

Manhattan Community Gardens

Past newsletters are available on: <http://www.k-state.edu/ufm/gardennews.htm>

It's Fall Clean Up - Saturday, Nov. 1st

- *Clean Up of the Commons Area, 8am - 11:30am*
- *Returning Gardener Sign Up, 8am - 11am*
- *Potluck Lunch 11:30am*
- *Annual Garden Board Election and Meeting - Noon*
- *Burn Piles Permitted - After Board Meeting, about 12:30pm*

The Annual MCG Fall Clean Up is scheduled for Saturday morning, Nov. 1st from 8am to 11:30am. All gardeners are invited to join us for some scheduled workday projects to improve the commons area of the Community Garden. Please meet at the large shed where work crews will be assigned. This is a good opportunity to meet your fellow gardeners and the Garden Board Members.

Help: Wheelbarrows are needed on clean up day. We have volunteers who will spread woodchips on our paths – but we need more wheelbarrows to transport the woodchips.

Returning Gardener Sign Up - 8am to 11am

Sign up will be in the large shed at the Community Garden for returning gardeners. Payment will be required, so bring your checkbook. You will also be required to sign up for mowing and for two scheduled board designated activities in 2009; so bring your calendar or you will NOT be allowed to sign up. This is a change to the garden rules – refer to the Sept/Oct newsletter for more information. The board designated activities will occur each month between March and November, and it's first come – first sign up. Come early for more choices. The two remaining opportunities to sign up for 2009 plots are on Dec. 3rd & Jan. 7th.

"Hobo Soup" Potluck Lunch – 11:30am

Bring a side dish, or something from your garden to add to the vegetable stew. Tableware will be provided.

Election & Annual Board Meeting - Noon

Elect three new board members.

Burn Piles Allowed – after 12:30pm

After all the days events are over, if weather permits, individuals may have burn piles, but they must NOT be left unattended, and must be doused with water when finished.

Rain Date

In the event of rain, we will postpone the Clean Up day and all events to the following Saturday, Nov. 8th.



A Message from the Soon to be Former President

I and two other Garden Board members Stoner Smith and Brad Debey will complete our three-year terms in December of 2008. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Stoner and Brad for their participation on the Garden Board. I know they will both welcome the time to rest and be ordinary gardeners once again – but your efforts and hard work to help keep the garden operating have been very welcome by me as President, and I suspect by many other gardeners as well.



Stoner as Chair of the Equipment Maintenance committee has almost single-handedly kept our equipment running for the past three years. I know he has had to make the same repairs over and over again on the lawn mowers and roto tillers, frequently due to equipment being used by gardeners with less experience than they should have, or the equipment being used inappropriately. Throughout the frustration and hard work...Stoner has never given up. I suspect he has saved the community garden a lot of money over the years; if you see him gardening take the opportunity to tell him how much you appreciate his fortitude in keeping the equipment running.

Brad has the unpopular job of being the Chair of Rules and Safety. He has probably walked the paths of the community garden more than anyone else – with the exception of his predecessors. His job is to look for gardens that have been abandoned or not had enough attention and are currently or will soon have a negative impact on the neighboring gardens. This can happen in multiple ways – through unexpected family or work situations that reduce a gardeners time in their garden, lack of gardening experience and knowledge, or dare-I-say a philosophy – where the gardener does not think or care about how their gardening practices affect their neighbors. Brad's job is to find these gardens through regular walks through all areas of the MCG, and to send letters to offending gardeners to inform them of the problem, offer solutions and give them a time limit to respond or risk losing their plot(s). This does not make Brad a popular guy if you receive one of his letters, but if you're the garden neighbor to one of these plots – he is your hero. So when you see Brad next, be sure to thank him for helping keep someone else's weeds from crossing into your garden.

