



NEWSLETTER: Working In The Garden

Saturday April 6th was the garden's first day of group toiling. Throughout the morning nineteen people worked cutting, rolling, carrying or transporting heavy sod. Approximately half of the garden was cleared that first day. More help arrived on Sunday continuing the job. It was discovered that a far corner of the garden is low, rutted and soggy. This problem will be resolved by Kevin Fleming, a local building contractor, who has volunteered to bring in a machine to level topsoil over all areas and fill the wooden plot frames when we build them on our next workday April 27th.



Helpful Info & Videos can be found at our website: www.WTCommunityGarden.Jimdo.com

Learn about: Compost & Compost Tea and you'll find a Vegetable Growing Chart to guide you with timing your planting in our region.



"The nicest thing about the promise of spring is that sooner or later she'll have to keep it."
- Mark Beltaire

May Chores

By Margaret Roach

TUBERS AND SLIPS: Are the white potatoes in the ground? Sweet potatoes can go in this month, too.

CONTINUE SOWING CARROTS, beets, radishes, salad greens, dill. With salad greens, select heat-resistant varieties now for best results as they'll bump into warmer weather. I'm sowing kale and chard, too.

CUCUMBERS and their relatives (melons, squash, gourds) can be sown indoors and set out a month later after frost danger passes, or direct-seeded after mid-month.

DIRECT-SOW BEANS at mid-month and beyond; sow a short row every two weeks, and also sow pole beans for an even later crop.

WAIT UNTIL MONTH'S END, when the weather is settled, to sow summer and winter squash, cucumbers, melons, or start indoors at the first of month and set out at end.

WHEN SHOPPING FOR SEEDLINGS of tomatoes (or really anything), pick stocky young plants about 4 inches high and wide—bigger isn't better.

WITH FLOWER SEEDLINGS in 6-packs, I like to "buy green," as in not worrying if I'm buying annuals that aren't flowering madly in their tiny cells. Younger, fresher plants are best, and often less stressed. They will catch up.

Our first and last freeze/frost dates for Washington Township, New Jersey.

Each winter, on average, our risk of frost is from **October 7 through May 5.**

Almost certainly, however, **we will** receive frost from October 21 through April 23.

We are almost guaranteed that we **will not** get frost from May 18 through September 23.

Our frost-free growing season is around 155 days.

Events:

April 24th - 7:00PM Our first Gardener Orientation Meeting.

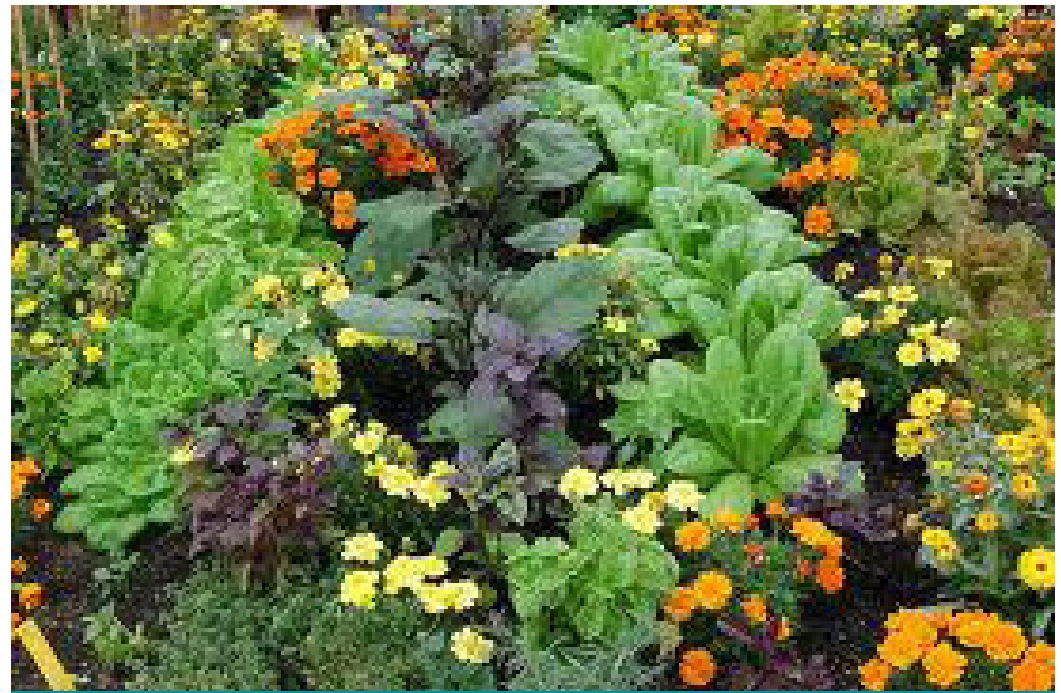
April 27th - All Day Gardener Work Day. Select one of two shifts and email Diane Muenzen your preference ASAP if you haven't done already. This is a great day to take part in seeing the garden come together with frames being built and filled with compost.

April 29th - 7:00PM Our second choice of Gardener Orientation Days for those that could not attend the previous meeting on April 24th.

May 1st - Our Opening Day. Keeping in mind that it is mid-week and we may not be completely done building the beds. Those plots that are finished may now be worked in.

A Beginner's Guide to Organic Gardening

Gardening is not too complex. Almost all of us—probably in grade school—planted a seed in a cup of dirt, watered it, and watched it grow. But creating a garden that produces fresh food and flowers all season is not so elementary, especially to those who did not grow up



Why use companion planting?

Planting good companions increases health & production in your organic garden.

Companion Planting for a Productive Garden

When you use companion planting in your garden, you are encouraging two or more plants to work together for some kind of benefit, such as controlling pests,



gardening. So Organic Gardening Magazine compiled a guide to the basics of organic gardening and the keys to success they've learned over the years.

You can find the guide at www.organicgardening.com in the Learn & Grow section.

resistance to diseases, or higher yields. Sometimes you can have "bad companions" in your garden. Some plants can have adverse effects on other plants and must be grown apart from one another. Companions use garden space efficiently. You can have two plants in one patch by planting a ground covering vining plant with an upright growing plant. Companions

prevent pest problems. Plants like onions act as a repellent for some pests. Other plants can be used to lure pests away from desirable plants. Companions help each other grow. Tall plants can provide shade for smaller sun sensitive plants. Companions attract beneficial insects. All gardens need plants that attract beneficial insects to control pests. - contributed by Melanie Bitecola

A comprehensive chart of companion & antagonistic vegetables can be found at www.gardensimply.com in Organic Gardening Methods.