



OLD FARM COMMUNITY GARDENS NEWSLETTER

March 2022

A Word from Your President

Welcome to the 2022 OFCG gardening season! Surely you are looking forward to a great season ahead and have already started to think about and plan your garden layout. What an exciting time! I am very much looking forward to seeing the garden come to life and seeing you all tending to your garden. I hope that over the winter season, you all have had a chance to reflect on last season and the amazing work you all continue to do personally with your gardens and as a whole.

We have six committees: Care and Share, Maintenance, Picnic, Garden Awards, Infractions and Website. If you would like to participate or be involved in any of these, please let me know and I will connect you with the committee chair.

Please review the Old Farm Community Garden By-Laws and Rules & Policies. They have recently been distributed. If you have any questions, concerns or need another copy, please do not hesitate to contact the OFCG Board at: OFCGBoard@gmail.com

I am so happy to bring in another year at OFCG. Gardening has so many benefits - vitamin D, socializing with other gardeners and a sense of connection, exercise (lifting, digging, etc.), improves your mood and self-esteem, calming environment, volunteer opportunities, healthy habits, organic food, just to name a few. Thank you all for being here!

Happy garden planning,
Tiffany Lherisson, Board President
719-208-2089 (call/text) or
email LherissonTiffany@gmail.com



Seed Viability

by Debra Othitis

Ever wonder if those old seed packets have viable seeds? The germination rate does decline over time. You can learn how to test seeds with a simple procedure. Go to: <https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/rhonda-ferrees-ilriverhort/2017-02-03-test-seed-viability>. Also, the chart below, provides a general rule of thumb as to how long your seeds are viable. The original date is always stamped on the seed packet. Of course you may decide to sow older seeds more heavily to compensate for lower germination rates.

Vegetable Seed	Years	Flower Seed	Years	Herb Seed	Years
Asparagus	5	Ageratum	4	Agrugula	3-4
Bean	3	Amaranthus	4-5	Basil	5
Beet	4	Anthemist	2	Chives	1-2
Broccoli	3-5	Anthirrhium	3-4	Cilantro	5
Brussels Sprouts	4	Calendula	5-6	Dill	5
Cabbage	4-5	Celosia	4	Fennel	3-4
Carrots	3	Cineraria	3-4	Marjoram	1
Cauliflower	4-5	Clarkia	2-3	Oregano	1
Celery	5	Cosmos	3-4	Parsley	1-3
Corn	1-2	Digitalis	2	Sage	2
Cucumber	3	Eschscholzia	3		
Eggplant	4-5	Gaillardia	2-3		
Garlic	5	Godetia	3		
Kohlrabi	3-5	Helianthus	2-3		
Leek	5	Heliotrope	1-2		
Lettuce	5-6	Hollyhock	2-3		
Muskmelon	3	Impatiens	2		
Okra	2	Larkspur	1-2		
Onion	1	Linaria	3		
Parsnip	1	Linum	1-2		
Pea	3	Lobelia	4		
Pepper	2-4	Marigold	2-3		
Pumpkin	4	Nasturtium	5-7		
Radish	5	Nicotiana	4-5		
Squash	5	Nigella	2		
Spinach	3-5	Pansy	2		
Squash	4-5	Petunia	2-3		
Tomato	4	Phlox	2		
Turnip	5	Salvia	1		
Watermelon	5	Schizanthus	4-5		
		Sweet peas	2-3		
		Sweet William	2		
		Viola	1		
		Wallflower	4-5		
		Zinnia	5-6		



Follow our fellow garden member, Larry Stebbins's gardening blog and podcasts for useful gardening tips throughout the year. His 5th podcast provides the specifics of making a successful compost pile.

Go to: <https://thegardenfather.com/garden-podcasts> or <https://thegardenfather.com/garden-blog>

New Members – WELCOME!



Alessandra Mann
Plot B0



Meredith Hass
Plot C7

2022 Garden Board

President – Tiffany Lherisson
Vice President – Chris Scott
Secretary – Susan Metzger
Treasurer – Cynthia Fox
Members at Large: Terry Conrad, Mike Harvey,
Hope LaMonica, and Frank Pado

Committee Members

Awards – Tiffany Lherisson, Mike Harvey
Infractions – Hope LaMonica, Chris Scott
Maintenance – Tiffany Lherisson, Cynthia Fox
Picnic – Hope LaMonica, Sara Morgan
Care & Share – Tiffany Lherisson, Chris Scott,
Gerald Hamstra, Linda Schneider
Website Manager – Jennifer Phillips
Newsletter Editor – Debra Othitis

Gardeners' Profile

by Lisa Conrad

Terry and I both have childhood memories of gardening. Growing up in CA, my dad always let me plant flowers in a special plot. Growing up in MN, Terry remembers the large family garden and the apple tree. Our first community garden plot was over 35 years ago in CA. Our first house also had citrus trees, loofah vines and a hybrid boysenberry/black raspberry we called the Conrad Berry. It made great jam!

Prior to moving to Colorado, we spent almost 10 years on Terry's Family Farm in NE. That really ramped up our production of veggies and preserving.

Here in Colorado Springs, our small yard at home only holds wine grapes, gooseberries and an apple tree. We were thrilled to have gotten our OFCG plot with established raspberries. It's a great combination of the two of us: Terry tries to shove as much as possible into the beds, while I rein him in to keep the garden looking pretty and easier to move around in for weeding and harvesting.