I as Co-Chair of the Education and Newsletter committee have had the pleasure of being the editor, of this bi-monthly newsletter for the past three years. I have really enjoyed the opportunity to find and present information to help you be a successful community gardener, but this is my last issue. I was asked if I would continue to edit the newsletter, even while off the board and my answer is NO for two reasons. First I really need to concentrate on finishing my Master of Horticulture degree at K-State. Second, I strongly believe that other gardeners should "step-up-to-the-plate" and help move the community garden in a positive direction through their input. This is after all a community garden, and its function is to utilize the many diverse resources of its gardeners in order to maximize everyone's potential to grow a variety of fresh, healthy fruits and vegetables at a low cost. I will also miss my role as President, which has allowed me to help guide and facilitate the conversations of a really terrific group of people that comprise the Garden Board - who share a goal to make the Manhattan Community Gardens run more efficiently and effectively.



➔ *Patty Zehl, President Manhattan Community Gardens*

Changes to Garden Rules

In addition to the new rules identified in the Sept/Oct. 2008 newsletter, the following changes were made:

Added Rule:

#7 **PLOT TRANSFER:** A plot cannot be transferred to another gardener without said gardener going through the registration process.

Modified Rule:

#2 **PLOT LIMITS, SIGN-UP, AND RULES VIOLATIONS:**

1st change to #2: Returning gardeners who did not receive more than two written notices of violation of rules during the previous year are allowed a maximum of **four plots** of plot space. (*note: formerly the maximum was 2500 square feet – the Garden Board voted to allow current gardeners with more than four plots to be “grandfathered in” and are allowed to keep all their plots.*)

2nd change to #2: Any plot not **maintained** by June 1 (or two weeks after rent date for those plots rented after June 1) will revert to the MCG and gardener of said plot will lose plot deposit and rental fee. (*note: original rule said “Any plot not **planted** by June 1”.*)

→ Receive a complete set of rules when you sign up for 2009 garden plots

Will you be a Returning Gardener for 2009?

If the answer is yes, please join us on Nov. 1st for our first garden sign up. If the answer is no, contact Susan Peterson, Chairperson of Records as soon as possible to release your plot and have your garden deposit returned. Remember, your garden must be cleaned and free of structures and crop residue by Dec. 1st to receive your deposit refund.

What are Board Designated Activities?

In the last newsletter I identified a new MCG rule: *All gardeners are required to participate in a minimum of two board-designated activities. All persons must take their turn or they **WILL** lose their right to garden the next season.* In the past when you registered for your garden plot you also signed up for a committee to help with. Unfortunately, that is all a lot of people did – sign up. The new rule requires everyone who chooses to garden at the MCG to actually participate in two activities each garden season.

Nov. 1st is the first opportunity for you to sign up for 2009. There will be sign up sheets for “board designated activities,” and you will need to sign up for two activities. Examples of activities include:

- Nine different workdays, from March to November. Each workday is for two hours, 8-10am or 9-11am, depending on the time of year. Each workday is on the first Saturday of the month, with the following Saturday as the rain day. Board members will determine what needs to be done, and one board member will lead the workday.
- Five different garden socials. This may include purchasing food, cooking food, setting up the social at the MCG, decorating or cleanup
- Roto tilling opportunities.
- Garden Show representatives at the Feb. Garden Show.
- Other miscellaneous opportunities to be defined later.

You will have to make the decision about what you will participate in beginning with the Nov. 1st sign up. Attendance will be taken at each of these activities. You are required to fulfill these obligations if you want to garden in the 2010 season. I will be available during garden sign up on Nov. 1st if you have any questions.

→ *Patty Zehl, President Manhattan Community Gardens*



Gifts from the Garden

When many of us hear the phrase “gifts from the garden” we think of vegetables, fruits, flowers and etc....During this holiday time of year my thinking of the term “gifts from the garden” takes on a whole different meaning. Many low cost, low time, low effort, but beautiful quality gifts can be made using materials that we have grown ourselves. Here are just a couple of ideas....

