



Garden Wise

February/March 2014



"The flowers of late winter and early spring occupy places in our hearts well out of proportion to their size."

- Gertrude S. Wiste

Garden Wise is back! We have *almost* made it through another winter. The past two weeks have tested our gardening souls by keeping some of us inside and away from our winter gardening duties. I myself took this forced break as a time to reflect and absorb the beauty of the pure white snow. Only for a moment though, before the snow plows woke my somber mind saying, "Hello, you are in the city now!" As we transition into warmer weather, let's keep in mind the amazing seasons and all the unique characteristics of each one that we love to see arrive and hate to see go.

The end of winter marks the time to start all of those little seeds with their infinite promise and potential. For me that means, first, rearrange the house to accommodate tables, trays, and grow lights. Second, turn into the crazy yogurt cup lady. Third, start way too many seeds, more than I could ever need. Finally, because I cannot stand thinning, my little seedlings supply the neighborhood with mini gardens. Because I seem to have acquired more seeds this year than previously, my gardening New Year's resolution is to learn more about gardening in small spaces without turning my house and yard into an unmanageable jungle. I'm sure I will still be going door to door with trays of free seedlings even if I stick to my resolution.

Happy Gardening!

-Eva Preiser, EMGV

EMGV Passalong Plant Sale and Festival

Mark your calendars! **Our Extension Master Gardener 2014 Passalong Plant Sale and Festival is Friday, May 19 and Saturday, May 10 at the Agriculture Center** on Burlington Road. Plan to bring your wish list, family, and friends for a wide variety of healthy plants that are sure to fit your garden needs! We'll have education and information galore, too. Don't miss out!

- Friday, May 9, 9 am - 3 pm
- Saturday, May 10, 9 am - 11:30 am

We hope to see you there!



Organic Gardening: Where to begin?

As gardening enthusiasts we all love our environment whether it be working the ground, planting, harvesting, or in my case eating the wonderful bounty the earth has allowed me to grow. So why don't we step our love for the environment up another notch and introduce some simple organic gardening aspects into our agricultural routines.



So what is organic gardening? Organic gardening is gardening done without the use of synthetic fertilizers, chemical herbicides and pesticides. Let's look at what we can do to our soil. In addition to compost organic gardeners incorporate fertilizers like animal manures, rock phosphate, seaweed, green sand, wood ash, and lime. These organic fertilizers help balance the pH in your soil while adding important nutrients needed to produce a bountiful organic harvest. These additions to your soil are safe for you and your environment.

Now what to do about all those garden pests? Most organic gardeners have a mindset of keeping a balance in their gardens ecosystem. A balance means not eliminating all pests but working with the environment to deter and control pests. One of the best ways to control those pesky insect populations in by promoting beneficial species that include spiders, bats, birds, lady bugs etc. etc. etc. (Please visit the NCSU garden website for a list and information on all of the beneficial species) By planting a variety of herbs and flowers you can attract all sorts of helping insects into your garden. Remember using harsh chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides don't just harm the "bad" bugs they harm all insects. This is just another reason to incorporate organic gardening techniques into your garden routine. If you are in the experimenting mood try looking up recipes for homemade organic pesticides. Many of the recipes use household items like vinegar, soap, cayenne pepper and if you want to go all out try mixing up some tobacco juice. Of course nothing works better than the old "squish them gently" technique. Just make sure you properly identify the little eggs and insects you are squishing. (Please visit the NCSU garden website for insect identification information)



Controlling disease in your garden is tricky and organic gardeners practice good sanitation of their tools so that they do not spread disease from one plant to another. They also keep a keen eye on all their crops, quickly removing damaged or infected plants so that the disease is less likely to spread. Many of us know about the benefits of rotating crops on the soil but it also cuts down on the possibility of transferring diseases to other crops.

Now that you have the basic information about organic gardening and what it entails it is time to make a plan to incorporate some of these earth friendly techniques into your gardening routine. Don't feel overwhelmed. Completely switching over to organic can take some time. Do your research and start experimenting. The beauty of gardening is the ever changing environment in which we work in. Start to observe what happens in your garden, what insects you see, and which beneficial insects are missing. After this, begin to make an Integrated Pest Management plan, IPM, for your garden. (For more information about IPMs please visit the NCSU website) Happy Organic Gardening!!

- Eva Preiser, EMGV

Henbit and Chickweed and other cool season annuals – Oh My!

-Kathy Williams, EMGV volunteer in Guilford County

Chickweed and henbit are common cool season broadleaf weeds. They can be found in your turf or among your flowers and shrubs. The good news with these weeds is that they are annuals, so they grow one season and then die. The bad news is that the seeds they produce will remain in the soil to germinate the following growing season. This means that they will germinate in the fall, grow slowly throughout the winter (yes, even *this* winter) and explode around the end of February and early March.



Chickweed (left) and henbit (right) from

<http://johnston.ces.ncsu.edu/files/library/51/Weed%20ID.pdf>

As with most turf and garden problems, the best method of control is prevention. And, the best method of prevention is healthy soil and plants. (The best way to maintain healthy turf and beds is to soil test every few years. If you have not soil tested your turf and beds in a few years, now is the time! You can learn more about soil testing at: <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Soil-test-fact-sheet.pdf> . For the first time, there is a \$4.00 fee for tests conducted December-March of each year [peak time]. Other times of the year, there is still no charge.)

