

Manhattan Community Gardens

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

A Message from the President

As this gardening season is coming to an end, your Garden Board is already working hard to make the 2009 season a success. An important role of board members includes identifying problems that exist in the MCG and through discussion during board meetings coming up with solutions. The information presented on page three of this newsletter will articulate some of the rule changes made to solve some of the problems which have plagued the MCG, for the three years I have been a board member – and longer according to conversations I have had with former board members.

I want to take this moment to thank my fellow nine board members for having the courage to resolve the issues related to gardener sign up and committee participation. It has been suggested, we will not win any popularity contests with these changes and that we may lose some gardeners. I believe we have made these changes with the best of intentions, to help improve the functioning of the community garden for everyone's benefit.

Anyone unhappy with our changes will have the option to release their garden plot(s) – but they may also just give this a chance and see what happens. All gardeners are encouraged to attend board meetings to voice their opinions or to join the 2009 Garden Board and make future policy decisions.

→ *Patty Zehl, President Manhattan Community Gardens*

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 by Oct. 15, 2008 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.



“Hobo” Potluck – Last Social of 2008

Our Fall Clean up day and traditional fall potluck will occur at 11:30am on Saturday, Nov. 1, 2008. By request from our President, this will be a Hobo stew affair. There will be a stockpot ready for any type of vegetable you want to place in the pot. Everyone is also encouraged to bring a favorite dish to share. There will be a prize for the best “hobo” hat displayed and worn during the potluck. Let's work hard and eat well.

→ *Lynda Bachelor, Garden Social / Crop Walk Chairperson*

Fall Clean Up – Nov. 1st

Don't miss this event! New this year will be the opportunity for returning gardeners to sign up for the 2009 season, between 8-11am at the garden shed. Payment will be required, so bring your checkbook. In addition to the sign up, read on about the rest of the days events - the clean up, potluck, board meeting, election and burn pile rules.

Fall clean up is from 8-11:30am. Join Garden Board members for a variety of projects to help get the community areas and unused gardens ready for the winter. We encourage all that participate to meet at the shed at 8am, to find out what projects you can help with. This is a day we really need your help.

Potluck lunch begins at 11:30am at the large garden shed. Please bring anything you want to add to the vegetable stew we are making on site, and bring another side dish. We will supply all the tableware, and you should bring a chair, or you can sit on the grass. This is a great opportunity to meet fellow gardeners and share the harvest from our gardens.



There is always a HUGE amount of great food to enjoy, so come even if you can't bring food!

Annual election and garden board meeting begins at noon near the shed. All gardeners are welcome to attend. If you have issues, concerns or questions then please join us at the meeting. Three new Garden Board members will be elected at this meeting, by a vote of all in attendance.



Burn piles allowed, AFTER the above daily events have ended. Burning of garden refuse can start at approximately 12:30pm if weather conditions are appropriate. Gardeners can have their own burn piles, or join with other gardeners and combine their refuse in a larger burn pile. If you have a burn pile, you will be responsible for setting the fire and **you must stay on site** until the fire is out. It's highly recommended that you dowse any embers with water when the fire has burned down. Do not under any circumstances leave unattended fires.

→ **Do not start any fires until after the sign-up, clean up, potluck and meeting have ended.**

Note: In the event of rain, all events will be held the following Saturday, Nov. 8th

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 would like copies of these articles, contact board member Patty Zehl.



Sept, Oct & Nov 2006 & 2007 Issues:

- "Curing" sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, squash and pumpkins
- Direct application of organic materials
- Edible landscape resource guide
- Cover crops
- Gardening Internet websites

Garden Sign Ups

The Garden Board has made several changes to the garden rules pertaining to plot rentals to make the sign up process more efficient. Some changes are discussed here, and the rest will be in the next newsletter.

An important change is that returning gardeners **MUST** sign up during the official “returning gardener” sign up dates, or they **WILL** forfeit their rights to renting their plots. To make the opportunity to sign up easier, we have made several changes. We have increased the sign up dates from two to three, and we have increased the amount of time between the first and the last sign up.

