TO DO**

- Plant carrots and lettuce seeds in shade of broccoli and tomato plants.
- Plant another square or two of string beans.
- Plant cucumbers behind your peas so they can also climb the trellis, peas will be finished before the cucumbers appear.
- Watch growth of broccoli heads – if they aren’t getting bigger over the next couple of weeks they are probably not going to (a condition called buttoning). If this is the case, pull them out and replace with a different crop
- It’s been dry so keep up with watering!

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**CROPS OF THE WEEK**

**KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE FOLLOWING CROPS… THEY MAY BE READY TO HARVEST**

- Radishes
- Spinach
- Lettuce
- Onions
- Herbs
HELLO GARDENERS!

We’ve been getting some calls about things that are happening in your gardens – thank you for asking questions! Very often you are not the only person who wants information and it helps us know what to address in the newsletter. In addition we love to hear how crops are growing, what you’re eating and how you are eating it. If you have recipes you’d like to share, please pass them along.

Cindy & Kate

TIPS ON…

Maintenance

Plants that turn yellow may be getting too much water. If we haven’t had rain, then wait a day or two between each watering session. See your growing guide for more info.

Pests

Slugs! These snails without shells love dampness. Put on gloves, pick them off and crush them.

Harvesting

Broccoli – Your broccoli is ready to harvest when the head gets to be the size of a softball or larger. If you see little yellow flowers on main head or shoots, harvest immediately otherwise the plant will stop producing broccoli (you can eat the flowers). Use a sharp knife and cut the stem just below the head. Leave the plant in the ground. It will continue to produce side shoots into the fall. Side shoots will not get as big as the main head but are tasty. Eat them cooked, or raw with dip- recipe on other side.

GARDEN TALES…

Once upon a time there was a garlic plant. It started to develop a long stem that curled and had a whitish colored bulb towards the tip of the curled part (called a scape). Along came a gardener and cut off the stem and the curly end and took it inside to use it just like regular garlic. Food tasted great! The garlic in the garden was happy because now it could grow its bulb really big since it didn’t have to spend time growing the stem any more.

Moral of the story: Cut scapes off your garlic. Store in a plastic bag in the fridge; chop them up and use just like garlic. You will get much bigger garlic bulbs at harvest time (in late summer).
**THINGS TO DO**

Keep pushing pea plants towards the trellis so they can climb upward. Poke plants through trellis if needed to get them started.

Snap and shelling peas have started to appear in farmers markets. If your peas have flowered look for mini-pods (or full size ones) on your plants.

Continue to tie the stems of your tomatoes to their stakes. Add a new tie (use a rag, a piece of old panty hose or soft string) when the plant has grown about 8 to 12 inches beyond the previous tie.

Plant a square of green beans or lettuce.

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**RECIPE**

**Garlic Scape Dip**

½ cup yogurt  
½ cup mayonnaise  
½ teaspoon Dijon or other mustard  
1 garlic scape, finely chopped  
Mix all ingredients together. Thin to desired consistency by adding milk. For a salad dressing add 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar.

**Easy Garlic Scape Soup**

7 scapes of green garlic  
3 small potatoes, chunked, with skins  
2 tablespoons butter or oil  
3 cups chicken or vegetable broth  
2 to 3 tablespoons white wine vinegar  
Cut the scapes into thin rounds. Sauté in butter for about 10 minutes at low heat. Place the potatoes and sautéed garlic in a saucepan and add chicken broth. Cook covered for about 30 minutes.
In a blender, puree the soup in small batches until smooth. Return soup to the saucepan and add more broth if it is too thick. Add salt and pepper to taste, reheat. When hot, add white wine vinegar and serve. *Serves 2.*

*Recipes from www.dakotagarlic.com.*

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**CROPS OF THE WEEK**

**KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE FOLLOWING CROPS... THEY MAY BE READY TO HARVEST**

Radishes  
Spinach  
Lettuce  
Onions  
Herbs  
Garlic scapes
HELLO GARDENERS!

Tomatoes, peppers and eggplants have begun their journey toward producing fruits. Some of you may already be seeing flowers on these plants, some may not. Don’t be disappointed, the cool wet weather has slowed the progress of many heat-loving plants but they will catch up soon. The benefit is that cool-weather plants (peas, lettuce) are still doing well. Enjoy them while you can! 

Cindy & Kate

TIPS ON…

**Maintenance**
Remember to thin plants to the appropriate number per square. Try snipping at base of plant with scissors or fingernails or transplanting a plant that is too close into a different location with more space. Crops that have enough space grow correctly and produce more vegetables. If you clip seedlings, add those clippings to salad or use in cooking.

**Pests**

**Cutworms:** These pests literally eat or “cut” the plant at soil level. Often hiding out during the day in the soil around the plants they've been consuming, gently dig around newly emerging eaten plants and destroy the offending cutworm.

**Harvesting**

Small blunt-ended scissors are a great, easy-to-carry tool for harvesting herbs and thinning seedlings. Cut off and use the top leaves of your herbs. This makes them produce more branches and leaves.

ASTURTIUM: A FAVORITE GARDEN FLOWER

Since many GPGP clients grow this versatile flower in their gardens, we thought you might want to find out more about it...

*Tropaeolum minor,* the scientific name for the nasturtium, comes from the Greek word meaning "to twine". Nasturtium was first found growing in Mexico and Peru where it was used instead of cress to flavor foods. It was brought to Europe in the 16th century and considered a symbol of conquest and victory in battle.

Nasturtium is one of the easiest flowers to grow from seed. It germinates quickly, grows rapidly, and will bloom until fall. The leaves and colorful blooms, which contain a good dose of vitamin C, can be used to add a peppery flavor to fresh salads or as an elegant garnish.
THINGS TO DO

Pull out entire plants of spinach and lettuce that has bolted (has grown a tall stem which possibly has flowers on it). It is now bitter – plant some more!

Plant a square or two of beans if you haven’t done so in a while. Tuck them under your tomato plants.

Make slug traps. Bury a tuna can or small plastic container in your garden so that its edges are level with the soil (like a swimming pool). Fill with beer or empty a packet of yeast into bottom of container and then add water. The slugs will be attracted to the smell and drown in the pool. It’s disgusting but effective.

CROPS OF THE WEEK

KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE FOLLOWING CROPS… THEY MAY BE READY TO HARVEST

Peas
Swiss Chard
Kale
Collards
Herbs
Garlic scapes

RECIPES

Basil Pesto
2 cups fresh basil leaves, packed
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/2 cup Olive oil
3 tbsp. pine nuts or walnuts
3 garlic cloves

Place all ingredients in small batches in food processor or blender and mix until well chopped. Scrape down sides of container in between batches. Process pesto until it forms a thick smooth paste. Serve over pasta. Pesto keeps in the refrigerator one week or in the freezer for a few months.

