



OLD FARM COMMUNITY GARDENS NEWSLETTER

June 2021

A Word from Your President

HELLO EVERYONE!

Water Updates - As I am writing this update again the Water situation has not changed. The project to bring us up to speed with meeting code has not occurred but Parks and Recreation has turned our water on and I assume it will remain on until they can work us into their schedule. I will let everyone know when I hear of anything regarding the scheduling of this project.

Garden Discount Updates - Harding Nursery is giving all our members a 5% discount (year-round) on everything. They will not be listed on our membership cards for 2021 but they will honor this discount with our current card. They will be added to next years card.

Storage Shed - All members can store items in our shed with the intention of using these items in their garden plot. All items should be clearly marked with their name on it. Items left in shed with no names will be given to the Re-store or Goodwill.

Locks - Remember to be conscientious about your surroundings and know who is remaining in the garden when you leave. Please lock gate if you feel you are the last person using your particular gate or any other locks when exiting the area knowing all other members are gone.

General Maintenance – Please do not remove the chicken wire that has been secured on the perimeter of our fence. It has been placed there to prevent rabbits from getting into the garden. Remember, they like our veggies as much as we do!

Any questions or concerns please always feel free to contact me.

Happy Gardening,
Carol Kinate, Board President
719-648-9015 (call/text)



Gardening is a family affair for some....

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

Help Fight Hunger in Your Community – Grow and Give

By Carol O'Meara, Boulder County CSU Extension



Lingering impacts from a disrupted world are hitting our community, with hunger a growing problem. Last year, gardeners responded to the crisis by reviving the Victory Garden movement, growing and donating over 23 tons of produce to food banks and pantries across Colorado through the Grow & Give project.

Victory Gardens have been cultivated throughout our history as a country, popping up when events take a toll on our collective wellbeing. During economic crashes, depression, and war, people sow, grow, and share. As spring warms the soil and the itch to plant consumes us, gardeners are being asked to plant extra to help combat a rise in hunger. The numbers from this aspect of our shared catastrophe are grim.

Hunger Free Colorado conducted quarterly surveys in 2020, mapping the increase in hunger due to heightened effects from the pandemic. Their third statewide survey, conducted in December, found almost 38-percent of Coloradans are food insecure, lacking reliable access to nutritious food. This is more than two times what Colorado experienced during the Great Recession. The survey found that more than half of households with children are struggling to have regular access to nutritious food, while 19-percent of children are not getting adequate nutrition because there is not enough money for food. Twenty-five-percent of adults reported having to cut back or skip meals because there wasn't enough money to buy food.

If you have excess produce from your garden this year, please consider donating it to our OFCG Care & Share Committee which is part of the Grow and Give program. Our donations can help alleviate hunger in our community. Contact Carol Kinate for details.

You can download a FREE Colorado vegetable guide from CSU at:
<https://growgive.extension.colostate.edu/colorado-vegetable-guide/>



Gardener's Profile

Why I Love Gardening at Old Farm Community Garden – by Chris Scott

I started gardening at Old Farm I believe 9 years ago after being on the waitlist for 4 years, I moved twice to get to the plot I'm currently at and don't intend to move again! Getting out to garden has been my therapy for many years in many places in the world. I'm so thankful to have this place to go and be relaxed while I plant and watch things grow, I love walking through and seeing all the different methods and tricks the gardeners come up with. Colorado has challenged me more than anyplace else with the dryer conditions and hail. I'm still learning what does well for me here as well as how to improve the soil.

One of my suggestions is to use the comfrey I've planted outside the fence for a green manure/mulch anywhere in the garden space you can. It's there, free, very good for the garden soil and comes back faster than I can keep it cut back. PLEASE feel free to use it!! I got started with it after reading about the many uses for it medicinally as well as in the garden. I make a salve from the leaves several times a year and was totally sold when I had a cut on my foot that closed but didn't look fully healed for months. I mashed the leaves and applied a poultice for 36 hours and was shocked at the difference when I removed it-I literally had to get a magnifying glass to see where the cut had been! I've had a lot of people brag about the difference the salve made when they used it for rashes as well as helping heal scars. (It's not recommended for ingestion or open wounds though.)

My other garden green manure favorites are buckwheat and millet. Mainly because they lift out so easily, I'm not shy about admitting I'm a lazy gardener! I prefer mulch to weeding, composting is in pots in the beds that the worms get in at the bottom and just do it slowly themselves with nothing from me but adding more as I have it.