Former rules said the gardener “may” forfeit their rights, and this has been changed to “will” forfeit their rights. This change was made due to problems encountered during past sign ups, but in particular the 2008 garden sign up period. Despite our efforts to encourage returning gardeners to sign up prior to “new gardener” sign up, we had a number that did not. This resulted in new gardeners coming to the first sign up opportunity, and we were unable to identify all the plots available.

Let me be very clear about this. As a returning gardener, you **MUST** sign up on or before Jan. 7, 2009. Whether this is your 2nd year or 25th year gardening, we will assume you have chosen to give up your plot(s) if you have not signed up on or before Jan. 7, 2009. If for some reason you cannot attend any of these three meetings, you **MUST** contact Susan Peterson, Records Chairperson – and fill out the 2009 forms and pay in full by the Jan. 7, 2009 sign up date or you **WILL** forfeit your plots.

Returning Gardener Sign Ups:

- Nov. 1st, 8am-11am in large shed at the community garden (During Fall Clean Up)
- Dec. 3rd, 7-8pm at UFM
- Jan. 7th, 7-8pm at UFM

New Gardener Sign Ups:

- Feb. 4th, 7pm at UFM
- Feb. 14th, 10am at UFM
- Mar. 28th, 9am at the community garden if plots are available (During Spring Clean Up)

New Garden Rules

Our community garden takes a lot of work to run well, and all gardeners are expected to participate. Everyone in the past was required to take a turn mowing the communal area and to sign up for and volunteer in a

committee as a prerequisite for their right to have a garden at the MCG. We have had very poor participation in committees and at our two yearly clean ups for the past few years; and according to former board members this has been a continual problem.

The MCG plot rental fees are kept very low, and all maintenance activities, as in most community gardens are the responsibility of the gardeners. The lack of “community participation” in the MCG has been discussed by the Garden Board many times; and to encourage a shift from a group of individual gardeners to a group of community gardeners - the current Garden Board is changing one of the rules for the 2009 garden season: *“All gardeners who are physically able will mow the common areas. All gardeners having two or more plots must sign up to mow twice. 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.”*

“Board-designated” activities may consist of a variety of activities – but primarily work days (with jobs for different skill levels and physical capabilities), which will be scheduled on the first Saturday of each month from March to November, and will cover two hours in the morning. During garden sign up, each gardener **MUST** sign up for two of these work days, in addition to their mowing date(s) – so bring your calendars.

Attendance will be taken at each work day, or board-designated activity. All attempts will be made by Board Members to accommodate schedule conflicts; but if you have not fulfilled your two work days by November of 2009, you **will not** be allowed to sign up for garden space in 2010.

→ If you have questions about any of these changes, please contact me - Patty Zehl, President MCG

Preserve your Garden's Bounty and Reduce your Carbon Footprint



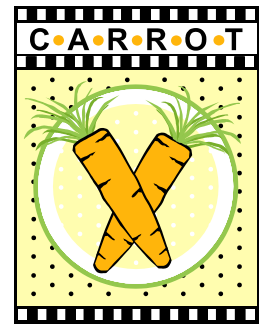
There is still time to try a little canning, drying or freezing of vegetables from your garden. Come this January, not only will the Earth thank you, but so will your taste buds. Eating food grown locally – from your garden - reduces transport-related carbon dioxide emissions. And by preserving food from your garden you also reduce energy inputs from processing and packaging.

An additional bonus is you will have a connection to your food. Each time you enjoy frozen strawberries this winter; remember the perfect warm morning you picked them from your garden. Growing your own food allows you to enjoy the flavor and savor the memory.

For information on how to preserve your garden's bounty visit the *National Center for Home Food Preservation* at: <http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/index.html>

Seeds Left Over?