A thick, healthy turf makes it difficult for weed seeds to germinate. And, seeds that do germinate often get insufficient light for growth among the thick, healthy blades of grass. So, if you were wise and aerated and over seeded your turf last fall, you are probably in good shape. The other Fall strategy would have been an application of a pre-emergent herbicide like pendimethalin (Halts, Lesco) or dithiopyr (StaGreen, Crabgrass Preventer). These are broadleaf herbicides that are most effective when applied in the fall. They are less effective once germination has occurred in the Spring (<http://lee.ces.ncsu.edu/2012/08/fall-pre-emergent-weed-control/>).

If you are like me, many of these preventive strategies were not followed in the Fall. And, as noted above, it is too late for a pre-emergent to be very effective. This time of the year, it is best to use post-emergent herbicides. These can be applied when temperatures rise above 50 degrees. Post emergent herbicides contain 2,4-D+MCP+2, 4-DP or 2,4-D+MCP+dicamba

(continued)

(Winter Annual Weeds continued)

(Ortho Weed-B-Gon Max is a common brand name product). Several applications may be necessary, since seeds will continue to germinate and grow. Once the weather becomes warm, however, additional treatments are unnecessary. As soon as it gets warm, these cool season weeds begin to die. Whenever you use any of these products, remember: always read the label directions and follow them carefully!

Your strategy will be similar in your color beds, but weeds often seem more problematic here. This is because weeds insert themselves into open spaces. So, planning your beds to minimize empty space is crucial. Again, this increases the competition for space, light and moisture. Where you want space or where young plants have not yet filled in, you will use mulch. In addition to adding beauty to your beds, mulch will help control weeds by depriving seeds of much needed light. If you use a herbicide for weed control, granular applications are typically safer, especially when tender young bedding plants are present. When applying these herbicides, bedding plant foliage should be dry. After application, irrigate gently to wash any errant granules off the leaves to prevent damage. This will also begin to dissolve the herbicide, so that it can begin to do its work.

So, despite our living through a fairly severe winter for North Carolina's Piedmont, it is time to get to work on our yards. It is still cold outside, but, the temperature will soon begin to rise. Watch the thermometer. As soon as it tops 50 degrees, it is time to attack those cool season weeds that are just waiting to take over! It's time!

Share the Harvest

One out of every four children in Guilford County doesn't know where his or her next meal will come from. According to a recent survey conducted by Gallup for the Food Research and Action Center, 25 percent of Greensboro and High Point families struggle to feed themselves, ranking the two cities fourth nationally in terms of food insecurity.

Share the Harvest is an exciting program that started in 2012. This not-for-profit group is creating pathways to connect gardeners with local service organizations to help families overcome food insecurity. **Share the Harvest** has established drop off sites across the county where gardeners can drop off their fresh produce. Information about these sites can be seen at their website: <http://sharetheharvestguilfordcounty.org/> This produce will be collected and distributed to local food pantries, shelters, and soup kitchens across the county. This distribution chain allows us to make local fresh produce available to everyone.

You can check out the Share the Harvest website at <http://www.sharetheharvestguilfordcounty.org/>. In addition to a list of collection sites for 2014, they have a link where you can volunteer. Share the Harvest collected and distributed 6374 pounds of produce in 2013; with your help, they can distribute even MORE in 2014!





Central North Carolina Planting Calendar for Annual Vegetables, Fruits, and Herbs

Central North Carolina is a wonderful place to garden. Almost any type of vegetable or fruit can be grown successfully provided you choose appropriate varieties and plant at the right time. The climate, the season, and potential pests all affect the selection of what and when to plant.

Adapted to Climate: Freezing temperatures, high temperatures, humidity, and solar intensity, all common in central North Carolina, can put stress on plants. To successfully grow plants in this environment, select varieties that are tolerant of temperature extremes, plant at the appropriate times to avoid temperature extremes, or plan to protect the plants. It is possible to grow plants out of season by creating microclimates that differ from the overall climate by providing shade, humidity, or artificial heat.



Seasons: We have three optimal growing seasons: spring, summer, and fall. Both day length and temperature vary dramatically

between seasons (short days and cold temperatures in winter to long days and high temperatures in summer). Since few annual plants are suited to thrive in both circumstances, it is important to choose plants that mature quickly to ensure a complete life cycle within one season.



Disease and Pest Resistance: Choose varieties that have been bred to resist diseases and pests. Some companies list resistance on the plant tag, the seed package, or in a seed catalog. Many companies use initials following the plant variety name. For example, “V” may mean resistant to *Verticillium* wilt disease, “N” may indicate resistance to nematodes, “F” may indicate

resistance to *Fusarium* wilt disease, and “T” may indicate resistance to Tobacco Mosaic virus. Different companies use different symbols, so be sure to check their key to understand the labeling. Choose a planting date to avoid known pest seasons. Delay fall planting until whitefly populations decline with cooler temperatures, for example, or delay spring planting until soils become warm to reduce fungal and bacterial disease problems.