Salsa Fresca
6 roma or salad tomatoes, diced
1 red onion, diced
1 red bell pepper, diced
1 yellow bell pepper, diced
1/2 cup cilantro, finely minced
1 lime
Salt and pepper, to taste

In a bowl, mix the tomatoes, onion, red and yellow bell peppers, and cilantro. Squeeze lime juice over mixture and season with salt and pepper. Hot peppers or jalapenos can be added to spice it up. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.
HELLO GARDENERS!

We hope that all is well with your gardens. Kate spotted her first tiny sweet pepper this week and harvested a jalapeno chili. Unfortunately, her lettuce is bolting and she needs to plant more broccoli and chard.

By the way, we have great chard recipe this week from a GPGP gardener. Check it out on the other side.

Finally, cherries and blueberries are in season at local orchards and are tastier and probably much cheaper than in the grocery store. Call around and see if they have them.  

  Cindy & Kate

TIPS ON...

**Maintenance**
Check the “Watering” section of your Growing Guide for information on watering your crops now that it’s a bit warmer and drier.

**Pests**
Cabbage worms are the larvae (caterpillars) of the cabbage butterfly. They eat cabbage and other members of its family: broccoli, kale, and collards.

**Harvesting**
You can cut chard and lettuce just above the base of the plant where the leaves start. Use a sharp knife or pair of scissors. Chad will produce new leaves throughout the season.

Gently move the soil from the tops of carrots and beets. If the tops of your carrots are about the width of your finger, you can harvest them as baby carrots. Baby beets are ready when they are 1 to 1 ½ inches across — you can eat the greens too. Harvest full sized beets when they are 1 ½-3 inches across.

CROPS OF THE WEEK

**THINGS TO DO**
- Think about planting some broccoli for a fall crop.
- Go on a cabbage worm hunt.
- Continue to stake tomatoes.
- Cut off non-producing shell pea plants at soil level
- Plant a new square of cilantro or chard.

Think up questions you want to ask the GPGP staff! We’ll be arranging garden visits in the next few weeks to cheer you on and offer help with garden problems.

**Chili Peppers, Baby carrots, Beets, Green beans, Swiss chard, Sugar snap peas, Herbs**
**Tasty Chard:**
This recipe comes from Evie N. of Lunenburg. She writes: “Here is a recipe I came up with to use up our Swiss chard. It’s different but good.” Serves 4.

Swiss Chard (I cut one whole square)
Olive oil (about 1-2 tablespoons)
1 clove of garlic
1/2 a diced onion
2 tomatoes cut into chunks, not diced
2 cups cooked hot buttered rice (I prefer brown Basmati)
Balsamic Vinegar

Clean and separate stalks from the leafy parts. Cut up both leaves and stalks but keep separate. You should have about 3 cups of chopped leaves. Heat pan to med. high heat, add oil and stalks and cook for 2 min. Add the rest of the chard, onions, garlic and tomatoes. Cook for 3 min. Add a tablespoon of balsamic vinegar, and stir well. Remove from heat. Serve over hot buttered rice. Yummy!

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**Local Farmers Markets**
Another source for locally grown fresh fruits, veggies, honey, eggs, and other food products!

**Fitchburg Farmers Market**
Wallace Civic Center parking lot
John Fitch Highway
Tuesday, 3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.
Friday, 8:45 a.m.-12:00 noon
WIC Coupons accepted

**Gardner Farmers Market**
Heywood/Wakefield apartment parking lot off Park Street
May-October
Thursday, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon
WIC Coupons accepted

**Marlborough Farmers Market**
Bolton Street & Route 20
July-October
Thursday, 2:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.
Saturday, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon
WIC Coupons accepted

**Maynard Farmers Market**
Clock tower parking lot
Main Street
June-October
Saturday, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon
WIC Coupons accepted

Eligible WIC participants are issued FMNP coupons in addition to their regular WIC food coupons. These coupons can be used to buy fresh, unprepared fruits, vegetables and herbs from farmers, farmers’ markets or roadside stands that have been approved by the State agency to accept FMNP coupons.
Roasted beets with sautéed greens

- 1 bunch (5 or 6) medium colored beets, with their tops
- 4 cloves garlic
- Olive oil (for sprinkling)
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 4 sprigs fresh lemon or regular thyme
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar, or to taste

Set the oven at 400 degrees. Trim both ends of the beets. Soak the greens in several changes of cold water until free of dirt; set aside. Scrub the beets. Tear off 2 1-foot sheets of foil. Stack sheets on top of each other to make a packet. Set the red beets on it. Add garlic cloves and thyme sprigs. Sprinkle with oil, salt, and pepper. Fold up the sides so the beets are completely encased. Set the packet on a rimmed baking sheet. Roast the beets for 1 to 1 1/4 hours or until the beets are tender when tested with a skewer. Set them aside for 5 minutes.

In a large skillet, heat the 1 tablespoon oil. When hot, add beet greens with the water clinging to them to the pan -- stand back because they'll splatter. Add salt and pepper, and cook, tossing constantly, for 1 to 2 minutes or until the greens are bright green. Add vinegar to greens and toss again. Slice the beets thinly and arrange them on plates. Using tongs, lift the greens from the skillet, leaving the liquid in the pan. Add a mound of greens to each plate. Sprinkle with salt. Adapted from Sarah Blackburn and The Boston Globe. NOTE: If using multi-colored beets make 2 packets and put red beets in a separate packet.

Brazilian-style Collard Greens

In the southern US, collards are cooked slowly for a long time. This rapid method is also very tasty. The greens retain a bit of their springiness but are still tender. The garlic and onion add a delicious flavor. If you are growing onions and garlic in your garden this year, try pulling up some of each and using them in this recipe.

- 2 bunches collard greens (about 14 full-size leaves)
- 2 tablespoons olive or vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 large shallot or ½ medium onion, minced (about 1/3 cup)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- Salt, to taste
- Ground pepper, to taste

Cut the tough end stems off the collards. Rinse the leaves and gather them together into 2 piles. Take each pile and roll it tightly. Cut leaves into thin strips crosswise. You should have about 8 cups.

Heat the oil and butter in a large, heavy skillet over medium heat. Sauté the shallot with the garlic, stirring often, until they are lightly browned, about 3 minutes. Add the greens and salt and pepper. Cook, stirring often, for about 5 minutes or until the greens are tender but bright green. If necessary, cover with a lid and cook an additional couple of minutes to tenderize the greens. Serve immediately.
Grilled Zucchini or Summer Squash

Grilling is a wonderful way to prepare vegetables without heating up your kitchen. You can add other vegetables throughout the summer: bell peppers cut into strips, mushrooms, whole cherry tomatoes, eggplant chunks, even broccoli.

2-4 medium summer squash or zucchini
Olive or vegetable oil (for coating the squash)
Salt and pepper to taste

Cut off ends of squash and then cut squash in half lengthwise. Cut each half into strips about ¼ inch thick. Lay the squash strips on a cookie sheet or cutting board and coat each strip lightly with oil using your fingers or a pastry brush. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Turn strips over and coat other side with oil, salt, and pepper. Grill over low to medium heat about 2 minutes per side until just tender.

