

WEST PASCO URBAN FARM REPORT

NEW PORT RICHEY FARMNET
WEEK OF APRIL 21, 2025



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www.FarmNetNPR.com

WEEKLY UPDATE BY DELL DECHANT

Weather Update

Temperatures this week will run well above normal, with no rain expected. Look for temperatures in the high-80s to 90 or more, and lows in the low-70s, and heat increasing as the week progresses. Record highs were reported in the area over the Holiday weekend, and we can expect them throughout the week. There will also be little variation in the arid conditions.

This is the dry season; we call this the very dry season. Not only is rain uncommon at this time of year, it is also when the temperatures begin to climb – and this week, it looks like

they will climb significantly. Dry season is mid-September through mid-June. What we call very dry season is mid-April to mid-June.

September will show up as a rainy month on some charts, but recent years have had below normal rainfall in West Pasco, especially late in the month. Of course, hurricanes in September result in higher rainfall total. What we call very dry season is mid-April to mid-June.

If you are planting now, be sure to keep up with the irrigation.

**Historical average for week:
High, mid-80s; Low, mid-60s
No Rain Expected May 19 - 26**

We missed a section of cucumbers last week, and most perished and rest were injured. Use a watering can if you can. Using a watering can conserves water and allows for targeted irrigation. For regenerative growing, hand watering and watering-can irrigation is recommended. It is the most responsible and conservative approach during a drought - or anytime for that matter.

Hand watering and watering-can irrigation ensures only plants the gardener sees receive irrigation, and only those the gardener recognize as actually needing irrigation. Automatic systems do not allow for such focused and conservative water use - even drip systems are often less thrifty. Watering can irrigation also allows gardeners to observe and interact with each bed, each row, and every plant.

Market News

The next FarmNet Evening Market at Plants and Pints is May 20 (5/20).

Mark your calendar: FarmNet will have fresh local produce at Plants & Pints, at Ordinance One, in downtown New Port Richey, on Tuesday May 20, 5:30 to 7:30. May will best spring offerings. Possibly sweet potato leaves (try them if you have not before), back-eyed peas, dragon tongue beans.

In the meantime, CSA shareholders can pick up shares at the homestead every Tuesday evening. If you are interested in acquiring a share contact us through the FarmNet website <https://farmnetnpr.com/>
Weekly shares and single items are also available.

FarmNet also has a booth at Tasty Tuesday and Wright's Famers Market.

Regenerative Growers' Notes

Start seeds, open sow, close out harvests, return spent plants soil, layer new mulch, irrigate and water in. Let renewed beds sit at least a week. Irrigate regularly to stimulate biodynamic activity.

Growers should start seeds or open sow for spring gardens. Winter crops should be culled. If you are not saving seeds, and not distributing last harvest to others, return the spent crops to the ground. Cut stalks at the base as close to the ground as possible, leaving the roots in place. Trim leaves and cut up stems and any stalks into small pieces, distribute leaves stems and stalks evenly over your beds, mulch over the area, irrigate are, and plant spring and summer crops in a week or two.

In our nursery we have Dragon Tongue Beans, cucumbers, eggplant, and peppers. Others are encouraged to consider these reliable Springtime transition crops - and certainly, add tomatoes to that list. We are not starting tomatoes now, because we already have an abundance, having avoided a hard freeze. The nursery has dozens of tomato seedlings - available to the community for donations. Remember, these seedlings are acclimated to the region and especially West Pasco. They will also produce reliable seeds for regeneration.

The tomato harvest has been exceptional this year. At our main garden we have harvested over 60 pounds so far. If you started tomatoes in the fall, you are likely also enjoying abundant harvests now.

As you cull your crops, consider donating the cullings. Share your harvest with friends and neighbors (human and others), compost, and return to the soil. FarmNet advocates no waste gardening.

Those using regenerative methods, should see tomatoes coming up in last-year's tomato beds. Same with sweet potatoes in the sweet potato beds. Two other great spring crops are Dragon Tongue Beans and Pigeon Peas. See featured stories on both these high-yield legumes in recent issues of the Farm Report.



Check out our CSA

This week's CSA fresh harvest feature is
Tomatoes.

If you'd like a market basket (about ½ a pound) of locally-grown tomatoes from one of our gardens, let us know. Suggested donation, \$3 (more if you can, less if needs be). This is likely the last offering of loquats until next year.

If you'd like loquat preserves (jams and jelly), let us know.

Other CSA produce includes tomatoes and collards

CSA shareholders can pick up their shares at the homestead every Tuesday evening. If you are interested in acquiring a share contact us through the FarmNet website <https://farmnetnpr.com/>

Weekly shares and single items are also available. Suggested donations: \$10 one item, \$20 any four, \$30 five or more.

If you are interested in acquiring a share, contact us at <https://farmnetnpr.com/> We'll give you a day and time to pick them up.

Thanks to all who support FarmNet CSA and its Agrarian Mission.