Cultivars: Select varieties that provide desirable yield, taste, texture, and color. Using varieties that mature quickly may help avoid insect and disease problems. New varieties are released each year, and other varieties may become unavailable. Check with your local Extension website, Extension Master Gardener volunteers, or Extension agents for the varieties best adapted your area. You can also read vegetable variety reviews from gardeners across the country online at <http://vegvariety.cce.cornell.edu>.

Planting dates: These dates are suggested guidelines and should provide the highest probability of success, but weather conditions vary from year to year and planting dates should be adjusted accordingly. Plants established in the middle of the recommended planting dates



will do best with lower success rates at both the earlier and later recommended planting dates. The dates on the chart are for planting out in the garden. If you provide shade in the summer and frost protection in the winter, you may be able to extend the season both before and after these recommended dates. Spun-woven covers can allow you to begin your garden earlier in the spring and extend it longer into the fall. In addition, plastic mulches can be used to produce vegetables earlier in the

season. Planting additional plants every few weeks within the planting window will extend your harvest over a greater period.

Transplants: If growing your own transplants, start seedlings six to eight weeks before transplanting them into the garden. Protect tender transplants from severe temperature conditions. Harden them off prior to transplanting by gradually introducing them to the new environment. Just before transplanting, take them outside for increasing periods each day until they are acclimatized to the new temperature and light conditions.



Note: In order to fit the charts on the following pages into this newsletter, we had to flip them 90% and make them considerably smaller than they are in print. To view the original document online, go here: http://cals.ncsu.edu/hort_sci/extension/documents/AG-756.pdf.

*If you're viewing this publication online (as most people will be), remember you can enlarge the size of your screen display on a PC by hitting **Control and the + key (Ctrl+)** until it reaches the size you want. You can reduce it by hitting **Control and the - key (Ctrl-)**. On a Mac, hit the **Command** key and hold it down while scrolling up or down.*

Garden Planting Calendar for Annual Vegetables, Fruits and Herbs in the Piedmont

Fruit/Herb/ Vegetable	Days to Harvest (unless otherwise noted)	Distance Between Plants	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec			
			1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15
			Artichokes, Globe	1 year	30 in						T	T	T															
Artichokes, Jerusalem**	6-8 months	9 – 12 in						Tu	Tu	Tu																		
Arugula	40-50	6-9 in			S	S	S	S									S	S	S	S								
Asparagus	2 years	18 in	C	C	C	C	C	C																C	C	C		
Basil	50-75	2-8 in									S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T												
Beans, Lima- Bush	65-80	6 in								S	S	S	S	S	S	S												
Beans, Lima- Pole	75-95	6 in									S	S	S	S		S												
Beans, Snap- Bush	50-55	2 in						S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S								
Beans, Snap- Pole	65-70	6 in							S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S								
Beets	55-60	2 in					S	S	S						S	S	S	S										
Broccoli	T=70-80	18 in				T	T	T	T								T	T	T									
Brussels Sprouts	S=90-100	14-18 in													T	T	T	T										
Cabbage	T=63-75 S=90-120	12 in			T	T	T	T	T							T	T	T	T									
Cabbage, Chinese	T=45 S=75-85	12 in						S, T									S	S		T	T							
Carrots	75-80	2 in			S	S	S	S						S	S	S	S	S	S									
Cauliflower	T=55-65 S=85-95	18 in			S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T								S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T							
Celery	120-150	6-8 in				T	T	T						T	T	T	T											
Chard, Swiss	60-70	6 in					S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T							S, T	S, T	S, T									
Cilantro	50-55	2-4 in			S	S	S	S													S							
Collard Greens	60-100	18 in				T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T		S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T								

Fruit/Herb/ Vegetable	Days to Harvest (unless otherwise noted)	Distance Between Plants	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec			
			1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15
			Corn, Sweet	85-90	12 in						S	S	S	S	S													
Cucumbers	56-65	12 in							S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T											
Dill	40-55	2-4						S									S	S	S									
Eggplant	80-85	24 in							T	T	T	T					T	T										
Garlic	180-210	4-6 in																		B	B	B	B	B				
Kale	40-50	6 in			S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T		S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T								
Kohlrabi	50-60	4 in			S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T			S, T	S, T	S, T									
Leek	120-150	4 in			S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T														
Lettuce, Head	70-85	10 in			S	S	S	T	T	T								S	S	T	T							
Lettuce, Leaf	40-50	6 in			S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T							S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T								
Melons, Cantaloupe	85-90	24 in							S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T													
Melons, Watermelon	90-100	60 in							S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T															
Mustard	30-40	2 in				S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S			S	S	S	S								
Okra	60-70	12 in									S, T	S, T					S	S										
Onions, Bulb	60-80	4 in	S	S	S	S	S, B	S, B									S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S		
Onions, Green	60 - 70	1-2 in			S	S	S, T	S, T										T	S, T									
Pac Choi/ Bok Choy	30 - 75	7-12 in						T										T	T	T								
Parsley	75	9-12 in				S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T								S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T								
Parsnips	100-130	3-4 in				S	S	S	S	S	S						S	S	S	S								
Peanuts	145 - 160	6-8 in									S	S																
Peas, Dwarf	54-60	4 in	S	S	S	S	S	S	S								S	S	S	S								
Peas, Trellis	54-72	2-3 in	S	S	S	S	S	S	S								S	S	S	S								
Peas, Field/ Southern	55-65	4 in						S	S	S	S	S	S				S	S										

Note: B= Bulbs; C = Crowns; S = Seeds; T = Transplants; Tu = Tubers
 ** Best grown in a pot, as it can spread aggressively.