The flowers in our gardens are very lovely to look at. There are usually an abundance of them in late summer. Instead of them just senescing away, when they are at the peak of their splendor thin them out a little by picking part of them. Lay the flower bloom (cut the stem off) face down between two pieces of paper and place a mid to large size book (or weighted item) on them. If you have a huge abundance of flowers, they can be pressed in several layers by placing a piece of cardboard between each newspaper/flower layer. Pressed flowers can be used to decorate any number of things. They make wonderful greeting cards or bookmarks when placed on paper. They can be used to decorate plain inexpensive picture frames, cardboard or wooden boxes, gift bags, or about anything that your creativity can think of. I have even seen a collage, inside of a glass frame (shadow box) that was just wonderful. One point to remember when working with pressed flowers is that they are fragile, so if giving them for a gift where they are exposed, especially if you think that they may be moved around a lot, it is wise to cover, say a bookmark, with clear contact paper, or a box or frame can be sprayed with *mod podge* or sealer of some kind. Flowers are hugely versatile and there are many wonderful other gifts/craft ideas that I know of using, but there is not room in this article for all of them.

Besides flowers, other crops can be useful for gift giving. Fill a plain cardboard box decorated as mentioned above, with teas, or cooking herb blends, made straight from your garden. It is a gift that is pretty, useful and made with love and thought. I received a wreath from a family member from the southwest once that was completely made of dried chili peppers strung together and topped with a bow. It was adorable. If you have an abundance of apples slices, sprinkle them with cinnamon, lay them out to dry and in a few days you can make garlands, wreaths or all sorts of things. This year, the Okra that I let stay on the stem too long and was too tough to eat I dried to use for crafts at a later time. The spines on the okra split, giving it white stripes and an extremely unique appearance. It will be a great addition to a project at a later date. There are so many ideas for making gifts or project with garden materials. Look through magazines, check out books at the library, go to Google, just use your imagination and the skies the limit.

The ultimate message I am trying to relay in this article is to use everything you can from your garden. If something isn't edible (like my okra) look at it from another point of view, maybe there is something else you could do with it (ex: could it make paper, or a decoration). Nature is beautiful during the summer when everything is growing. Take just a couple of minutes and harvest some of that beauty and preserve it and you will have it, not only for you but also to share year round.

→ *Jean Squires, Manhattan Community Gardener*

Valuable Information from Past MCG Newsletters

Manhattan Community Garden newsletters from 2006 thru 2008 are available online by visiting the “community garden” section of the UFM website at www.tryufm.org



The following are articles that are pertinent to what is happening in your garden right now. If you do not have access to the Internet, but want copies of these articles, contact board member Patty Zehl.

Nov, Dec, Jan 2006 & 2007 Issues:

- Catalog lists
- Leaf recycling
- Cold sensitivity of vegetables
- Indoor seed starting
- Soil Testing
- Switching to organic

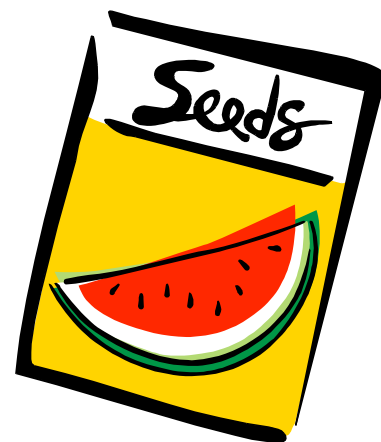
Where is the Best Place to Get Vegetable Seeds?

This is a question that I'm frequently asked. Fortunately, our seed laws in Kansas and all other states prevent seeds from being offered for sale that will not have an acceptable germination rate or be filled with any harmful weed seeds or other crops. Therefore, you really can't get 'bad seed'.

Seed packets that you can get from racks in many retail locations are more expensive since you have to pay for the colorful pictures and extra seed that is not sold in the rack at the end of the season. Seed from 'mail or internet' order sources come in 'plain-brown-wrapper' containers so you will get more seed for your money. However, you will have to pay for shipping/handling so getting a larger order is usually less expensive than a small purchase. Also, seed gets less expensive in larger quantities. There is not a common definition of 'a packet' other than it is a small amount of seed in an envelope. Some seed companies offer larger quantities of seed in fractions of an ounce (or pound for larger seed) and some offer seed by quantity (100 or 1000 seed). There are several standard charts that most seed companies provide in their catalogs or on-line sites that describe seed counts by weight for most common vegetables.