Zucchini-Lemon Muffins

Adapted from Cooking Light. A very yummy way to enjoy that extra zucchini!

2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
2 teaspoons grated lemon rind
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 cup coarsely shredded zucchini
3/4 cup skim milk
3 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 large egg
Cooking spray

Combine the first 6 ingredients in a bowl, and make a well in center of mixture. Combine zucchini, milk, oil, and egg; stir well. Add to flour mixture, stirring just until dry ingredients are moistened.

Divide batter evenly among 12 muffin cups coated with cooking spray. Bake at 400° for 20 minutes or until golden. Remove from pans immediately, and let cool on a wire rack.

Lemon-garlic dressing

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
2 teaspoons lemon juice
1 clove minced garlic
2 cups cooked broccoli, green beans or other vegetables

Whisk olive oil, grated lemon zest, lemon juice and garlic together in a small bowl. Warm in microwave, if desired. Season with salt and pepper. Toss with cooked vegetables. (4 servings)
HELLO GARDENERS!

Garden visits have started and we are seeing tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, cucumbers and beans with both fruits and blooms on them! Keep your eyes open as often these delightful treats have a way of suddenly being full of good things to eat.

We also found more farmers’ markets in the local area and have included them in here – these are a great way to try things you might want to grow yourself next year. Peaches are also just coming into season – pick some up at a farmers’ market or stand near you.

Cindy & Kate

TIPS ON...

Maintenance
Weeds take vital water, sun and nutrients away from your plants as well as offering insects a place to hide. Keeping your garden weeded will help keep your plants healthy. A square or two a day is easy!

Pests
Cucumber beetles can be found on squash and cucumber plants, Japanese beetles seem to prefer peas and beans. Squash or dump in jar of soapy water. Squash bug eggs are orange-brown in color and can be found in clusters on the undersides of leaves. Squash eggs or remove that part of the leaf and dump into trash can.

Harvesting
String beans are ready to pick. Pick when the plants are dry to avoid spreading disease. Use a sharp knife to cut the bean from the plant when they are 3-5” long and about as round as a pencil. Beans produce rapidly so keep checking them.

CROPS OF THE WEEK

THESE MAY BE READY TO HARVEST…

Chili Peppers, Baby carrots, Beets, Green beans, Cucumbers, Sugar snap peas, Herbs

THINGS TO DO

✓ Check for squash bugs and eggs
✓ Get a trap for Japanese beetles, place away from garden
✓ Pull out bolting lettuce plants, plant more under tomato plants
✓ Pull out broccoli that is no longer producing enough shoot, plant a fall crop from seed
✓ Cut garlic scapes if you haven’t done so yet
Chive Green Beans
Adapted from Cooking Light

Leave green beans whole for a restaurant-caliber look. Or try this recipe with other vegetables, such as steamed carrots or fresh asparagus.

1 pound fresh green beans, trimmed
1 tablespoon chopped fresh chives
2 teaspoons butter, margarine or olive oil
1/2 teaspoon stone-ground mustard
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper

Put beans in vegetable steamer and steam green beans, covered, 5 minutes or until crisp-tender. Remove from steamer; toss with remaining ingredients. (4 servings)

Note: if you don’t have a steamer, put beans in a colander or sieve covered over a pan of boiling water. Another option is to simply boil them in water until crisp-tender.
HELLO GARDENERS!

We had received several questions about insects and decided to give you some idea of what creatures you might be finding in your garden, what they do and how to take care of them. Keep in mind that not all creatures that show up in your garden are bad – in fact, many of them will help you in your battle against the bad guys. Try not to use pesticides that might rid you of these beneficial insects.

Take this issue with you when you go out to the garden. It may come in handy. Please call us with any questions or concerns.

Cindy & Kate

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Some of the good critters you might find in your garden

Ladybugs [A] eat aphids which would suck the juices out of your plants. The ladybug larva [B], a very strange looking insect indeed, is also a large consumer of aphids in the garden.

Bees help pollinate crops such as squash and tomatoes.

Lacewings [C] eat softbodied insects such as aphids, mealy bugs, small caterpillars and mites.

Praying Mantids [D] will eat any insect they can find.

The Spined Soldier Bug [E] eats many caterpillars and beetle larvae including the Colorado potato and Mexican bean beetles.

Brachnoid wasp [F] consumes the eggs of over 200 species of moths as well as being a parasite to the dreaded tomato hornworm caterpillar. If you see these insects in your garden, be happy since they are probably doing their best to help keep your insect population under control naturally.

Toads [G] and lizards are also the natural enemy of a number of pest insects.

Even snakes [H] help by controlling mice and voles though we certainly do understand that most people aren’t interested in having a snake hanging around. The most frequently seen snake around here is the common garter snake.

Earthworms [I] move soil around and help bring air to plants roots (yes, roots need air!) as well as adding back nutrients.
Some of the bad bugs you may find in your garden

Cucumber Beetle

**Description:** About 1/5" in length, yellow with black head and 3 black stripes on its back. Spotted version is about 1/4 inch long, yellow with black head and 12 back spots on its back. Found mostly on cucumber, squash and melons.

**Damage:** Chew on flowers, foliage and rinds of ripening fruit. Can transmit bacteria that causes the plant to wilt and die, and can transmit cucumber mosaic virus.

**Actions:** Find and crush, plant radishes with squashes and cucumbers. Plant another crop for a fall harvest.

Squash Bug

**Description:** Adults are brownish black and 1/2" in length. Nymphs range in color from pale green to grey. They lay shiny bright orange egg masses on the underside of plant leaves. Most often found on cucumbers, melons, pumpkins and squashes.

**Damage:** Small yellow and pale green patches appear on the leaves that turn brown are caused by the bugs sucking the sap from the stems and leaves. Leaves can eventually wilt, dry up and turn black.

**Actions:** Hand pick and destroy adults and eggs. Trap by laying a board on the ground near squash. They will congregate there overnight and can be captured during the cooler part of the day and crushed, or drowned in a jar of water with a little cooking oil added to it. Spray plant with insecticidal soap. Plant radishes and nasturtiums around squash to repel the bugs. Plant another squash crop for a fall harvest.

Flea Beetle

**Description:** Tiny, 1/10" brown or black beetle that jumps like a flea when disturbed. Found on a wide variety of vegetables including beans, beets, broccoli, radishes, cabbage, eggplants, peppers, tomatoes, collards and cabbage.

**Damage:** Numerous small round holes found in the leaves which if the plant is very young, can result in a destroyed plant.

**Actions:** Use agricultural fleece to protect crops since flea beetles are most damaging in the early spring. Use a trap crop of radishes (which they really like). Plant extra if you want some for yourself to eat! Flea beetles prefer full sun so plant new seeds near larger crops that can provide shade.