Fruit/Herb/ Vegetable	Days to Harvest (unless otherwise noted)	Distance Between Plants	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec	
			1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15
Peppers	75-80	18 in							T	T	T	T					T									
Potatoes, Irish	95-120	10 in				Tu	Tu	Tu																		
Potatoes, Sweet	95-125	10 in								T	T	T	T	T												
Pumpkin	115-120	4 ft							S	S	S	S	S	S												
Radishes	20-25	1 in			S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S			S	S	S							
Rutabaga	70-80	4 in			S	S	S	S	S						S	S	S	S	S	S						
Spinach	50-60	6 in			S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S			S	S	S	S	S					
Squash, Summer	50-60	24 in							S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T									
Squash, Winter	70-95	36 in							S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T	S, T										
Sunflower	55-110	9-24 in					S	S	S	S																
Tomatoes	75-85	18 in							T	T	T	T	T	T	T		T									
Turnips	55-60	2 in			S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S			S	S	S							

Note: B= Bulbs; C = Crowns; S = Seeds; T = Transplants; Tu = Tubers
 ** Best grown in a pot, as it can spread aggressively.

Acknowledgments

This publication is based on prior work by Debbie Roos, Doug Jones, Erv Evans, and Larry Bass. The authors would like to thank Jeanine Davis, Bill Jester, Issac Lewis, Jonathan Schultheis, Allan Thornton and Brent Winter for their assistance with this publication.

References:

Brandenburg, R., D. Jordan, B. Shew, J. Wilcut, and S. Toth. 2005. Crop Profile for Peanuts in North Carolina. Available online at <http://www.ipmcenters.org/cropprofiles/docs/ncpeanuts.html>

Bratsch, A. 2009. Specialty Crop Profile: Globe Artichoke. Virginia Cooperative Extension, Publication 438-108. Available online at http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/438/438-108/438-108_.pdf

Evans, E. Vegetable Garden Planting Guide: Spring. NC State Cooperative Extension. Available online at <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/consumer/quickref/vegetable/plantingguide.html>

Jones, D. and D. Roos. Planting and Harvesting Guide for Piedmont Vegetables and Herbs. Available online at <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/chatham/ag/SustAg/plantharvest-guide2008.pdf>

Putnam, D.H., E.S. Oplinger, D.R. Hicks, B.R. Durgan, D.M. Noetzel, R.A. Meronuck, J.D. Doll, and E.E. Schulte. 2011. Alternative Field Crops Manual: Sunflower. University of Wisconsin and University of Minnesota.

Available online at <http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/afcm/sunflower.html>

Sanders, D. 1997. Home Garden Celery in Eastern North Carolina. NC State Cooperative Extension. HIL – 8027 Available online at <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/hil-8027.html>

Schultheis, J. 1999. Growing Jerusalem Artichokes. NC State Cooperative Extension HIL – 1-A. Available online at <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/hil-1-a.html>

Schultheis, J. 1998. Muskmelons (Cantaloupes). NC State Cooperative Extension HIL – 8. Available online at <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/hil-8.html>

Prepared by

Lucy K. Bradley, Extension Specialist, Urban Horticulture
Christopher C. Gunter, Extension Specialist, Vegetable Crop Production
Julieta T. Sherk, Assistant Professor
Elizabeth A. Driscoll, Extension Associate

*Department of Horticultural Science
 North Carolina State University*

This newsletter is a publication of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, Guilford County Center. Published by the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service. Distributed in furtherance of the Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. Employment and program opportunities are offered to all people regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. North Carolina State University at Raleigh, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

Kids' Corner!

Make Your Own Terrarium



Plants

Potting
Soil

Charcoal

Rocks

First, you want all your plants to be able to thrive in the same kind of environment. For example, you could plant all succulents (including cactus), because they need very little water. Or you could plant all ferns, because they like it moist. You could put moss with the ferns, because moss likes it moist, too. If you put a fern with a cactus, though, one or the other might not do well (the fern if it gets too dry, the cactus if it gets too wet).

You can use an open container or a closed container. An open container is best for succulents and cacti. They like lots of air. A closed container (with a lid) might be best for ferns, ivies, and begonias. They like it humid. But if you see a lot of water condensing on the lid, remove it for a while, then replace it.

For any terrarium, you need:

- Clear glass container. For example, aquarium of any size, goldfish bowl, cookie jar, pickle jar, vase with a broad bottom, brandy snifter, or even a shallow dish with a glass bowl turned upside-down over it.
- Rocks (around marble sized, depending on the size of container)
- Activated charcoal to filter the water and help prevent growth of fungi
- Potting soil (sterilized)
- Small plants of different colors, shapes, & textures. Try to get miniature plants that aren't going to grow too big for the container.

Optional:

- Moss
- Decorative rocks or pebbles, or both
- Fun décor, like tiny pine cones, shells, ceramic animals, or a garden gnome.
- Make sure your glass container is clean and shiny.