Our gardening style doesn't really follow the "traditional" rules. We tend to plant what we want, where we want and see what happens. Most of the time we have great success. We keep things as organic as possible; the soil amendment is mostly chicken manure from our hens, with the neighborhood leaves for mulch.

We love fresh veggies and salad items throughout the summer. We do LOTS of canning and freezing of veggies to use off-season: beans, peas, broccoli, carrots, cabbage, pickles, salsa etc. We also make jelly/jam, syrup and wine/juice out of whatever berries and grapes we harvest. Sharing our bounty with our friends and family is also high on our list!



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Winter Sowing

By Ginger Maclean

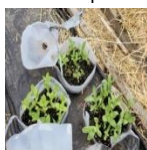
Winter sowing has grown wildly popular as gardeners are seeing the value of starting plants outside. Here are some simple steps to take to be successful.

1. Prep your milk jugs. Drill holes on the bottom for drainage. Cut across the middle of your jugs, leaving the handle in place so it acts as a hinge. Dispose of your lid.
2. Add pre-moistened sterile potting mix to your jugs. (Fertilome is a great brand to use.)
3. Your jug is essentially a seed tray, so you can sow more thickly compared to the ground. Follow your seed packet on how deep to sow your seeds.
4. Use duct tape on the cut previously made to your milk jug. Place your jugs in trays if you can, to make transport and watering very easy. Place your trays of jugs in part shade/part sun.



WHEN TO PLANT: Perennials-this process needs to take place when it is consistently cold, anytime in January through February (can include cool weather veggies and self-seeding annual flowers). Annuals-late April for tender annuals (warm weather flowers and veggies). Annuals cannot take freezing temperatures once sprouted, so you will need to cover your jugs if a freeze is expected. Your perennials will be fine unless they are a tender perennial and you can err on the side of caution and cover them as well.

WHEN TO WATER: Once you place your jugs out in winter, you can ignore them until about mid-March. Check moisture levels in your jugs. You don't want sopping wet soil, but they definitely need to have some water. Watering trays makes it a lot easier to water, and you won't disrupt seeds or soil.



ONCE SPROUTED: You can look back on your seed packets to see if they need full sun, full shade, etc. and place your jugs in the appropriate light until you are ready to plant. Keep an eye on the full sun jugs as they will need more water.

PLANTING OUT: Get your seedlings acclimated to having wind and full sun on them by opening your jugs for a few days. Plant out your seedlings and space accordingly to your packet directions.

QUESTIONS: Can you do tomatoes, peppers, eggplants this way? Not here in Colorado Springs. You won't get fruit in time for a good harvest. Start them indoors. How about onions? Onions grow beautifully when seeded this way!

RESOURCES: Trudi Davidoff "invented" this method years ago. She used to have a website, but now the internet is besieged by everyone doing this. She does have a FB group called Winter Sowers that is invaluable to get your questions answered.

My personal results: the most jugs I ever had planted was around 88. I grew all the flowers for my daughter's wedding last year, and all my zinnias were started in jugs...over 500 zinnia plants. Try your hand at winter sowing today and save your indoor space for tomatoes!!!



March Garden Calendar

By Debra Othitis

-As soon as ground can be worked, till in 1" to 2" of compost or aged manure into vegetable garden soil if you didn't amend last fall.

-Mid-March to early April you can plant peas and sweet peas, after first soaking the seeds overnight.

-Grapes and fall-bearing raspberries can be planted now. Some raspberry varieties are, Heritage, Fall Gold, Fall Red, September, Pathfinder or Trailblazer.

-Cool season vegetables, radishes, spinach, arugula, lettuce and onions can go into the prepared garden bed toward the end of the month.

Care & Share Update

by Tiffany Lherisson

In December, I met with Tricia Thomas, the Food Procurement Coordinator at Care and Share. She stopped by the garden and saw the dedicated Care and Share plot and was very excited and appreciative of Old Farm Community Garden and the involvement over the years. Tricia provided four signs that will be displayed in the garden in the spring with a QR code that you can scan with your phone with locations to donate and drop off your produce. This is an application that you can download and will be able to locate local drop-off locations that are in need or are accepting donations. This does not stop our Care and Share committee from coordinating drop-off times so you can provide your produce and it is transported, but provides an additional resource to provide the freshest produce to the Care and Share food bank and those in need.

Vegetable Gardening Resources

An extensive booklet will guide you in selecting types and varieties of vegetables that will grow well in Colorado. Download free at: <https://growgive.extension.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/63/2021/01/Colorado-Vegetable-Guide-2.1.pdf>

You can access free, research based Fact Sheets on Gardening from The El Paso County Extension Office. See listing at <https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yarden/?target=publications#fruits>

Upcoming Colorado Master Gardener Classes

- March 2 – Mythbusters for Gardeners
- March 9 – Grow Big in Small Spaces
- March 16 – Alternatives to Turf for Colorado Gardens
- March 23 – Compost: Black Gold for Your Soil
- March 30 – Good Groundcovers: Win the Waterwise Way!

All classes take place at noon, are \$10, and will be recorded if you can't make the live session.

Register here: <http://epcextension.eventbrite.com/>

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

- April 15** – Deadline to forfeit plot and receive full refund
- 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

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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