Aphids

**Description:** Tiny, about 1/10" long with a pear-shaped body, long antennae and two tube like projections from the rear of the abdomen. They come in a variety of colors and affect many different plants. Ants are often present because of the sticky honeydew that aphids secrete.

**Damage:** Leaves will curl, pucker and turn yellow because the aphids suck juices from the leaves, fruit and stems.

**Actions:** Spray plants vigorously with water every other day in the early morning for a week or so. This shakes the aphids off the plants. Spray with insecticidal soap for heavy infestations. Luckily aphids have many natural predators including birds, ladybugs and lacewings.

Cabbage Maggot

**Description:** A small, white legless worm about 1/3" long with a blunt end. Found mostly on members of the cabbage family (cabbage, broccoli, collards, etc) as well as peas, radishes and turnip.

**Damage:** Plant will wilt during the midday heat and eventually die. Brown, slimy tunnels develop on the stem and roots where the maggot has entered the plant. Seedlings become yellow and the plant growth is stunted.

**Actions:** Plant vulnerable crops with a 3" paper collar around them (paper towel rolls work well) with 1" buried in the dirt and 2" above. Use agricultural fleece to prevent the adult flies from laying their eggs in the soil near the base of the plant. Plant turnips or radishes as a trap crop. Next year, plant cabbage family crops in a different garden bed.

Wire Worm

**Description:** A hard shelled worm, 1/3-1 1/2" long with a brown to yellow-brown jointed body found in the soil around the roots of the plant. Larvae bore into the seeds or plant roots either preventing germination or stunting and killing the plant. The can be found on most vegetable plants.

**Damage:** Plant will wilt, small plants may die.

**Actions:** Set a potato trap. Spear pieces of potato with sticks and bury 2-4" deep in the garden, leaving the part of the stick showing above the soil. Set traps at 3 foot intervals—wireworms will burrow into the potatoes to feed. Pull out after 1 week and destroy—replace as necessary.
Cut worms

**Description:** A fat grayish brown caterpillar 1-2 inches long that will curl up when disturbed. It feeds at night and hides in soil during the day. Favors tomatoes, eggplant and peppers but also found on beans, members of the cabbage family (broccoli, collards, etc), lettuce, radishes to name a few. Seen mostly in the early-late spring.

**Damage:** Your seedling may be totally eaten or is lying down in the garden with a severed stem or very little root left.

**Actions:** Plant vulnerable crops with a 3” long paper collar around them (paper towel rolls and milk cartons work well) with 1” buried in the dirt and 2” above. Or after planting transplant or when seed has germinated and grown a bit, stick a toothpick or matchstick in the soil against the stem (touching) - the cutworm must encircle the plant with its body to “cut” it off and the tough wood of the toothpick prevents it from being able to do this. Maggot mats, squares about 10 inches by 10 inches placed around plants (slit half way so slides around stem to reach middle of square) prevents fly from laying eggs on soil next to the plant. Carpet, tar paper or cardboard anything that survives some rains will do.

Tomato Hornworm

**Description:** Can get very large – 3-4 inches long and about the size of your finger; they have excellent camouflage – a light green color with 7 white and black V-shaped markings and a horn on the bottom. You can find them hiding under the foliage or blending in to a stem. Once you find one it will be much easier to spot any others. Sometimes you can even hear them chewing if you listen closely. Primarily found on tomatoes.

**Damage:** Holes in the leaves or leaves that have simply been consumed, fruit that is partially eaten, and dark green or black droppings on the plant are all a good indication that these guys are at work.

**Actions:** Pick them off the plant and drop into a jar of soapy water or squish with your foot. Since they are hard to see, you can spray the plants with water—the caterpillars with thrash around so you can see them. If you find one with clusters of small white eggs on its back, leave it alone. Those eggs are from a parasitic wasp that will destroy the hornworm and then look for others to destroy. You can also spray plants with Bacillus Thuringiensis.

Cabbage Worm or Looper

**Description:** A green caterpillar with 2 white lines down it’s back which can get up to 1 1/2” long. Found primarily on members of the cabbage family (broccoli, cabbage, kale, collards, etc). Small ball-shaped green droppings (poop) of are an indicator that these are on your plants.

**Damage:** Chews large holes in in the leaves and may destroy the entire plant if it is young.

**Actions:** Hand-pick and kill them (drown in water with salt or soap). Spray with bacillus thuringiensis (BTK). After harvesting, soak produce in a salt water bath for 15 minutes (caterpillars will float to the top) and then rinse with fresh water.

Slugs and Snails

**Description:** Fat and slimy, brown to orange brown colored body 1-2 inches in length; snail counterpart has a shell on its back. Feed only at night and hide in moist dark places during the day. Can be found on any vegetable as they aren't picky eaters.

**Damage:** Chew large ragged holes in the leaves, fruit and stems. Will often find trails of shiny, silvery slime on leaves and soil.

**Actions:** Refer to methods discussed in your Growing Guide. To make a beer trap, cut a 2-inch hole about two-thirds up the side of an empty margarine tub or plastic yogurt container. Bury the container so the hole is just above ground. Add 2-3 inches of beer (or a mixture of 1 tablespoon (Tbl) yeast, 1 Tbl flour, 1 Tbl sugar, and 1 cup water) and cover the container with its lid to seal the trap. Remove dead slugs daily – you might want to use a spoon. Plant marigolds which slugs love along your garden’s border, hand pick slugs in late evening and dispose of them – aren’t you glad that there were gloves in your gardening kit? Another thing to do is spread crushed eggshells around plants most affected—slugs don’t like sharp edges. Toads and fireflies eat slugs!

Squash Vine Borer

**Description:** The larva are 1 inch long with a brown head and wrinkled white worm-like body. Adult moth is 1 1/2 inches long, looks like a wasp with a red body and black wings. Tiny dull red eggs are laid in late spring on the base of the plant, on the underside of leaves or near the base of the stem, larva emerge and bore into the stem of the plant. Found on squash and pumpkin.

**Damage:** Squashes start to wilt even if they’ve had enough water. Check the base of the plant for a hole that is filled with a yellowish material that resembles sawdust which indicates the presence of borers chewing

**Actions:** With a sharp knife, slit the infested stems lengthwise above the hole, find and destroy the borers. Cover the damaged portion of the stem with soil and keep the soil moist to encourage new roots to grow. Look for eggs and destroy. Shake black pepper on the ground around young squash plants—this is said to deter moths from laying eggs. Spray base of stems with Bacillus thuringiensis (BTK) once a week in late spring and early summer. Lay aluminum foil around the base of the plant as a mulch—moths can’t locate the green plant due to the reflected sunlight. Wrap the stems of the plants with strips aluminum foil or old pantyhose. Plant another crop for a fall harvest.
Keep your earthworms happy!