A few companies that I have dealt with in the past that have a good on-line catalog and have provided good service include the following (in no particular order)

- www.harrisseeds.com
- www.stokeseeds.com
- www.parkseed.com
- www.johnnysseeds.com (has an organic catalog too)
- www.organicseed.com (organic seed from Park Seed)
- www.ruppseeds.com (no on-line catalog but you can request a catalog)



If you are interested in saving some money you might check with some of your neighboring gardeners about pooling an order for seeds and splitting a larger quantity or sharing the shipping/handling costs. Planning for next year can make some of those long winter nights a little shorter.....

→ *Chuck Marr, K-State Professor (Emeritus) of Vegetable Crops and Manhattan Community Gardener*

2008 MCG Board Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Committee</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
Patty Zehl, President	Newsletter & Education	537-8306	pzehl@ksu.edu
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Bruce McCallum	Grounds Maintenance & Tilling	539-1016	brucemacks@yahoo.com
Stoner Smith	Equipment Maintenance	539-3821	sbsinks@aol.com

(Please do not call MCG Board Members after 9pm)

The Garden

For the garden of your daily living,
Plant three rows of peas:
Peace of mind, peace of heart and peace of soul.

Plant four rows of squash:
Squash gossip, squash indifference, squash grumbling and
squash selfishness.

Plant four rows of lettuce:
Lettuce be faithful, lettuce be kind, lettuce be happy, lettuce
really love one another.

No garden should be without turnips:
Turnip for service when needed, turnip to help one another,
turnip the music and dance.

To conclude our garden we must have thyme:
Thyme for fun, thyme for rest, thyme for others, thyme for
ourselves.

Water freely with patience and cultivate with love.
Your garden is abundant because you reap what you sow.

→ *Author Unknown*

Favorite Variety this Season:

Incredible Sweet Corn

New Crop this Season:

Russian Kale

Picked like leaf lettuce, cooked like
spinach, at least three pickings this
fall – was delicious!

→ Gardener Donn Leach



How Low Can You Go?

Well, the gardening season is about to end but when that end will come has a lot of variations. Most warm-season (tender) crops will be injured when temperatures drop to just below the freezing point 32 F. Cool season crops can withstand lower temperatures depending on the crop. Leafy greens can usually withstand temperatures in the 27-28 range while cabbage, broccoli, and cauliflower can withstand temperatures in the 23-24 range. If they are properly conditioned, some plants will not be injured by temperatures slightly below 20 F. When this will happen is something of a guess but we do know some things based on historical weather patterns as to what the chance of a freeze may be on any given date (for Manhattan, KS).

Average (50%) chance of a freeze (32 F) in autumn - October 15

60% chance	October 17
70% chance	October 20
80% chance	October 24
90% chance	October 29
95% chance	Nov 2

Average (50%) chance of a freeze below 20F in autumn - November 15

60% chance	Nov 18
70% chance	Nov 21
80% chance	Nov 25
90% chance	Nov 30
95% chance	Dec 4

So, as you can see, it may be possible that you could still be harvesting some things as late as early December in some years from your community garden. What we don't know is exactly what may happen in any given year other than knowing what the statistical probability.

→ *Chuck Marr, K-State Professor (Emeritus) of Vegetable Crops and Manhattan Community Gardener*

Shelter Structures to Prolong Gardening

Among the items to add to the list of "everything that's old is new again" are the various types of season-extending shelters for plants. These include cold frames, cloches, water-filled plastic cylinders, tunnels, and garden fabric. In gardening manuals from a hundred years ago, cold frames and cloches were gardening staples for starting seedlings and cool-season crops, growing vegetables longer into the fall, overwintering tender plants, and propagating woody plants. Twenty years ago, you hardly ever saw any of these. Open a garden supply catalog now or do a Web search, and you're confronted with dozens of choices. This article will include information on cold frames and tunnels.

