



# OLD FARM COMMUNITY GARDENS NEWSLETTER

October 2021

## A Word from Your President

### Happy Fall Gardening!

October is upon us – this year seems to have flown by! Welcome to the new board members! A special thank you to the previous board and officers. It has been a such a joy over the past 3 years to be part of the Old Farm Community Garden. It has been a pleasure meeting and getting to see and know many of you, while enjoying spending time in the garden. I look forward to meeting more of you!

Hopefully you all had a wonderful season and an abundant harvest. The season continues for fall planting. Some cool-season vegetables perfect for fall and early winter are: lettuce, spinach, carrots, cauliflower and garlic. What are some other crops you all plant for the fall and winter?

Looking forward to continued joy gardening with you all!

Dates to remember:

October 31<sup>st</sup> – Deadline for year-end cleanup

Upcoming:

Winter watering – This is still in the works. Details will be forthcoming.

Feel free to contact me with any questions and/or concerns you may have.

Happy Gardening,

Tiffany Lherisson, Board President

719-208-2089 (call/text) or email [LherissonTiffany@gmail.com](mailto:LherissonTiffany@gmail.com)

## 2021 Garden Award Winners



Best Garden  
Jerry Fuchness



2<sup>nd</sup> Best Garden  
Jane Hannon

## CONGRATULATIONS!

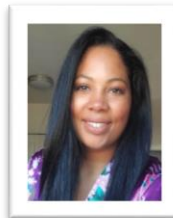


Best New Gardener  
Ashleigh Hamilton



2<sup>nd</sup> Best New Gardener  
Laura Regnier

## Meet Your 2022 Board Members



Tiffany Lherisson  
President



Susan Metzger  
Secretary



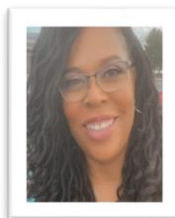
Cynthia Fox  
Treasurer



Terry Conrad



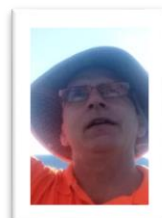
Mike Harvey



Hope LaMonica



Carol Kinate



Frank Pado



Chris Scott

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October 2021 (page 2 of 2)

## Care and Share Recap

by Carol Kinate

I would like to report that we donated 1,491 pounds of produce this year (2021) to Care n' Share. This number is exceptionally high but there is an explanation! I want to thank my Care n' Share Committee (Gerald Hampstra, Sara Morgan, Linda Schneider and myself) for growing and giving at least 60% of this total amount. Another source came from Kelly Wise who had to move after setting up her plot. She had requested we donate her produce to Care n' Share (2021) and she also gave our Committee the plot structures and hail netting she had to leave behind. **Thank you Kelly Wise!** A big THANK YOU needs to go to all the individuals who maintained her plot throughout the season thus allowing us to give away so much extra produce. Last but not least, I want to thank all the gardeners who donated their extra produce at the end of the season. Care and Share is very appreciative of our donations. **AMAZING YEAR!**

## Now is the Time to Prepare Your Vegetable Garden for Spring Planting

by Debra Stinton Othitis, Colorado Master Gardener

Fall is the best time of year to improve the soil in your vegetable garden beds. Preparation now gets your gardens into a "planting ready" state, so you can begin a new gardening season whenever spring temperatures are favorable. Adding soil amendments in fall also takes advantage of winter's repeated freezing and thawing of the soil, to gradually mix and incorporate them.

As it is estimated that 80% of all gardening problems are the result of poor soil, it is important to gain a basic understanding of the composition of good soil. Well-managed western soil should have around 50% empty space (comprised of equal amounts of air and water) and 50% of solid materials (comprised of organic matter and mineral solids such as decomposed rocks or sediments). Also, your soil is a living ecosystem containing living organisms in the organic matter. Although many of these are naked to the eye, they are continually making nutrients available to plants and improving soil tilth—the suitability of the soil to support plant growth.

The goal of annual soil amendment is to improve the environment for your plants so that they produce healthy and abundant produce next year. Amending your soil now will: (1) improve the soil's physical properties, such as water retention, permeability, water infiltration, drainage, aeration and structure; (2) increase the activity and number of the soil organisms; and (3) replenish nutrients important for plant growth.

A soil amendment is any material added to a soil. To do its work, the amendment must be thoroughly mixed into the soil. If it is merely buried, its effectiveness is reduced and it will interfere with water and air movement and root growth. In selecting soil amendments, you must first consider the type of soil and your desired results. To improve the water and nutrient-holding capacity on sandy, gravelly, and decomposed granite soils, select well-decomposed materials like finished compost, aged manure and peat. To improve aeration and infiltration and improve structure on clayey soils, select fibrous materials like sphagnum peat or straw.

To improve soil tilth using organic amendments, consider using sphagnum peat, grass clippings, straw, compost, or manure. Vermiculite, perlite, tire chunks, pea gravel and sand are inorganic options for this purpose. These amendments are the most significant amendments for enhancing the photosynthesis process of your vegetables:

**Nitrogen** – This stimulates vegetative growth or top growth and should not be used in high concentrations where root or fruit production is important. Leafy crops such as lettuce and spinach require more nitrogen than root crops. Blood meal or fish emulsion are excellent organic sources of nitrogen.

**Phosphorous** – This produces flower buds, fruit, and root development. Root crops and crops that produce fruit such as carrots, tomatoes and peppers perform better with adequate phosphorus which can be achieved with organic bone meal. However, most Pikes Peak soils contain plenty of phosphorus and since it does not readily leach from the soil, care should be taken to not over use this nutrient.

**Kelp** - An excellent source of potassium, this will build strong healthy plants by improving fruit quality and reducing disease.

Mulching on top of the soil surface after the soil amendment will help regulate fluctuating soil temperatures throughout the winter months, minimize soil compaction forces of winter storms, and prevent evaporation of winter moisture. After application, secure the mulch from blowing away with netting or wire fencing. Organic mulches such as straw, grass clippings or dried leaves may be incorporated into the soil as amendments next year after they have decomposed to the point that they no longer serve their purpose as mulch.

Soil improvement is a continual process but making fall amendment an annual practice is a way to achieve optimal garden soil in a measured and gradual way. And you will see the results of your efforts in next summer's harvest.

Learn more about soil amendments from CSU Fact Sheet No. 7.235 *Choosing a Soil Amendment* available online at <http://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/choosing-a-soil-amendment/>.

If you have questions or concerns about Old Farm Community Gardens, contact  
Tiffany Lherisson, Board President @ 719-208-2089 (call/text) or email [LherissonTiffany@gmail.com](mailto:LherissonTiffany@gmail.com)

*Ideas for future newsletters can be sent to Debra Othitis (editor) @ [debraothitis@gmail.com](mailto:debraothitis@gmail.com)*