Earthworms feed during the cool of the night and a light sprinkling of cornmeal on the surface of the soil can promote rapid reproduction. Organic items such as coffee grinds and well-chopped vegetable and fruit scraps that come from preparing a typical meal, lettuce stems, potato and banana peels, apple cores, melon rinds, would be well-nourishing for earthworms. Please remember to cut scraps into small pieces or put them through your composter first.

Check it out! You can read more about earthworms and compost at the local library.

Keep your earthworms happy!

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Japanese Beetle
Description: A large chunky green metallic beetle with bronze wings, 1/2" long.

Damage: Eats fruits and leaves of a wide variety of plants. Leaves often look like skeletons.

Actions: During the cool hours of the morning, shake or knock beetles off of plants into a jar of soapy water and drown. Cover crops with agricultural fleece. Birds and spiders really like Japanese Beetles. Beetle traps are commercially available at Agway and other stores that carry gardening items.
HELLO GARDENERS!

We have finished our first round of garden visits and are impressed with all of your hard work and beautiful vegetables. We know that it has been hard to wait for tomatoes and the other lovely vegetables that symbolize summer. We hope that you are enjoying them now or will be able to do so soon.

Many of the tips and to dos have sprung from our observations of your gardens and conversations that we had while visiting with you. We hope that you found the “pest issue” useful. We are planning to incorporate it into next year’s Growing Guide. So if you already have your Growing Guide, staple Issue 8 on the back.

Cindy & Kate

TIPS ON...

Maintenance
You can still plant green beans! Make sure to put them in a different spot than green beans that have finished producing.

Pests
Tomato hornworms are here. See the alert and pictures from a Lancaster garden on the next page.

Harvesting
Cherry tomatoes are ripening now. Some are ripe when yellow while others are deep red. They are ready to pick when the small stem at the top of the tomato develops a bulge and the stem breaks at that bulge when gently bent.
Garlic is ready when the bottom 3 leaves have turned brown. If you planted garlic last fall and you see the leaves browning, pull it out and put it a cool, dark dry and breezy place such as under a porch or deck. It should be ready to use in a couple weeks. The skin of the bulb should feel like paper.

CROPS OF THE WEEK
THESE MAY BE READY TO HARVEST...

Cherry tomatoes, bell peppers, cabbage, kale, eggplant, string beans

THINGS TO DO
✓ Check for squash bugs and eggs
✓ Hold a tomato hornworm hunt with your children or friends
✓ Plant a few fall crops in empty spaces in your garden such as broccoli, beets, spinach, lettuce and chard.
✓ Remove dead or rotting produce from the garden as they attract unpleasant insects – compost it!
✓ Keep weeding – it will make for less to deal with next year.
✓ Harvest, harvest, harvest,
✓ Eat, eat, eat
Simple Tomato Salad
This salad is a great way to start a meal. If you don’t like basil you can use oregano, parsley or cilantro instead. For a more filling version, put some thin slices of mozzarella cheese between the tomato slices when you assemble the salad. If you want to serve more people, just cut more tomatoes and herbs.

3 large fresh tomatoes (any kind), cores removed and cut crosswise into ¼ inch slices
10 or more medium basil leaves cut into slivers
Salt and pepper to taste
About 2 tablespoons olive oil or other oil

Arrange tomato slices in a wide bowl or pie plate. Sprinkle with basil slivers, salt, and pepper. Then sprinkle with olive oil. Cover with plastic wrap or foil and let sit at room temperature for about 15 minutes to let the flavors blend. Serves 2 to 3.

Pest Alert
When Kate was visiting gardens last week, she came upon tomato plants that had some branches without leaves. This means that tomato hornworm caterpillars were on the loose. These caterpillars are the same color as the tomato stems and stay very still when they figure out that you are looking for them. Be patient and methodical and you will find them. Put on your gloves and remove them from the plant.

The caterpillars that Kate found were as long as and wider than her fingers.

Short branches without leaves are a clue that caterpillars are on your tomatoes.
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 😞
**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
½ 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.

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.
HELLO GARDENERS!

The cooler weather seems to have slowed down the ripening of tomatoes, peppers and other heat loving crops. The larger tomatoes take much longer to ripen than all those little cherry tomatoes. But don’t be disheartened, the bigger ones will get there soon. The green peppers in Cindy’s garden are just beginning to think about turning red and becoming sweet. It will probably be a few more weeks before they finish ripening.

Please remember that if you have questions, comments or stories to share, give us a call. We enjoy hearing from you.

Cindy & Kate

TIPS ON...

Maintenance
Keep weeding, especially those grasses and weeds that are producing seeds right now.

Pests
Cabbage worms eat kale and collards too. Pick them off if you see them and make sure to wash leaves in salt water before using.

Harvesting
Eggplant can be harvested any time after they reach about half of their mature size. The longer they stay on the vine, the more seeds they will develop making them tougher. Use a sharp knife to remove the eggplant from the stem. Basil can be harvested and stored for use through the year. Pick leaves, wash and let drain until dry. Put leaves on single layer of a cookie sheet spaced apart and freeze until rigid (about 1 hour). Places leaves in small freezer bags, press out air, seal and return to freezer.

CROPS OF THE WEEK

These may be ready to harvest...

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

THINGS TO DO

✓ Remove plants that are no longer producing for you (string beans, broccoli, peas, lettuce, etc) and plant some lettuce or spinach for a fall crop.

✓ If your garlic has been drying and the outside is papery to touch, remove stem to about ½-1 inch above the bulb, cut off any remaining roots but don’t cut the bulb and store the bulbs in an old onion bag or something that allows the air to flow through. Place bag in dark, dry, cool location (basements are good). Enjoy at will!
Eggplant gratin
3 garlic cloves, peeled and mashed
1 1/2 cups finely chopped onion
3 tablespoons olive oil
a 1-pound eggplant, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
1/3 cup plus 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley leaves
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/4 cup dry bread crumbs

Set a rack in the center of the oven and preheat the oven to 400°F. In a heavy skillet cook the onion in 2 tablespoons of the oil over moderately low heat, stirring occasionally, until it is golden. Add garlic and stir for 1 minute. While onion is cooking, steam the eggplant in a steamer set over boiling water, covered, for 10 minutes, or until tender, transfer to a colander, and drain 5 minutes. In a bowl toss together eggplant, the onion mixture, 1/3 cup of parsley, salt and pepper to taste and spread mixture in a greased 3-cup shallow baking dish. In a small bowl stir together Parmesan cheese, bread crumbs, and remaining 2 tablespoons parsley, sprinkle mixture over eggplant mixture, and drizzle top with remaining 1 tablespoon oil. Bake gratin in the middle of the oven for 20 minutes, or until the topping is golden and the mixture is bubbling around the edges.

Extra eggplant? Wash, peel if desired and slice 1/3-inch thick. Blanch in 1 gallon boiling water with ½ cup lemon juice, covered for 4 minutes. Cool, drain and package in zip lock freezer bags leaving ½ inch space at top of bag. Freeze. Or fry slices, drain on paper towels, pack into freezer bags with freezer wrap between layers and freeze.

