



OLD FARM COMMUNITY GARDENS NEWSLETTER

April 2021

A Word from Your President

Happy Gardening EVERYONE!

Another season is soon to begin with several changes that have developed recently that I need to bring to your attention.

MY THANKS go to Debra Othitis who has created this newsletter for all of us and for her time and effort into creating this form of communication. Outstanding job! Also thanks to Larry Stebbins and Chris Scott for providing articles of garden related issues. Off to a great start! If anyone would like to share information for our newsletter please submit your information to Debra (debraothitis@gmail.com) or myself (kinatec@aol.com).

Information boards on the East/West ends of the garden have been updated.

FREE 19'/1" diameter pole (East end) is begging to be removed and reestablished at another location. Please take away!

DISCOUNTS will be provided for all members from three gardening sources. Each one is providing a discount that is **different** from one another. A specific place in the newsletter will be established for these discounts explaining the criteria to be followed at each of these locations. By the time you read this you should have received an individual email from me regarding this new development and explaining exactly how it will work at OFCG.

Care n' Share Committee is requesting more help with the Care n' Share plot this year. If you would like to be part of this Committee please contact me as I would love to talk to you (648-9015 text).

As you read this newsletter, I am assuming that the work being done to our water system has now been completed. Just a reminder that going forward we will not have a source for year-round watering other than what you do yourself (rain barrel, buckets of water, etc). Please plan accordingly for your future plans.

Carol Kinate, Board President
719-648-9015

2021 Garden Board

President – Carol Kinate
Vice President – Chris Scott
Secretary – Colette Larimer
Treasurer – Debra Othitis
Members at Large: Terry Conrad, Mike Harvey,
Hope LaMonica, and Frank Pado

Welcome New Garden Members



Ashleigh Hamilton
Plot N4



Quentin Hudson
Plot B4b



John & Alejandra Szpyrka - Plot A0



Kelly Wise
Plot D8

MEMBER DISCOUNTS (with Membership Card)

ACE Hardware 3640 Austin Bluffs Parkway, 2730 South Academy Blvd. and 1830 W Uintah St. ACE Hardware has offered to provide a 15% discount to all our members. This discount is effective year round and covers basically everything. A 50% discount on tool sharpening also applies. Each gardener will need to present their annual membership card to receive discount.

Phelan Gardens 4955 Austin Bluffs Parkway
Phelan Gardens has offered to provide a **10% discount** to all our members. This discount is **effective April through September** and covers the following items only: Garden seeds; Vegetable plants (tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, etc.); Root plants (garlic, onions, etc.); and Cover crops. Each gardener will need to present their annual membership card to receive discount.

Sunset Greenhouse 1023 Sunset Road (between Circle and Union/south of Uintah)
Sunset Greenhouse has offered a **10% discount** to all our members. This discount is **effective April through June 23rd** and covers Veggies and Herbs only. Each gardener will need to present their annual membership card to receive discount.

Membership cards will be provided to all 2021 plot holders.

RECOMMENDED Seed/Product Sources (To be continually updated with our members input)

Penn and Cord Mountain Seeds - Penn and Cord Parmenter have been developing vegetables suited to Colorado mountain growing in Westcliffe for many years. If you ever have the opportunity to visit them it's well worth the trip.
www.pennandcordsgarden.com
719-783-2917

Seed Savers Exchange - Deborah, IA - provides heirloom, untreated, non-hybrid, non-GMO seeds. SSE identifies varieties that are not commonly available to the public and makes every effort to offer these varieties in its catalog and exchange.
www.seedsavereexchange.org
563-382-5990

Brent and Becky's (Gloucester, VA) (Bulb Growers Since 1900)
www.brentandbeckysbulbs.com
1-877-661-2852

Tagawa Gardens 7711 S Parker Rd, Centennial, CO 80016
www.TagawaGardens.com
303-690-4722

Rick's Garden Center 1827 W Uintah St, Colorado Springs, CO 80904
www.RicksGarden.com
719-632-8491

Good Earth Garden Center 1330 N Walnut St, Colorado Springs, CO 80905
www.goodearthgardencenter.com
719-473-3399



The glory of gardening: Hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart in nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not only your body, but your soul.
-Alfred Austin



Gardening Tips from the Garden Father

by Larry Stebbins

Time to Plant Onions

It is time to plant onions in mid to late April. Buy your onions as small plants (see photo). I try to avoid planting too early since some of our nights have been below 20°F. That could severely set back the onions. I wait until I see the nights will be above 30°F for as far out as my weather apps will predict. Since we live in area that some term mid latitude, I buy mostly mid latitude varieties of onion plants. Candy, Red Candy Apple and Superstar White do well here. Some onions form their biggest bulbs when they are grown in Texas. These types like shorter summer days. Some like longer summer days, like in Montana. We are in the middle so I choose mid latitude (or day neutral). I also plant another variety, Copra. It is a pungent onion that stores well. Those day neutrals are sweet and only store for three or so months.