If you know anyone who would like information on acquiring a share in the CSA, send a message to New Port Richey FarmNet on Facebook or the "contact us" on the webpage

Costs of annual shares are very modest compared with other CSAs.

Weekly, monthly, and quarterly shares are also available. Suggested donations:

Weekly \$10 one item, \$20 any four, \$30 five or more.

Monthly (full share, 4 weeks): \$70

Quarterly (full share): \$180

Half Year (5 months) \$250

Annual Share \$400

If you would like to acquire local seeds and seedlings, send a message to New Port Richey FarmNet on Facebook and ask to be added to our mailing list.

Harvest & Ripening Update

Tomatoes: If you took a chance and planted in the fall, and did not have a freeze, you should have ripe tomatoes in abundance. If you planted in January or February, you now should be seeing ripe fruit – or you soon will. At are community and market garden (EMG), we've harvested over 60 pounds so far.

Broccoli: Broccoli will be bolting and forming pod. End of season. Save for seeds, compost, or regenerate.

Loquats: Loquats continue to ripen. Near end of the season.

Peaches: Look for increasing ripening. Peaches follow loquats by about a month. Some are ripe now.

Mangos: Look for the buds on mango trees. Look for first tiny fruitlings.

Winter Greens: Season over. Harvest now or let them seed.

Beans: Dragon tongue beans will be producing flowers and first pods.

Lettuces: Look for bolting. Harvest now. Season is over.

Starts

Tomatoes: Continue planting and start more now.

Beans: Start bush and pole beans now. Continue planting Dragon Tongue beans and start more now.

Pigeon Peas: These reliable legumes are flowering and producing pods now and until fall. Start more now.

Peppers: Start peppers now.

Okra: Start okra or open sow. Okra starts best in cells.

Black-eyed Peas: Start now.

Eggplant: Start now.

Sweet Potato Slips: Start now (order now, coming soon)

Nursery Notes: Sweet Potato Slips coming this week

If you are looking for seeds and seedlings for local growing, FarmNet is the place to go. FarmNet features organic heirloom seeds from Seed Savers Exchange, and the FarmNet Seed Bank – the largest collection of local seeds. Seedlings are also available.

Right now, we have a good supply of seedlings, featuring tomatoes, dragon tongue beans, cucumbers, peppers, and eggplant.

Coming soon, Sweet Potato Slips, Pigeon Peas, black-eyed peas, okra.

If you desire seeds and seedlings, contact us through FarmNet web site, and join our mailing list for the Seed & Seedling Project. Go to <https://farmnetnpr.com/>

All these transitional crops will produce through the rest of the winter and into spring. The tomatoes will stay with you into the summer. Peppers might, too. Don't count on the cumpers much past early spring.

Thanks to all who support New Port Richey FarmNet and its agrarian mission.

If you know anyone who would like information on acquiring a share in the CSA, send a message to New Port Richey FarmNet on Facebook.

<https://farmnetnpr.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/NPRFARMNET/about>

Cost of annual shares are very modest compared with other CSAs.

If you would like to acquire local organic produce, seeds, and seedlings, send a message to New Port Richey FarmNet on Facebook and ask to be added to our mailing list.



Join the community for New Port Richey's 2025 Monarch Butterfly Festival

Monarch Festival, New Port Richey, May 3, 2025 10:00 to 1:00
New Port Richey Public Library, 5939 Main Street, New Port Richey

To help restore and heal our butterfly community, the New Port Richey Environmental Committee and New Port Richey FarmNet encourage all residents to plant native wildflowers on their properties. New Port Richey is honored to be recognized as a Monarch City because of our commitment to create habitat and nurture ecological initiatives to support Monarchs and other butterflies. We remind all residents that butterflies are in decline around the world, with Monarch Butterflies being especially threatened. Planting native wildflowers is the one best (and easiest) action anyone can take to help restore butterflies in the City, and help reverse the decline of these beautiful and necessary residents of our community and the world. To learn more, join others at New Port Richey Monarch Festival on May 5, at the New Port Richey Public Library.

On the Cover: This week's image.

Planting of Barbados Cherry at New Port Richey's Fruit Tree Peninsula - April 15, 2025

The image us from the tree planting at the Fruit Tree Peninsula on the morning on April 15.
The features tree in the image is Barbados Cherry - one of two planted.

The Fruit Tree Peninsula is a pocket park at the end of Main Street (at the fork, where Main, Nebraska, and Old Main converge).

The FTP was created in 2018. It is devoted to local fruit trees, showcasing the variety of food-producing trees that thrive in New Port Richey. It is a Public Produce demonstration project of The Environmental Committee, Public Works, and New Port Richey FarmNet. The original trees were donated by the Rotary Club of New Port Richey.

A native wildflower bed is being restored. Volunteers to maintain the bed are welcome. Contact Dell deChant .

Tree in image: Barbados Cheery
Humans in image: Marty Field, Logan Blanton, Colin Eichenmuller, and Dell deChant