A few tidbits
Did you know that you can freeze garlic? Just pop whole unpeeled heads in the freezer in freezer bags and then remove the individual cloves as you need them. You can also peel and chop the cloves; freeze tightly wrapped in plastic then grate or break off what you need. Or peel and puree 2 parts garlic cloves and 1 part oil together in blender or food processor then freeze in small quantities. And the last idea, cover fresh peeled cloves in oil and store in freezer.

To reduce the acid in tomatoes when cooking, add a tablespoon or more of molasses, honey or sugar while cooking. Careful not to make it sweet!
HELLO GARDENERS!

This time of the summer is Kate’s favorite. She calls it “Corn-tomato-peach” season. You can usually find her somewhere between the farm stand (she doesn’t grow corn or peaches) and her garden, trying to stuff herself full while these fruits and vegetables are still in season. We hope that your gardens are feeding you well.

By the way, one of our supporters has given us some canning jars. Please let us know if you are interested in them. We’ll try to bring them to you in the next couple of weeks.

Cindy & Kate

TIPS ON…

**Maintenance**
If your tomatoes show black rot on the bottom (called blossom rot), your soil needs a bit more calcium. Sprinkle dried milk on your soil and water it in.

**Pests**
The cooler weather has slows down many pests’ ability to move or fly, making them easier to catch. Take a look and remove a few today.

**Harvesting**
**Shallots** are ready to harvest when the tops start to brown and wither. Gently dig bulbs out of the ground and hang in a well ventilated dry location until the outer skin has dried completely. Cut off top leaving 1 inch of stem and store in a cool dry location in a mesh bag (old onion bags work well). Smaller bulbs can be replanted for a spring crop. Shallots are sort of a cross between onions and garlic and can be used in place of or in addition to either.

CROPS OF THE WEEK

*These may be ready to harvest…*

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

THINGS TO DO

- Check your cabbage or cauliflower to see if it’s ready to harvest. It should be the size of your fist or larger.
- If you are growing something in your garden that you really don’t like, harvest the crop and share it with someone who does. Feed a friend instead of letting the plants rot and attract bugs and disease.
- Plant some spinach for a fall crop.
**RECIPE**

**Green Beans with Shallots**  
*Serves 6, adapted from Cooking Light*

1½-2 pounds green beans  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
¼ cup minced shallots  
1 tablespoon water  
½ teaspoon salt  
1/8 teaspoon pepper

Trim ends from beans, and remove strings. Drop beans into a large pot of boiling water; cook 10 minutes or until crisp-tender. Drain.

Heat oil in pot over medium heat. Add shallots; sauté 3 minutes or until tender. Add green beans and water; cook 3 minutes or until beans are tender, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat, and stir in salt and pepper.

**Roasted Bell Peppers**  
*Ripe red, yellow, or orange peppers are delicious alone, with pasta, or as part of a sandwich.*

Char peppers directly over gas flame or in broiler until blackened on all sides. Enclose in paper bag 10 minutes. Peel, seed, and quarter or slice as desired. Store in the refrigerator for up to 3 days before use.

**Cabbage in Your Garden?**

This cabbage is ready to be picked. You can pull the whole plant out of the soil or just cut off the head. If there are holes in the outer leaves (the one in the picture has some) then wash it in salt water before use.

**Roasted Shallot Vinaigrette Salad**  
*Serves 6, adapted from Cooking Light*

1 medium shallot, peeled  
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar  
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil  
1 teaspoon sugar  
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard  
¼ teaspoon salt  
¼ teaspoon black pepper  
1 (4-ounce) package herb salad mix

Preheat oven to 400°.

Wrap shallot in foil. Bake at 400° for 35 minutes; cool for 10 minutes. Peel and mince. Combine shallot, vinegar, oil, sugar, mustard, salt, and pepper in a large bowl; stir well with a whisk. Add salad mix; toss well to coat.
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.
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 1/4 cup vinaigrette, zucchini, and bell peppers in a large bowl. Brush remaining 1/4 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

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.
HELLO GARDENERS!

Think there is nothing left to plant at this point? Think again (if you want garlic, that is)! Gardeners plant garlic at the end of October and you can too. Why are we talking about it now? Because we want to make sure that everyone who wants it, gets it. If you requested it on your application or survey then you are all set. If you didn’t but would like to have some, please give us a call to let us know. If you are not sure what you requested (it was a long time ago), call us so we can make sure we don’t miss anyone who would like to have this wonderful crop which pops up first thing in the spring.

Cindy & Kate

TIPS ON...

**Maintenance**
Start picking off the blossoms of your slicing tomatoes – that will force the energy in the plant to go towards ripening the fruit that is already on the plant instead of spending it on making new fruit that will probably not have enough time to ripen.

**Pests**
To help reduce pests next year, destroy infested plants by placing them in black plastic bags and letting them sit in the sun for a week. Throw out in the trash – do not compost.

**Harvesting**
Pick male squash blossoms (the ones with the long stems and no bulb at the base of the flower) as they are no longer needed to produce new squash - use in salads, stuff them or deep fry them. Wash gently, remove stamen (small fuzzy rods inside the flower) and stems. Best eaten on the day they are picked.

CROPS OF THE WEEK

**THESE MAY BE READY TO HARVEST...**

All tomatoes, bell peppers, summer squash, cucumbers, eggplant, lettuce, zucchini, green beans, and keep an eye on your winter squashes

THINGS TO DO

- Store diced peppers from your garden in reclosable bags in your freezer. You can cook them later and they will taste great; they won’t work well for salads though.
- Plant some spinach or lettuce
- Try a few marigold flower petals in your salad
Ratatouille

This is an easy, versatile dish. I make a large batch and freeze it in portions. For an easy dinner you can defrost the ratatouille and add Italian sausage or shrimp, while reheating, and serve over pasta. Or pour a bit over a mild white fish and bake. The meals you can do with this basic recipe are endless.

5 Tbsp. olive oil
3 garlic cloves, chopped
1 onion, chopped
1 green bell pepper, chopped
1 eggplant, chopped
1 zucchini, chopped
6 mushrooms, quartered
1 teaspoon oregano
1 teaspoon basil
2 cups tomatoes, seeded and chopped
1/2 cup tomato sauce
Salt and pepper

In a large pot heat oil. Add garlic, onion, bell pepper, eggplant, zucchini and mushrooms. Sauté until vegetables are softened. About 10 minutes. Add oregano, basil, salt and pepper, tomatoes and tomato sauce. Simmer uncovered over low heat for 30-40 minutes. Serve topped with parmesan cheese.

Back to School…

Don’t forget to use the fresh veggies from your garden for nutritious school snacks for your kids! Accompany your veggies with dressings, dips, cheese or peanut butter. Get creative and colorful!