The layers of rock and soil are part of the beauty of your terrarium.

- Start with a layer of rocks, about one inch or so, at the bottom of your container. These will help the soil drainage, so the roots of your plants won't get water-logged.
- Add a 1/2-inch-thick layer of charcoal.
- Fill the container up to half-full with potting soil.
- Plant your plants. When you remove them from their little pots, carefully tease the roots apart and remove some of the old soil so they will fit nicely in the terrarium. Arrange them to look nice. Leave some space for them to breathe and grow. Pat down the soil so they don't get uprooted easily.

Add decorative pebbles, rocks, pine cones, or whatever to make your terrarium look like a little garden world. Water the plants, but not too much. Place in indirect light.

<http://climatekids.nasa.gov/mini-garden/>

Cold Frames

Eva Preiser, EMGV



Now that we are starting to warm up from this cold winter it is time to think of some new projects for the garden. This easy to make addition to your garden will help extend your growing season throughout the next winter. Cold frames help provide you with fresh produce year round. Not to mention they are great for starting seedlings. Which we all should be doing right now!

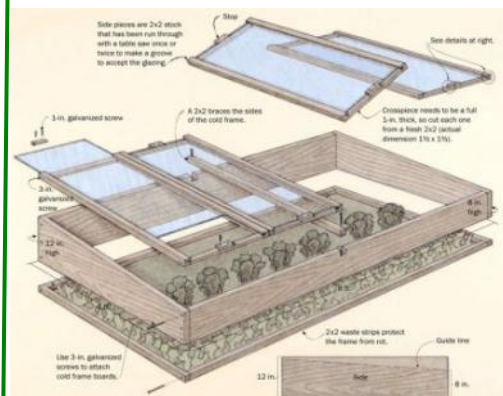
Some things to think about when adding a cold frame to your garden: Do you want to purchase or build your own. The benefit of purchasing a cold frame is mainly in the materials. They are usual made out of plastic which means they are light weight and easy to move. It is important to identify how the cold frame is vented. The biggest benefit is time. If you are buying a cold frame then you do not have to worry about collecting materials or having the right tools needed to construct your own. If you want to build a cold frame, this can be perfect way to use some recycled materials. Old glass windows, shower doors or tempered glass doors work great as the top for cold frame. It is important to note that using untreated wood for the base of the cold frame is important.

You can find a variety of blueprints for cold frames and it is important to choose one that is a good fit for the location on or in your garden/property. The standard construction of a cold frame has a higher back around 18 inches and the front around 14 inches. This height differences creates a slope that allows sunlight to reach all of the plants and help with rain and snow run off. Dig a 2-3 inch groove around the perimeter of the cold frame which will allow you to set the frame in the ground. This helps with leveling and keeping heat inside. Placing the cold frame facing south and near your house or shed will provide protection from wind and other elements.

You can grow a variety of vegetables throughout the winter months in your new or upcycled cold frame: Kale, Arugula, Broccoli, Beets, Cabbage, Mustards, Radish, Spinach, just to mention a few. Happy Cold Framing!

A) <http://www.vegetablegardener.com/item/2504/cold-frame-gardening/page/all>

B) <http://img4-2.sunset.timeinc.net/i/2000/02/alaska-style-cold-frame-m.jpg?300:300>



Focus on Cool-Season Vegetables

PEAS

Susan Tanzer, EMGV



The pea, *Pisum sativum*, has a long and glorious history that spans the globe. The pea was even immortalized in a child's rhyme during the medieval period.

The oldest pea found was in Burma (Myanmar) with a carbon-dated age of 9750, according to Klingaman. The ironic finding is that Burma is not the origin of the pea. Rather, the pea originated in the Mediterranean basin. These peas would be field peas. They would be dried and split for soups or stews. Columella mentions in 'De Re Rustica' that Roman legions would gather these wild peas to supplement their daily rations.

During the medieval period, the pea supplemented their diet. It was so common it was immortalized in rhyme. The rhyme about peas in the porridge is a very old rhyme with unknown origins.

English peas

Pease porridge hot

Pease porridge cold

Pease porridge in the pot

Nine days old

Snell noted that it is known in medieval times a family would have a kettle over a fire and fill it with vegetables, bean, grains, and meat (if available) and eaten for supper. Breakfast was leftover stew, and the remains from breakfast would start the meal for that evening. The porridge is what we would call stew. However, peas go back even further in time and beyond Europe.

The pea began its noble history with the Norse god Thor. Thor used legumes as a weapon. He had dragons drop peas into water to foul the water. However, the dragons occasionally missed and the legumes dropped on land and the people used them as a food source. They ate the legumes on Thor's day (i.e. Thursday). A Chinese tale has, Emperor Shu Nung, discovering the pea plant. He was unsure whether it was poisonous, so he fed them to his servant and dog first. It is recorded King Louis XIV ate peas and it was delicacy amongst the nobles.