Homemade Cold Frames

Cold frames are basically mini-greenhouses that sit low to the ground. For most of their history, they were most often made with wood walls and a glass top. With modern materials, we're no longer limited to wood and glass, although these are still among the cheapest and easiest materials to use. Packrats and scroungers will have the materials already on hand -- scrap lumber and a discarded window sash. Others can head to their local lumber supply store. If growing food crops, don't use pressure-treated wood. "Average" dimensions are 3 feet wide, 4 to 6 feet long, 12 inches high in the front, 18 inches high in the back, with sloping sides to better catch the sunlight. The best location for a cold frame is somewhere sheltered from the wind but with a southern exposure. By hinging the window, it can be easily propped open on warm days. You can also purchase thermostatically controlled arms that open the top when the temperature inside reaches a specified level. Because of the heat buildup in a cold frame, plants will dry out more quickly than they do in the garden, so it's important to keep an eye on soil moisture. By adding a heating cable to the box, you have what's known as a hot bed.



Purchased Cold Frames

Purchased cold frames often have metal or PVC frames with plastic or double-walled polycarbonate walls or cover. They are available in a wide range of shapes and sizes, but most have a rounded or A-frame top. Taller models, sometimes up to 3 feet in height, allow you to grow larger plants. Many purchased cold frames are light in weight, so they must be firmly anchored to keep them from blowing away in a strong wind. The advantage to being lightweight is that they can be readily moved to various parts of the garden as needed.



Tunnels

A variation on cold frames is to put plastic or garden fabric (a white, semi-opaque material that resembles the interfacing used in clothing) on hoops over raised beds or wide garden rows. Hoop supports can be purchased or made with flexible PVC pipe put over 18-inch lengths of rebar sunk in the ground. These tunnels can be as long as reasonable, but are usually 2 to 4 feet wide. The ends are opened and closed as needed for air circulation and to maintain desired temperature. Be sure to anchor the sides with earth staples or rocks.

→ Source: Maggie Oster, *National Gardening Association*

For complete story visit: <http://www.garden.org/regional/report/arch/inmygarden/560>

Articles written by Patty Zehl, unless otherwise noted.

Please send any suggestions for 2009 article ideas to Chuck Marr: cmarr@ksu.edu

Why You Should Encourage Kids to Garden

As you begin to plan next seasons garden, consider getting your children interested and involved in gardening. Research at St. Louis University indicated that children ate more fruits and vegetables if they help to grow and harvest them. According to Debra Haire-Joshu, Ph.D., director of Saint Louis University's Obesity Prevention Center, "When children are involved with growing and cooking food, it improves their diet. Kids eat healthier and they know more about eating healthy. It's a winning low-cost strategy to improve the nutrition of our children at a time when childhood obesity is an epidemic problem."

If a child's first experience with gardening is fun and successful, the chances are that they will develop a green thumb, a reward that will stay with them for the rest of their lives.



Tips for Gardening with Kids

- Start small and let kids choose what to plant. Offer guidance and make sure there are some sure-success plants among their picks.
- Relax your standards. Crooked rows and a few weeds are fine.
- Transplanting is fun, even if your child plays with plants the way they move their toys around. Just remind them that plant's roots need some time to grow in one place.
- Leave room for good old-fashioned digging. Holes are a highly popular landscape feature. Look for worms. Add water, and frogs appear.
- Let kids express themselves by coloring signs and decorating the garden in their own personal way. Action figures in the garden are okay.
- Do behind-the-scenes maintenance of kids' gardens, keeping them edged and weeded. Don't expect kids to do all the watering and pest patrol.
- You decide: when it comes to impending doom (no pumpkins appeared on vines; the daisy is uprooted and sunning on the deck) do you add a pumpkin from the farm stand? Replace the daisy? Some parents use loss as a lesson; others smooth things over for success.
- Include a fun structure - perhaps a sunflower house or bean tepee - to provide a seasonal hideout and playhouse.
- Remember: One of the best things you ever grow may be a gardener.

➔ *Source: <http://www.kidsgardening.org>*

Wanted: Gardeners to Teach Kids to Garden

Volunteers are needed to help connect children to nature, increase their fruit and vegetable consumption and physical activity by "turning" them on to gardening. K-State's projectPLANTS is looking for people who love to garden that can commit to at least one day a week as club assistants, from 3:30-5:00pm during the 2008 fall school term. After-school garden clubs at four schools are held twice a week, Monday and Wednesday, or Tuesday and Thursday. Club assistants supervise 4-6 kids, helping the children to complete the garden activities demonstrated by the club leader. There are also many other volunteer opportunities available for people who cannot commit to this time frame. Please consider this fun and easy opportunity to be a healthy role model for children.