Plant in good rich soil, that is moistened before planting. I built a multiple dibbler that has the dibbles 5 inches apart. It helps making lots of neatly spaced holes. You can just use a pointy stick. Set the onions in the hole about 1 inch deep. Cover with soil and gently moisten again. When finished planting your beds will look like the photo below. Keep moist and fertilize every three weeks with a good organic fertilizer.

As onions mature they signal to the gardener that they are ready to harvest when the green tops fall over. When over half of my onions of any given variety, fall over I help the rest fall over by gently pushing them over with a rake (as shown). I leave them in the ground for a few days then harvest. FYI: this falling over and bending of the leaves helps form an abscission type layer that will form a dry layer between the leaves and bulb. I then will gently lift them out of the soil and cure (dry) them on a screen in a well-ventilated shed (out of the rain and direct sun). In two weeks, the leaves are trimmed off and I gently brush off any soil on the bulbs. They are now ready to bring inside into a cool basement. Eat and enjoy! Sweet onions don't have much sulfur and will only store for two to three months. Pungent onions have more sulfur and that protects the onions from rotting right away. These pungents will store for up to six months or longer.



Buy onions as small plants.



Top: 4-point dibbler
Bottom: Properly spaced & planted onions



Newly planted bed



Tops falling over = Time to harvest

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

- April 15** – Deadline to forfeit plot & get full refund of fees paid
- June 1** – Planting in plots must have been started
- June 15** – Plots must be at least 50% planted
- Oct 31** – Deadline to clear beds for winter

April Garden Calendar *By Debra Othitis*

Early April

Outdoors –

- Garden and snap peas can be directed sowed as early as April 1st. (Soak peas for 24 hours first.)
- Soak parsley seeds 24 hours before planting ¼” deep.
- Dill seeds should be pressed lightly into the soil.
- Plant asparagus crowns (roots) in trenches 6” deep. Then, as plants grow, gradually fill in with soil. In an established asparagus beds work nitrogen fertilizer around plants before spears emerge.

Indoors –

Start tomato seeds. Everyone has their favorite varieties, but four consistently performing tomato varieties for this area are Big Beef, Celebrity, Early Girl and Medina.

Mid-April

Seeds of lettuce, chard, spinach, kale, beets, carrots, radishes and onion sets can be direct sowed now.

Late April

Start thinning vegetable seedlings to recommended spacing.

Free Research-Based Gardening Advice

The El Paso County Extension Help Desk is operating remotely at this time due to the COVID -19 virus. You can submit questions by email at csumg2@elpasoco.com, and they will get back to you as quickly as possible. They are not able to take walk ins/samples or phone calls at this time. Follow them on Facebook at Colorado Master Gardeners – El Paso County.

Research-based gardening resources:

- Growing Cool Season Vegetables, Plant Talk #1806
<https://planttalk.colostate.edu/topics/vegetables/1806-growing-cool-season-vegetables/>
- Growing Plants From Seed, CSU Fact Sheet # 7.409
<https://extension.colostate.edu/docs/pubs/garden/07409.pdf>
- Planting Peas, Plant Talk
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Na0Ty3viyac>

Another gardening recommendation (from Chris Scott):

- Vermicomposting the Easy Way with In-bed Worm Composting**
<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=991qDFd-ual&fbclid=IwAR3DHGzxp90s5c9BPnUwVcYDCAeHjM8byfaTeoF6P9IOFkUxuqbN81JR9I>

New Book

Plant Partners: Science-Based Companion Planting Strategies for the Vegetable Garden by Jessica Wallister

Available on Amazon for \$9.95 Kindle or \$21.97 Paperback

Excerpts:



- Plant radish in between tomatoes to “trap” flea beetles
- Plant Alyssum with lettuce to ward off aphids
- Plant nasturtiums with zucchini to repel squash beetles