Peas, *Pisum sativum*, are botanically a fruit. The seeds develop from the ovary of a pea flower. Peas are a cold weather annual crop. Planting the peas, starts 4-6 weeks prior to the last frost. In North Carolina that means be planting begins March 1st through March 15th. Planting should be 1 inch apart and 1 inch in depth. The pea seed can be wrinkled or smooth. According to Klingaman, the wrinkled pea has a higher sugar content. As always, test your soil before you fertilize your peas. Peas do not need high nitrogen fertilizer as it impedes its growth (Knight, Tanner). If you do need to add fertilizer, the recommended application is 5-10-10. Mulching around the plants keeps the



roots cool and moist, and suppresses weeds. Apply water in the morning, so the soil is moist 6 inches in depth. Harvest the pods every 1 to 3 days when the individual peas are plump for about 3 weeks.

Trellis, wires, or netting is useful even for the bush variety of peas. Peas have tendrils that cling to each other and the support to remain erect. It is a good idea to add a trellis prior to planting the peas.

Peas are susceptible to powdery mildew, fusarium wilt, and aphids. Knight and Tanner from Clemson University recommend the following cultivars: Alaska, Mr. Big, Maestro, Wando (which is heat tolerant), and Lincoln (also heat tolerant).

So, while you are planting your English pea you can feel connected to its long history that spans the globe.

Resources

Bartholomew, M. (1981). *Square Foot Gardening*. Emmaus, Pennsylvania: Rodale Press.

p. 315.

Brown, J. History of the Pea Plant. *Gardenguides.com*. Retrieved from

<http://www.gardenguides.com/129442-history-pea-plant.html>

Kafka, B. (2005). *Vegetable Love* [Review of the book *Vegetable Love*] New York: Artisan. p. 297.

Klingaman, G. (July 30, 2004). English Peas. *Plant of the Week*. Retrieved from

www.arhomeandgarden.org/plantoftheweek/articles/English_Pea.html.

Knight, F.R., & Tanner, S.C. (2010). Garden Peas. *Home & Garden Information Center*. HGIC 1328. Retrieved from

<http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/plants/vegetables/crops/hgic1328.html>

Retrieved February 6, 2014 Wiki: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peas>.

Snell, M. Porridge: The Bad Old Days. *Medieval History*. Retrieved from

http://historymedren.about.com/od/dailylifesociety/a/bod_porridge.html

Asparagus: Patience Pays!

Ken Meeks, EMGV

How much patience do you have? If you don't have much, forget planting asparagus. However, if you have a good bit of patience, planting asparagus will pay rich rewards...in more ways than one!

I recently received a gift of Barbara Kingsolver's book, **Animal, Vegetable, Miracle**.* A smile came to my face when I started reading the second chapter, entitled "*Waiting for Asparagus*." I smiled because the subject brought back fond memories from my teenage years of planting and harvesting asparagus for sale to local grocery stores (Yes, many years ago!) Although it takes a lot of work in the beginning, raising asparagus provides a delectable dish for the dinner table—as well as a profitable crop at the farmers' market.

So—why patience?! Well, the best recipe for a good asparagus bed is to begin a year prior to planting by building up the organic matter in the soil by turning under green mature crops, animal manure, straw, peat moss, or leaf mold. Turning the soil several times during the year before planting is also important. The furrow in which crowns (asparagus roots) are planted should be at least eight inches deep and wide enough to accommodate the root system of the crowns



when fully spread out. The Mary Washington variety is recommended because it is rust resistant. As with bulbs, the crowns should be planted pointing upward and covered with at least two inches of soil. As the plant grows the soil should be pulled up around the plant until the trench is filled. Covering it with a layer of mulch or pine straw also helps retain moisture and also assists in harvesting. In eastern North Carolina, crowns can be planted in February. In the Piedmont and Mountains, crowns should be planted in winter after the danger of a hard freeze has passed. The crowns should be spaced twelve inches apart, and rows should be five feet apart. Prior to the time the sprouts begin to grow (about March 1 in eastern North Carolina and about two weeks later in the rest of the state), broadcast a complete fertilizer (5-10-10).

Now you'd think you're ready to harvest asparagus when its sprouts emerge...but, not so fast, growing asparagus takes patience! The first year the asparagus needs to be allowed to grow into the full fern plant. After the first frost that year and after the plant has turned brown, cut down the fern and destroy it. Also be sure to clear weeds and grass from the bed to insure a good crop the net year. In the spring of the second year you're ready to start harvesting some asparagus! As the asparagus spears pop up, they will grow almost before your eyes! Carefully cut the spear at a length of four to six inches. Now you ready to pop them in a warm pan for a few minutes with a bit of butter and enjoy one of the earliest spring treats from the garden! Kingsolver notes that asparagus recipes date back 2500 years and were written in Greek and hieroglyphics. The Caesars went to great lengths to obtain asparagus for their banquet tables. So...with some patience you can enjoy and share with others this delectable food of ancient greatness.

Resources

Kingsolver, Barbara, Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life with Stephen L. Hopp and Camille Kingsolver, Harper Perennial: New York, 2007.

Sanders, Douglas C., NC State University, Horticulture Information Leaflets, *Home Garden Asparagus Production*, 2001

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS



The first Community Garden Leaders Meeting will be held Monday March 17th, 6:30PM, at the Kathleen Clay Edwards Library. Come out and learn from other community gardeners and pick up some free seeds to start your 2014 vegetable garden.