We all know that seeds are getting more expensive. You can save a lot of money, however, by purchasing larger quantities of seed rather than the small seed packets in local garden centers or retail stores. The reason for that is that you pay for the expensive colored picture and printing and all of the unsold seed packets in the rack. It cost just about as much to package and deliver a 1-ounce quantity of seed than a small seed packet. Usually, there is no color picture - only a name and variety description. What often happens, however, is that you will have a lot more seed than you need for a single season planting. In fact, you may have enough for 3-4 years worth of gardening.



The ability of seed to be saved from year to year depends on the way that you go about storing and handling it. Seed needs to be stored in a cool, dry location. This is usually best done in a dark corner of your basement or storage area. If dampness may be a problem, put the seed in a coffee can or plastic storage container (with a snap on lid) to keep it dry. Most seed can be held for 3-4 years with minimal loss of germination. The types of seed that loses germination rapidly include onions (which we usually don't purchase as seed) and the carrot family including carrots, parsnips, dill, or parsley. These seed should be used in 2 years for sure.

So, get wise about purchasing garden seed and store them properly during the winter months. You should be able to get several years use out of seed and save a lot of money in the process.

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

“Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit, wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad”

Anonymous



Articles written by Patty Zehl, unless otherwise noted. Please send any suggestions for future article ideas to:
pzehl@ksu.edu



How to Use the Community Compost Bins

Many people have been contributing to the compost bins that are located in three different locations: the north garden, by the tool shed, and off 8th Street. To speed up the composting process and to ensure maximum efficiency of the compost bins - signs will be posted this weekend that will give information about what to add and what not to add to the compost piles and which bin to put raw materials in. Here are the basic

rules for making and maintaining a compost bin using three chambers, taken from The Garden Helper Website at www.thegardenhelper.com/compost

1. Begin your pile with a base of three to four inches of straw or twiggy material on the bottom for good air circulation.
2. Add alternating three to four inch layers of wet green material and dry brown material.
3. The green matter should consist of a mix of grass clippings and garden waste.
4. The brown matter should consist of a mix of dry leaves, straw, or shredded newspaper (*no colored ink or glossy paper though*).
5. Uncooked fruit and vegetables may be added to the green layers, but should be covered with a layer of soil before the next brown layer, to prevent odors and flies.
6. Don't let your compost pile dry out.

DO NOT COMPOST meat, fish, bones, dairy products, fats or oils, pet waste, diseased plant materials, and hardy weeds such as the goose grass - which is very difficult to control.

The first bin will be for all new additions of plant material only, layered as described above. After a period of time in the first bin (ideally 3-5 days) the pile will be ready to turn into the second bin where it will finish and a new pile can be started in the first bin. How long it takes for the material in the second bin takes to finish depends on how often it is turned. Only finished compost will be in the third bin, ready to use.

→ *Jenny Guilford, Compost Committee Chairperson*

Mowing Schedule:

Gardeners are responsible for mowing the grass/weeds in the commons areas of the gardens ONE TIME during the scheduled period. If for some reason you are not able to mow during your scheduled time, you will need to switch with someone else or ask a garden neighbor if they would be willing to do it for you. **If you are confused about where your area is, check out the map located in the glass case on the front of the large shed.** If you have questions about the mower, call the Equipment Maintenance Chairperson – Stoner Smith.



<u>WEEK OF:</u>	<u>Southeast</u>	<u>Southwest</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>
Sept 7 – 13	Sharon Davis	Jeff Lord	Francis Begnoche	Leroy Brooks
Sept 14 – 20	Elena Boyko	George Brandsberg	Francis Begnoche	Kathleen Tanona
Sept 21 – 27	Elena Boyko	Leon Lyles	Teresa Minton	John Stites
Sept 28 – Oct 4	Jack Rader	Leon Lyles	Jackie MacDonald	Barbara Ferguson
Oct 5 – 11	Max Urick	Jerry Vestweber	Aaron Yoder	Belinda Hunter
Oct 12 – 18	Max Urick	Jerry Vestweber	Lani Meyer	Barbara Ferguson

REMINDER: All gardeners who are not on the Board of Directors are required to mow a commons area. Gardeners with one plot mow one time; gardeners with multiple plots must mow at least twice during the season. Gardeners who did not sign up for mowing (or not enough mowing times) at registration have been placed in the schedule where there was an empty slot.