Colorful fruits and vegetables deliver healthful doses of vitamins, minerals, and disease-fighting phytochemicals. The darker the color of the fruit or vegetable, the more nutrients it usually contains. Here are some examples: color — cranberries and apples; blue/purple — blueberries, purple grapes, plum and eggplant; red — tomatoes, strawberries, carrots; orange — sweet potatoes, cantaloupe, oranges, and carrots; yellow — corn, yellow tomatoes, squash, zucchini, broccoli; white — onions, garlic, and leeks.

Source: "The Color Guide", National Cancer Institute
Hello Gardeners,
Cool weather makes Kate think about soup, so you’ll find several soup recipes in this edition as well as a tasty dessert. We hope that your gardens have served you well and that you are still serving meals from them.

**Vegetable Soup with Brown Rice**

*This soup is made with brown rice and tiny brown or green lentils. It can be cooked for 1 hour on the stovetop, in a pressure cooker for 20 minutes, or transferred to a slow cooker and cooked for 8 hours. Serves 6. Adapted from The Boston Globe.*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Ingredients</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 tablespoons olive oil</td>
<td>1 ½ cups chopped green or Savoy cabbage</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 leeks (white parts only) or 1 onion halved lengthwise, and coarsely chopped</td>
<td>2 stalks celery, chopped</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 cloves garlic, chopped</td>
<td>7 cups cold water, vegetable broth or chicken broth</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 medium onions, cut into ½-inch slices</td>
<td>1/3 cup uncooked brown rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 bay leaf</td>
<td>1/3 cup dried dark green or brown lentils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ teaspoon chopped fresh thyme</td>
<td>½ teaspoon black pepper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 teaspoons kosher salt or ½ teaspoons table salt</td>
<td>3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley or basil</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 can (14 ounces) peeled tomatoes, crushed in a bowl</td>
<td>½ cup grated Parmesan cheese</td>
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In a heavy soup pot, heat the oil and cook the leeks (or onions), stirring often, for 5 minutes. Add the garlic and stir 30 seconds longer. Add the onions, bay leaf, thyme, salt, tomatoes, cabbage, celery, water or broth, brown rice, lentils and pepper. Bring to a boil, lower the heat, cover the pot, and simmer the soup for 1 hour stirring occasionally, or until the vegetables, rice and lentils are very tender. Taste for seasoning. Add, more salt and pepper, if you like, discard the bay leaf and ladle into bowls. Garnish with parsley or basil and sprinkle with cheese.

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**Egg Drop Soup**

*This is a wonderful, comforting soup – great on a cool day when you have a few stray vegetables from the garden and you want something warm and nourishing to eat that's not too rich. Serves 6 as a first course. Adapted from The Boston Globe.*

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Ingredients</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 quart chicken or vegetable broth</td>
<td>1 small cucumber quartered, seeds removed, cut on a slant</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 tablespoons vegetable oil</td>
<td>1 ½ tablespoons cornstarch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salt to taste</td>
<td>¼ cup cold water</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 tablespoon unpeeled chopped fresh ginger</td>
<td>1 egg, lightly beaten with a pinch of salt</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 scallion or 3 green leaves from an onion, finely chopped</td>
<td>Sesame oil (optional, for sprinkling)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 plum tomatoes, seeds removed and coarsely chopped</td>
<td>6 sprigs fresh parsley or cilantro (for garnish)</td>
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In a medium saucepan, heat the broth until boiling and reduce the heat to a simmer. Meanwhile, in a deep straight-sided skillet, heat the oil and salt on medium-high heat until the oil is shimmering. Add the ginger and half of the scallions. Cook for 20 seconds or until you can smell the ginger. Add the tomatoes and cook for 2 minutes, stirring, or until they are just soft. Slowly pour in the hot broth (stir carefully to make sure it doesn’t boil over). Add the remaining scallions and the cucumber to the pan. Bring to a boil. Lower the heat so the mixture is still bubbling. In a small bowl mix the cornstarch and water. Stir it into the simmering soup. Season with salt and start stirring gently. Slowly pour in the egg while still stirring. Cook the soup for a few seconds or until the egg forms strands. Ladle into bowls and sprinkle with sesame oil. Add a sprig of parsley or cilantro to each bowl. Serve.
Apple Cranberry Crisp

Consider serving with vanilla ice cream or frozé yogurt on top. If you don’t have fresh cranberries, use another 1½ cups of apples. Yield: 10 servings (serving size: 1/2 cup) Courtesy of Cooking Light

3 cups apples, cut into 1-inch cubes  
(about 1 pound – Granny Smiths are good for this)
2 cups fresh cranberries
1/2 cup sugar

Preheat oven to 350°.
Combine the first 3 ingredients in a medium bowl; spoon into an 8 x 8-inch baking dish coated with cooking spray. Lightly spoon the flour into a dry measuring cup, and level with a knife. Combine flour, oats, sugar, and oil, stirring with a fork until crumbly. Sprinkle over the apple mixture. Bake 40 minutes or until bubbly.

Beet and Fennel Soup with a Yogurt Swirl

Adapted from Judith Barrett’s book “Saved by Soup”. This is low-fat recipe serves 6.

3 medium-sized red beets, peeled and diced
1 medium-sized onion, diced
½ pound fresh fennel (about 1 bulb), tall stalks and leaves discarded, bulb cut into 1-inch pieces to yield about 2 cups
5 cups cold water
Salt
¼ cup nonfat plain yogurt

In a heavy 4-quart sauce pan, combine the beets, onion, and fennel with the water and salt over medium-high heat. Bring to a boil and reduce the heat to medium low, partially cover the pan, and simmer until the beets are tender and are easily pierced with a sharp knife. Cool slightly, then use an immersion blender and process in the same pot until smooth, or process in batches in a blender. Scrape down the sides and process briefly (about 15 seconds longer) once more. Reheat the soup gently before serving. Meanwhile, beat the yogurt with a wire whisk until smooth. Ladle the soup into bowls and drizzle the yogurt on top in a swirl pattern.
**HELLO GARDENERS!**

Thank you to those of you who called about getting garlic! You are on our list for deliveries which will happen in late October.

We will start to deliver bags of compost to you over the next few weeks. Details are in this newsletter. And speaking of newsletters, this is the last weekly one you will receive this season. From now on you will receive a newsletter every 2 weeks until the end of October.

Now we have a little exercise for you to help with planning your garden for next year. So grab a pencil or pen and read on!

*Cindy & Kate*

**WHAT SHOULD I GROW NEXT YEAR?**

To help you remember what things you liked and didn’t like, fill out this chart and save it for planning your garden next year. There is even room to add things that we don’t have on our list. Do it now – it’s so hard to remember when it’s cold outside.

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Garden Vegetable Soup

4-6 servings
Adapted from Twelve Months of Monastery Soups

Cool weather always seems to say soup. Here is a very simple recipe that can easily take a wide variety of vegetables.