Guilford County Cooperative Extension is again making Discount Cards available to all Community Gardeners for 2014. The following retailers are participating: A&A Plants, Bryant's Lawn & Garden, Coe Seed & Grocery, Guilford Garden Center, Oak Ridge Shrubbery, and Price Nursery. Each garden leader is invited to stop by the Extension office to pick up enough cards for your gardeners. Please call first ,and ask for Linda Brandon; the cards are kept under lock and key and only Linda has access. Her normal office hours are Monday through Thursday, 8 until 2.

KRAZY KOOL KALE SALAD!



Main ingredient: KALE!! Dinosaur, Curly, and/or Red Russian varieties
RECIPE = 3 cups KALE + 2-3 tbsp FAT + 2-3 tbsp ACID + SALT to taste + PIZZAZ!

Dressing:

- Start with a **FAT**, like olive oil, vegetable oil, tahini, peanut butter, sun-butter...
- Add an **ACID**, like citrus juice (lemon, lime) or vinegar (apple cider works well)...
- Add a **SALT** flavor – a pinch of salt, or substitute with soy sauce or miso
- Mix well with a fork in a separate bowl

Salad:

- Wash kale, remove the stems, tear leaves into small pieces and put in a big bowl
- Add dressing and **MASSAGE** away! Scrunch the leaves with clean hands or place the mixture in a plastic bag and massage from the outside. The more you squeeze, the tenderer it will be! The leaves will start to wilt and turn dark green.
- Add **PIZZAZ!** Any mix-ins you like on other salads work great. Examples:
 - Something sweet:* a little bit of honey, syrup, or orange juice...
 - Something spicy:* chili powder, cumin, ginger, pepper...
 - Something crunchy:* sunflower seeds or pumpkin seeds (pepitas), nuts...
 - Something creamy:* avocado, feta cheese, parmesan cheese, cotija...
 - Fruits & veggies:* raisins, craisins, shredded carrots, apples, jicama...
 - Beans and grains:* chickpeas, lentils, black beans, rice, farro, couscous...
 - Herbs:* cilantro, parsley, basil, chives, dill, fennel, mint, thyme...

TESTED RECIPES:

Basic: Kale + Olive Oil + Lemon + Salt, add shredded carrots and some sunflower seeds

Spice it up: Kale + Avocado + Lime + Salt, add grated garlic and a dash of chili powder

Greek style: Kale + Olive Oil + Lemon/Red Wine Vinegar blend + Salt, add grated garlic, marjoram or oregano, dill, crumbled feta, quartered cherry tomatoes, and olives

Miso Ginger: Kale + Vegetable Oil/Sesame Oil + Rice Wine Vinegar + Miso Paste, add grated garlic, grated ginger, sesame seeds, thinly sliced radishes and cucumber

Tahini Chickpea Mash-up: Kale + Tahini Paste + Lemon + Salt, add grated garlic, a dash of cumin and black pepper. Stir in a can of chickpeas, fresh parsley, and chopped chives

Thai-Style: Kale + Sunflower Seed Butter + Lime or Rice Wine Vinegar + Soy Sauce, add grated garlic, some chili-garlic paste, chopped thai basil, cilantro, sunflower seeds



Garden Reports

Grace Farm and Garden is a community based garden project sponsored by Grace Lutheran Church located at 1325 E. Washington Street. We are a very new garden and we intend to grow produce and flowers this season. We have plans to construct a children's garden, a community green space within the garden, and a memorial flower garden. We will not have community plots for individuals to plant at this time, but we welcome the support of everyone as we move forward into the vision we have for the farm to eventually sustain the members of the community.



The Westover Church Garden volunteers are meeting in January to design the layout and plant rotation in the raised bed garden this year. We are using succession planting to have early spring, summer and fall crops. We are also putting food tasting dinners on our calendar to introduce new vegetables to one another.

-Dana Deaton

Centennial Garden - The 2014 garden season has begun for the green thumbs. We have our cabbage seedlings growing and plan to put them in the garden next month. We also plan to add two 4 x 16 raised beds to the site (One bed for potatoes then sweet potatoes and the other one to house our cucumber crop). Last season we planted a raised bed of asparagus crowns and we are excited to begin the annual harvest of this perennial. The green thumbs goal this year is to harvest three seasons (spring, summer and fall) of vegetables from the primary garden space. We'll let you know the outcome.

-Ken Carter

Keeley and Steelman Park

We have spots available at Keeley and at the community garden at Steelman Park. Plots at Keeley are \$25/year, and \$15/year at Steelman. Folks just need to contact me and I will send them a registration form and get them started. I have attached a couple of photos from each garden.

-Heather Sparks



(Photos of Keeley Park and Steelman Park gardens courtesy Heather Sparks)

The **Mixed Greens Community Garden**, located at the extension office, had their first planning meeting in January. Plot assignments are completed. Church World Service will be part of the Mixed Greens Garden again this year.

Subcommittees were formed at the planning meeting. One subcommittee will provide plot tilling this year. Gardeners will sign up for thirty minute slots on designated days. Beds must be free of weeds prior to setting up the tilling session. Another subcommittee is working on making an inventory of the tools. Our **Mixed Greens Community Garden Kick-off Potluck dinner** was held on **February 25, 2014**.