The Importance of Fall Tillage

I've written about fall tillage before and emphasized it in the weekly electronic Community Garden newsletter. Let me summarize the importance of fall tillage in your garden management system.

Chopping and shredding garden residue allows you to till and incorporate plant residue that will 'compost in place' (including all the tops and roots of your garden plants) during the winter months.

You can certainly supplement that with additions of organic materials that you may add to the soil. Loosely tilled soil absorbs water readily

so you can 'soak up' some water for early spring planting. Fall is a good time to incorporate fertilizer if you choose to use bagged fertilizer. Finally, your garden will be ready to lightly till in the spring-enabling your early spring garden to be planted sooner. The one disadvantage of fall tillage in some areas is the tendency for soil erosion during the winter. However, in the flat, protected location of the community garden plots, that is not a big concern.



Make sure that your garden residue is finely chopped or shredded. It is difficult to till in fresh residue without it 'balling up' around tiller tines. This reduces the effectiveness of your tilling and makes for a difficult mess to clean garden residue wrapped around the tiller tines. If you choose to add supplemental organic materials, add only 2-3 inches at a time. In about 2 weeks you can add another 2-3 inches and till it in then repeat that process until the soil freezes (usually early to mid December).

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



Help the Gardens Help Themselves – CROP Walk Oct. 5th

Each year Church World Services help churches mobilize and educate communities about local and global hunger.

The Manhattan Community Gardens and the Flint Hills Breadbasket are the local recipients of this annual fundraiser. Even though we are a recipient, the MCG have also tried to solicit contributions since we support hunger issues in our community.

There are many ways you can participate in this year's CROP Walk:

- 1) Start a walking Team – get a team packet, collect monies and walk on Sunday, Oct. 5th
- 2) Donate funds directly to CROP Walk committee chair (me)
- 3) Donate funds on line (see link below)

http://www.cropwalkonline.org/site/TR/CropWalks/General?pg=entry&fr_id=1403&JServSessionIda012=ngrzv8zdo1.app33c

Last year the CROP Walk committee received \$100 in donations and the MCG received over \$900 from community efforts. If you would like to contribute to our CROP Walk efforts, please contact me at 785-539-9508 or email me: lbachelor@cox.net

→ *Lynda Bachelor, Garden Social / Crop Walk Chairperson*

Community Garden Weekly to Hibernate Soon!

This years e-newsletter will "go off the air" in October, but will return in March of 2009 for the new growing season.





Horticultural Therapy

Many of us who work in our gardens know that horticulture can be therapeutic; however, most of the general population does not know that there are actually schools that offer degrees in Horticultural Therapy. There are programs offered for certification all over the United States and two state universities actually offer degrees as high as PhD. Our Kansas State University is one of these. The PhD degrees perform research in many areas of plant-people relationships.

Horticultural therapy (HT) uses plant materials in therapeutic activities when working with diverse special populations. Horticultural therapists often work through the Recreation or Activities Department of local service organizations. HT is a fantastic opportunity to teach sustainability and respect for our earth home while achieving specific physical, mental and sensory short-term goals. There are three main areas of focus in HT.

The *vocational* focus works well with special populations such as children, at-risk youth and the developmentally delayed. During vocational focused HT, the participant receives training in the field of horticulture with the goal of future employment in the industry. This form of HT is often practiced in places such as greenhouse operations, garden centers, and small, local organic farms. Big Lakes Developmental Center has an enclave of individuals who visit the greenhouses at Kansas State University twice-weekly offering employment training for these clients and HT experience for KSU students. Some organizations work arm in arm with local school districts to offer vocational training during the high school year, while others offer simple summer programs. Starting this year in Manhattan's USD 383 a program called projectPLANTS has been developed within the elementary schools as part of the school year activities complete with greenhouses and outdoor garden spots at several different locations in town. Volunteers will run programs teaching the children about plants and how to use them. It is never too early to learn the importance of growing our own food.