2 quarts water (or vegetable stock)
2 bouillon cubes (if stock not used)
1 onion
1 zucchini
1 carrot
1 celery stalk
3 Swiss chard or cabbage leaves
½ cup pastina (small pasta)
Salt and pepper to taste
Grated Gruyere or parmesan cheese to garnish

Cut vegetables into small slices julienne style. Place water in a soup pot. Add bouillon cubes and vegetables and cook over medium heat for 40 minutes. Add pasta, salt and pepper and continue to cook for another 10 minutes. Serve hot with a sprinkle of cheese on top of each serving.

Garden Tidbits

Your garden has been spending a lot of time feeding you, now it’s time to feed it! Over the next few weeks, you will be receiving a bag of compost for each garden bed. We will leave them by your garden. This compost is food for your soil. After the first hard frost (sometime in October) many of your plants will die. At that point your job is to:

- Remove all weeds and dead plants except those that are still producing (root vegetables, kale, broccoli, lettuce)
- Remove decaying vegetables and fruits
- Using one bag of compost per bed, sprinkle a thin layer of compost on the soil and around the plants that are still producing. You do not need to work it in to the bed.

This will give your garden a good meal over the winter so that it’s ready to plant in the early spring.
HELLO GARDENERS!

This issue is the “green tomato survival” issue and the newsletter survey issue.

The weather is still lovely and the tomatoes are still slow. We may have a hard frost – really – by the end of the week. So if you still have tomatoes on the vine, check the weather and pick all your tomatoes, whether they are green or not. We have recipes to help.

Please let us know what you think about this year’s newsletter: Did it help you in your garden? Did it help you use your vegetables once you had picked them? Was it easier to find and remove pests? Or not? We want you to tell us while you still remember! Please send the survey back as soon as you can; we promise to read your comments carefully and respectfully.

Kate and Cindy

GARDEN TALES…

Did you know that carrots and their cousins can stay in the garden late into the year?

Carrots will stay firm and sweet in the soil for several more weeks. So don’t worry about harvesting them right away.

A similar vegetable, the parsnip, doesn’t really begin to taste good until after it has been through a winter. Farmers cover them with a thick layer of hay and harvest the whole crop in the early spring.

Parsley is another carrot relative that survives into late November. Leave some in your garden, cut the leaves and use them in your Thanksgiving dinner!

What to do with all those green tomatoes

Ripen them: Wrap them in clean newspaper and put keep them at room temperature. Check them often.

Eat them as Fried Green Tomatoes:

These are tasty served on a bed of lettuce with crumbled goat or feta cheese.

1 pound green tomatoes
½ cup cornmeal
1 tablespoon minced fresh oregano or thyme leaves
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 large egg
1 tablespoon water
1/3 cup olive oil

Remove a ¼-inch slice from the stem end of each tomato.

Cut the tomatoes crosswise into 1/2-inch-thick slices. Lay the tomatoes out on a couple of layers of paper towels. Combine the cornmeal, oregano, salt and pepper to taste in a shallow, wide bowl. Beat the egg and water in another shallow, wide bowl.

Heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Remove the tomato slices from the paper towels (the seeds should stay behind) and dip in the egg and then drag them through the cornmeal mixture, making sure both sides are well coated. Place the slices, a few at a time, in the hot oil. Fry, turning once until golden brown and crisp on both sides, about 5 minutes (reduce heat if oil starts to smoke). Transfer the fried tomatoes to plates lined with paper towels. Continue until all are cooked.
GREEN TOMATO SOUP
Makes 4 to 6 servings
Adapted from Gourmet Magazine

2 tablespoons olive or vegetable oil
2 oz thinly sliced ham (1/2 cup)
1 1/2 cups thinly sliced scallions (from 1 bunch)
1 tablespoon chopped garlic (2 cloves)
1 bay leaf
2 lb green unripe tomatoes, chopped
1 cup low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
2 cups water
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
Garnish: sour cream (optional)

Heat oil in a 3-quart heavy saucepan over moderate heat until hot but not smoking, then cook ham, stirring occasionally, until beginning to brown, 1 to 2 minutes. Add scallions, garlic, and bay leaf and cook, stirring occasionally, until scallions are tender and lightly browned, 6 to 8 minutes.

Add tomatoes, broth, water, salt, and pepper and simmer, partially covered, until tomatoes are tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Discard bay leaf and season soup with salt and pepper.

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E-mail: staff@growingplaces.org

“Growing Times” Survey

Please fill out this survey and return it to us by mail
Do you find the following sections of the newsletter helpful?

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Additional comments:

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HELLO GARDENERS!

This is your last newsletter of the 2006 gardening season. That does not mean that we disappear off the face of the earth! Compost still needs to be delivered (our truck needed some mechanical help) and your garlic will be mailed to you by the end of the month. You can always reach us by phone, email or regular mail if you have questions over the next few months. Please don’t hesitate to contact us if you do have any.

It has been our pleasure working with you during the growing season – we hope you all learned a little and ate a lot!

Cindy & Kate

PLANTING GARLIC

Garlic needs to be planted by mid-November. You will receive a box in the mail at the end of October which will contain your garlic. Here is what you need to do with it:

- Separate the cloves of garlic from the stem (you do not need to peel them)
- Pick out the large healthy cloves; reserve any that are very small or don’t look good
- Poke a hole in the ground that is 3 inches deep and put a single clove in the hole, pointy end up (you want the pointy end to be about 2 inches below the soil)
- Cover with soil
- Plant cloves about 3-4 inches apart (or 9-12 per square)
- Mark the area they were planted with a label so you remember where they went! Mulch with leaves if desired. Garlic will be ready in late summer next year.

For the smaller cloves, you can either use them for cooking or plant them for an early spring crop. Just do the same planting as above but plant them only 1-2 inches apart. When they are about 12-16 inches long and look like scallions (in May or there about) dig them up and use them in anything from salads to cooking meats. Especially good for stir fries!
One more recipe...

Butternut Squash Soup

This is a great time of year to make soup and with squash so readily available now, this is a perfect soup to make.

Serves 4. Adapted from www.recipesource.com

3 cups butternut, buttercup or acorn squash peeled and chopped
2 apples, peeled & chopped
1 onion, chopped
1 tsp oil
2 tbsp parsley, chopped
1 tsp ginger, grated
2 1/2 cups vegetable or chicken stock or water
1 tsp dried thyme leaves
Salt & pepper

In medium saucepan, add oil, onion and ginger and cook until softened over medium heat. Add chopped squash, apples, stock and thyme. Bring to boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer until squash is tender, about 20 minutes. Remove from heat and puree in batches in food processor or blender until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve hot.

Garnish each serving with chopped parsley if desired.

Notes: To soften the peel on a squash, pierce squash in several places with sharp knife. Microwave at high (100% power) for 3 minutes. Peel, remove seeds and deep squash. If you don't have stock handy, replace each cup of stock with the corresponding amount of water and bouillon cubes.