➔ *Contact projectPLANTS Program Manager, Patty Zehl 785-532-3193*

pzehl@ksu.edu

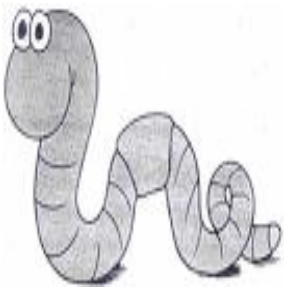
Help Your Kids Learn to Love Their Veggies!

Making sure that kids eat enough veggies and fruit is easier than you may think! Most kids under 12-years-old should eat between 2-5 cups of fruits and vegetables every day. Here are a few tips to help your family enjoy balanced meals and show your kids that veggies can be fun to eat:



- **Take an Adventure** – Explore veggie varieties from other regions around the world, and discover the taste and nutritional value they have to offer. Once a week, create a family dinner themed around a new country; feature a dish made with veggies native to that region.
- **Go for a Dip** – Pair favorite veggies with a cup of low-fat ranch dressing, hummus or peanut butter for a quick and tasty treat.
- **Veg-Out Sandwiches** – Enhance deli sandwiches with veggies, such as avocado and tomato slices, red onions, Romaine lettuce, and roasted red peppers. Toss finely chopped sweet pickles, celery, green onions, fresh herbs or grapes into a tuna or chicken salad and serve on a whole wheat English muffin.
- **Play With Your Food** – Make veggie-eating a game. Spread a whole-wheat bagel half with low-fat cream cheese and let kids create their own fun faces with pre-cut veggie pieces that resemble eyes, noses and mouths.
- **Veggies on a Stick** – Grill up delicious veggie kabobs. Give kids chopped-up chunks of assorted veggies, such as summer squash, red onions, mushrooms, asparagus and green peppers, add their favorite seasonings and allow them to create a customized veggie creation.

→ Source: <http://www.loveyourveggiesgrants.org/>



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Rot

Yes rot – the fourth component in the hierarchy of integrated waste management. Rot refers to recycling food waste and other organic materials through composting or vermicomposting. The process of using Red Wiggler worms (“vermi” is Latin for “worm”) to process organic food waste into nutrient-rich soil is called vermicomposting. Worms eat decaying food waste and produce worm poop - or “castings” for the squeamish. Castings are a very effective soil amendment; full of beneficial microbes and nutrients, and a great plant fertilizer – your plants will love it.

Worm bins, or V-bins can be made from plastic covered tubs (about 2-foot by 2-foot) by drilling air holes in the top, bottom and sides. Shredded newspaper is the best bedding material; it is readily available, provides excellent moisture retention, and preparation is simple and fun for children. Moist bedding provides the medium that worms need to survive. Gradually mix water, one-cup of garden soil, and crushed eggshell with the shredded paper. The bedding should be damp - about as wet as a wrung out sponge, and packed loosely.

The normal start up for a vermicomposting bin is with one-pound of worms. Red Wigglers will eat ½ their weight every day – that equals ½ pound of vegetable waste per day that does not need to go to the landfill! Add worms to the top of the bedding, leave the top off the container for an hour or so. Worms do best at temperatures between 55-77 degrees Fahrenheit, but will tolerate a wider range; basements are ideal locations.

Worms are not picky eaters; but do not feed meat or dairy, animal manure or heavily salted or spicy foods, and use citrus sparingly. Start with small bits of food until the worm population increases. Do not overload the system. Overfeeding can lead to odor problems.

What are you waiting for? It’s easy for you and your children to start a V-bin, and it’s just as easy to maintain. Save the planet and have fun!

Manhattan Community
Gardens c/o UFM
1221 Thurston Street
Manhattan, KS 66502

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- Information from past newsletters
- Best place to get vegetable seeds



- How low can you go?
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