Another focus of HT is the *therapeutic* focus. The populations best served by this focus are those with mental or physical distress. During therapeutic HT the goal is for the participant to improve their condition. For example, someone suffering PTSD caused from a destructive experience of war might benefit from nurturing and successful growing of a houseplant or small, low maintenance flower garden. The VA hospital in Topeka has a greenhouse where its clients participate in HT activities. After a heart attack, a patient might spend some peaceful time in the garden, allowing for exercise and stress relief at the same time.

The third focus is called *social*. These are short-term goal oriented plant material based activities designed for education and entertainment. The special populations that benefit most from this form of HT are the developmentally delayed, the elderly, and children. One example of a social activity is growing a garden of cut flowers and then making arrangements with them after harvest, or pressing them to make crafts that can be given as gifts for special occasions. Sensory stimulation in this focus often also stimulates memory recall in Alzheimer's patients. Social focus activities can also be brought to the location of the special population, such as a care home. This brings the community into the facility while adding variety to their daily routine.

We, as gardeners, already know the therapeutic value of horticulture. Being able to share it with the special populations in our community adds a new level of quality to that value. As information about HT is spread in our community, it is my hope that participation will increase benefiting all involved. If you would like to be involved in Horticultural Therapy, contact Dr. Richard Mattson at K-State, 785-532-1420 or email him at: mattson@ksu.edu

➔ *Jeanne Squires, Manhattan Community Gardener*

Gardening While a College Student - Advice for Handling Plants along with Schoolwork

The new school year has begun. Maybe you are taking classes? Maybe you have a new student neighbor that you are thinking about recommending starting a garden? Regardless of the situation, gardening is possible and very enjoyable for a student. I have gardened as a graduate student the past three years with great success. However there are some challenges for the student gardener. Below are my thoughts on gardening as a student.



The biggest challenge is time management. Spring planting can conflict with finals. The weeds are growing and there is a project due. Planning ahead identifies major conflicts and allows you to deal with them. Being flexible is important because schoolwork can be unpredictable. Planning ahead and being flexible is key to gardening as a student. As you plan, consider gardening with a friend to share the work, fresh produce, and joy.

The biggest joy is stress relief. School can be very stressful. The garden should be a place to forget about books and get your hands dirty in the open air. Seeing your garden grow is completely removed from prelims or that big project. Enjoy it and do not let it add to the stress.

The biggest mistake is biting off more than you can chew. Do not buy bedding plants until your garden is ready to plant. Do not think that gardening will not require any time. But at the same time keep your priorities straight and know that schoolwork needs to come before the garden. Sometimes the best course of action is take something off your plate. Plant flowers as filler and mulch bare soil.

The biggest helper is mulch. Mulch everything that you can. Mulch preserves moisture so that you don't need to water as often. Mulch inhibits weeds from emerging and growing. Mulch degrades into soil organic matter, which boosts soil fertility. Plus, straw mulch is free at the MCG!

The biggest resource is a fellow gardener. Don't be afraid to ask your garden neighbors for advice. Attend Spring Clean-up Day and the Garden Socials, you never know what information or seed will be shared. Get on the e-mail list to receive the Garden Weekly every Friday. Check out past newsletters on the website (www.ksu.edu/ufm/community_garden.htm). This is even more important for students not from Kansas and not familiar with gardening practices or vegetable varieties that work well locally.