Thursday evening staffing of the garden will start beginning May 1 for new gardeners and others that need assistance. Saturday workdays were set for March 1 and 29, Aug 21 and Sept 11 from 8-12.

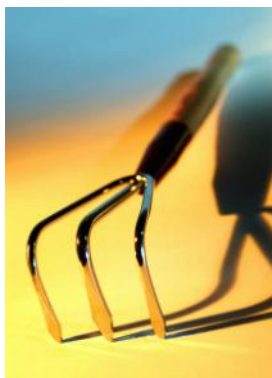
*LeAnn Glessner
EMG Volunteer*



Dunleith Community Garden

The Dunleith Community Garden continues to thrive in its fifth year of operation. Tucked away in a corner of the Historic Aycock neighborhood just three blocks from downtown it's a wonderful microcosm of "melting pot gardening".

The strength of this garden lies in the combination of COMMUNITY and DIVERSITY. Currently divided into 27 plot units, it hosts everyone from beginners to master gardeners. We have an entomologist whose specialty is bee pollination. The countries represented by our garden community are Vietnam (a Montagnard women's group), Bangladesh (grad students from A&T), Korea, India, and China. In addition to the usual North Carolina vegetable staples we grow hops (for our resident ale brewers) and many Asian varieties of squashes and greens. We also have banana, fig, and plum trees as well as maintain a community strawberry bed. The Montagnard group sells their greens at the Downtown Curb Market. Our front beds are entirely devoted to varieties of flowering perennials and we've experimented with cotton and flax. Come visit us and experience this unique global garden.



The Village Greens

The Village Greens at Brandt Village is going strong. We will continue with our 20 raised beds, butterfly garden and herb garden; and nearby "park area." We are working to expand our butterfly gardens, with the goal of creating a Monarch Way Station.

We have a workday scheduled for mid-March and most everyone plans to attend. Our neighborhood has many supporters, some of whom assist us, and all of whom enjoy the garden itself. If all goes well we hope to erect a fence around the area to deter the four-legged critters that invaded last year. And we are hopeful the unusual cold this winter will reduce the insect population a bit.

Growing the Green Way Class Series

Class Locations:

Cooperative Extension Office, 3309 Burlington Road, G'boro, NC 27405
Bur-Mil Park (Wildlife Education Center), 5834 Bur-Mil Club Road, G'boro 27410
Greensboro Arboretum (Ed Center), 401 Ashland Drive, G'boro 27403
Kathleen Clay Edwards Library, 1420 Price Park Road, G'boro, NC 27410



TOTALLY TOMATOES - ALL ABOUT OUR FAVORITE FRUIT

Nothing compares to the taste of your own home-grown tomatoes. That's all we'll be talking about in this class – proven tips and techniques for successfully growing America's most popular garden vegetable (or is it a fruit?). Get ready for tomato sandwiches all summer long!

Tuesday, March 18 th	6:30 pm	Cooperative Extension
Sunday, March 23 rd	4:00 pm	Greensboro Arboretum
Thursday, March 27 th	6:30 pm	Bur-Mil Wildlife Education Center
Monday, March 31 st	6:30 pm	Kathleen Clay Edwards Library



BUTTERFLY FRIENDLY GARDENS

A little planting in even the smallest areas will provide habitat for many butterfly species. Creating a suitable habitat by selecting the appropriate flowering plants will not only attract beautiful butterflies, but the garden will also be filled with colorful flowers through the year. Growing a butterfly garden is easy, fun, and entertaining.

Tuesday, April 1 st	6:30 pm	Cooperative Extension
Thursday, April 3 rd	6:30 pm	Bur-Mil Wildlife Education Center
Sunday, April 6 th	4:00 pm	Greensboro Arboretum
Monday, April 7 th	6:30 pm	Kathleen Clay Edwards Library

EASY TO GROW CULINARY HERBS

Some of us already grow basil, oregano, and thyme - but what about stevia, sage, or lemon grass? By knowing the characteristics of the plants, you can have fresh herbs to use year round. Come join us to talk about being successful at growing the herbs you want to use in your kitchen.



Sunday, April 13 th	4:00 pm	Greensboro Arboretum
Tuesday, April 15 th	6:30 pm	Cooperative Extension
Thursday, April 17 th	6:30 pm	Bur-Mil Wildlife Education Center
Monday, April 21 st	6:30 pm	Kathleen Clay Edwards Library

PRESENTED BY:

NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE IN GUILFORD COUNTY
and

THE EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS

SPONSORED BY:

GREENSBORO PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT and GREENSBORO BEAUTIFUL, INC.



2014 Gardening Classes - High Point Public Library

Presented by Extension Master Gardener Volunteers

BACKYARD HABITAT: GARDENING WITH (and in spite of) WILDLIFE

Saturday, April 12th 1:00 - 2:30 (Story Room)

Wednesday, April 16th 6:00 - 7:30 pm (Morgan Room)

One of the great benefits gardeners enjoy is observing and enjoying nature since birds, butterflies, and other creatures find habitat in our yards - this session is about how to make them welcome. We'll also talk a bit about ways to discourage any uninvited guests who may sometimes come to the party.