Editor's Note: Chris does an outstanding job as the Board Vice-President & as manager of the wait list.





Growing Sweet Corn

by Debra Othitis, Colorado Master Gardener

The key to growing excellent sweet corn is to provide rich amended soil, ample moisture and fertilizer, and plant in block-rows for good pollination.

Seed Selection

When selecting corn seed, you may be puzzled by the many varieties of sweet corn. Three genes control sweetness in corn: Sugary (su), Sugary Enhancer (se) and Shrunken-2 (sh). You will see these code letters on the packets.

What do these codes mean:

Sugary (su)

Traditional type, has an old fashioned flavor
Sugar level 8%-18%
Becomes starchy quickly, so plan to eat the day your harvest it



Sugar enhanced (se)

Sugar level of 30%-35% & more tender kernels
Sugar is slower to become starch after harvest
Remains sweet for three or more days in refrigerator

Shrunken (sh)

Also known as "Supersweet", sugar levels of 40%-50%
Crispy texture but some say it lacks "corn" flavor and is less creamy
Stays sweet for up to a week in the refrigerator

Planting

Corn requires warm air and soil temperatures to germinate and grow properly, and should be planted when soil temperatures are at least 50° F to ensure good seed germination. Super sweet (sh) varieties need even warmer soil temperatures, sometimes closer to 60° F. Garden soil which has been amended with aged manure or compost and given nitrogen fertilizer help give plants a good start.

Corn is wind pollinated and should be planted in blocks rather than long, single rows for best pollination. Plant two corn seeds in each hole, one inch deep, spacing the holes about 12-15 inches apart. Plant in rows 30-36 inches apart, planting several rows together to form a block of rows. After germination, thin the corn to one plant from each hole.

Maintenance

Adequate soil moisture is crucial for plants to form tassels, silks and ears; soil around corn should not be allowed to become too dry during the growing season. Uneven watering may stunt the plant, effecting the size and development of the ear. Be consistent. Fertilize corn around the first week of July and control weeds.

Harvesting

Two ears usually develop on a corn plant, the largest one grows closer to the top. Harvest after the silk is dried and brown and the husk is still green or when kernels are well filled and pressure from your fingernail produces a milky liquid. Pick in the early morning for best flavor.

Pests and Disease

There are two common, but manageable challenges to growing sweet corn. When harvesting, you may find damage at the top of the ear caused by corn earworms. Less often, you may find firm, tumor-like growths on leaves, stems, ears and tassels. This is common corn smut, a fungal disease.

June Garden Calendar *By Debra Othitis*

- Direct sow seeds for corn, lima beans, cantaloupe, pumpkin, watermelon and zucchini now.
- Fertilize plants one month after plants emerge by side dressing alongside rows.
- Transplants of tomatoes, cucumber, summer squash, and pepper can be planted early June. Plant tomatoes deep. -Remove lower leaves and bury 2/3 of the plant underground so plants have better root systems. New roots will grow along the buried stems resulting in stronger, healthier plants.
- Harvest thinnings from new plantings of lettuce, onion, and chard. They are delicious and this process will increase the quality of the remaining plants.
- Harvest asparagus spears until they thin out. Leave some of the spears to grow into tall, fernlike plants that rejuvenate the roots for next year's plants.
- Control the spread of raspberry plants by cutting back sucker growth.

Free Research-Based Gardening Advice

Submit your gardening questions to csung2@elpasoco.com. They will open their in-person garden help desk (and take samples) on Wednesdays May 19th and 26th (Mon & Wed, June- Sept) from 9-noon and 1-4 at 17 N. Spruce St or call 719-520-7684. Follow them on Facebook at Colorado Master Gardeners – El Paso County.

Resources for corn pests:

<https://planttalk.colostate.edu/topics/insects-diseases/1468-corn-earworm/>
<https://extension.usu.edu/vegetableguide/sweet-corn/corn-smut>

Upcoming Colorado Master Gardener Lunch & Learn Series via Zoom (\$10 each)

Sessions will be recorded for delayed access.

July 14 Tomato Troubles
July 21 Q and A Pests and Problems in the Garden

To register, go to: <https://elpaso.extension.colostate.edu/classes-and-workshops/>

Spring is a busy time in the gardens!



IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

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

Follow us on Facebook - Old Farm Community Garden

If you have questions or concerns about Old Farm Community Gardens, contact Carol Kinate at kinatec@aol.com or text 719-648-9015