➔ *Kellan Kershner is a graduate student in the KSU Department of Agronomy and can be reached at kkershne@ksu.edu*

2008 MCG Board Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Committee</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
Patty Zehl, President	Newsletter & Education	537-8306	pzeahl@ksu.edu
Susan Peterson, Vice President	Records	537-0372	slpete@sbcglobal.net
Pam Been-Redeker, Secretary	Flower Bed Maintenance	537-8298	donredeker@sbcglobal.net
Linda Teener, Treasurer	Finance	539-8763	lteener@ksu.edu
Lynda Bachelor	Garden Socials & Crop Walk, Flower Bed	539-9508	bachelor@ksu.edu
Brad Debey	Rules & Safety	587-8183	bdebey@yahoo.com
Jennifer Guilford	Compost & Mulch	443-2769	jlguilfo@ksu.edu
Chuck Marr	Newsletter & Education	539-6825	cmarr@ksu.edu
Bruce McCallum	Grounds Maintenance & Tilling	539-1016	brucemacks@yahoo.com
Stoner Smith	Equipment Maintenance	539-3821	stoner-2323@hotmail.com

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



Glorious Basil

Basil is another extremely versatile herb that I have noticed cultivated in abundance in the Manhattan Community Gardens. Some species of it are used in the cooking of almost every country in the world. We all have our favorite way to use Basil, but here are some things that we might not know about the herb.

History - Basil is native to northern Africa and some areas of Asia like Iran and India. Historically the herb has been both reviled and revered. To ancient Greeks and Romans it symbolized hostility and insanity even to the point of it symbolizing Satan. Greek Dioscorides and Roman Galen both warned against taking it internally because it might cause intestinal worms. In modern day Italy it has become a sign of faithfulness and love. In Europe and Asia it is often used with the dead to ease their passing onto the next world. The French believed that to grow Basil successfully one had to shout and swear while planting the seeds. Still to the current day ranting in French is called “sowing basil”. Thai Basil is called Holy Basil by many Orthodox churches and Hinduism because, not only is it sacred to the Gods Vishnu and Krishna of India, but it is also believed to have been found growing, depending on the legend, either at the base of Christ’s cross or around his tomb after his resurrection.

Medicinal Uses - Basil oil has been proven to kill intestinal parasites (contrary to Dioscorides and Galen). One animal study showed that it stimulates the immune system, which in turn causes some antibacterial tendencies. In India it is used to treat Acne. The compound (E)-beta-caryophyllene (BCP) is found in basil (as well as oregano) and could help to treat inflammatory bowel diseases and arthritis. Although no uterine stimulant has ever been found, it is believed to bring on labor in pregnant women so is not recommended in large doses during pregnancy.

Preserving - A pot of fresh Basil set on a windowsill is reported to deter flies. Basil is often steeped in wine as a tonic. It also makes wonderful herbed vinegar or oil. Leaves can be painted on each side with olive oil and then frozen. Full stems also dehydrate quite well. The leaves can then be removed after drying to alleviate crushing and decay. Whole leaves can be carefully dry packed with salt. It is best to tear fresh leaves instead of cutting them and add them to a dish close to serving time, as the basil tends to lose its strong aroma with time. When storing fresh leaves, they should be sealed in a plastic bag and handled with care. Crushed leaves quickly turn dark and decay.

→ *Jeanne Squires, Manhattan Community Gardener*

Wanted: Three Garden Board Members

It’s election time again. Three new board members will be elected on November 1st at the end of the Fall Clean-up day. All gardeners are eligible to vote, but they must either attend the meeting to cast their vote, or notify a board member if they are unable to attend but would like to cast a vote.

Board members are volunteers who play a key role in the function and development of the Manhattan Community Gardens. Volunteering can also help you make important networking contacts, help you meet new people, learn and develop new skills, gain work experience, build self-esteem and self-confidence, and practice problem solving skills. One of my favorite benefits is the opportunity to make a difference in the MCG.

Nominate a fellow gardener, or nominate yourself. Contact any board member if you have questions or to express your interest in being nominated by Oct. 15th. Do not disqualify yourself if you are new to the MCG, or if you feel you are not an experienced gardener. What is important is that you are interested in furthering the mission of the MCG.

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

What's Inside?

- Fall clean up and potluck
- New garden sign up opportunities
- Changes to garden rules
- Election – Wanted 3 board members
- Reducing your carbon footprint
- Seeds left over?
- Compost bins – how to use



- Fall tillage
- Crop walk is in October
- Horticultural Therapy
- Gardening while in college
- Glorious Basil
- Mowing schedule