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# WEST PASCO URBAN FARM REPORT

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NEW PORT RICHEY FARMNET  
WEEK OF JANUARY 27, 2025



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**[www.FarmNetNPR.com](http://www.FarmNetNPR.com)**

## WEEKLY UPDATE BY DELL DECHANT

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### Weather Update

This week brings milder weather and temperatures near normal. As you read this report, you will have already experienced the coldest morning of the season - pre-dawn Saturday morning (1/25). While some in our reporting area may have had a freeze Saturday, most if not all coastal and urbanized New Port Richey likely avoided one. A warming trend will begin on Saturday (1/25) and continue for the rest of the week, with temperatures getting close to normal by next weekend (February 1st and 2nd).

There is little chance of rain this week, so be ready to irrigate. Last week's rain was most welcome, and we received much more than is typical for this time of the year - even with cold fronts. Despite that significant rain event, we again stress that this is the dry season in Florida (especially this part of Florida), and growers should be ready to irrigate if rains do not occur. Hand and can watering conserves water and allows for targeted irrigation. For sustainable growing, hand and can irrigation is recommended. This method also allows (almost forces) growers to interact with all their plants on an individual basis.



# Thank You For Celebrating Arbor Day Friday, January 17, 2025

Arbor Day in New Port Richey was a great success. The 2025 celebration marked the 36th year the city has commemorated Arbor Day in Florida – the state with the first Arbor Day in the nation every year.

For more information on this year's Arbor Day, visit our blog at <https://farmnetnpr.com/blog>

## Historical average for week: High, low-70s. Low, low-50s

Growers' Notes: We are coming up on the date for the last possible freeze. Sources vary on the last freeze date, but most put it in the last week of January to the second week of February. Of course, there are exceptions, and there have occasionally been freezes throughout the entire month of February – but they are rare. Historical records indicate the latest freeze in this area occurring on March 3.

With the warming temperatures this week and approach of the last possible date for a freeze, growers may want to take a chance on starting spring planting. For now, best bet is still winter vegetables: collards, kale, arugula, broccoli, cabbages, brussels sprouts, kohlrabi, and others. All are members of the Brassica family and will thrive throughout the winter and into the spring. Additional good news, these greens can survive a freeze.

For those willing to take the risk, transitional (spring) crops can be planted now. Three excellent transitional vegetables are cucumbers, tomatoes, and peppers. Beans, and cow peas can be tried as well, along with an overlooked treasure, pigeon peas (gandules).

We'll tell you all a little bit about gandules next week, and how we grow them here.

Until then, take a look at this good site (from among many) on a great legume: <https://www.healthbenefitstimes.com/pigeon-pea/>

Gandules and the other transitional crops will produce through winter and into spring. Be advised, however, unlike the winter greens noted above, they do not thrive in very cold temperatures and a freeze will kill them. So, growers beware. If these great crops survive though the winter, they will produce well in the spring – but don't grow them unless you are comfortable with disappointment.

As noted last week, at our experimental market gardens, we are comfortable with disappointment – so, we are rolling the dice on tomatoes. We have dozens of plants in the market gardens and the residential gardens we manage, and all are loaded with ripening green tomatoes; 100s of tomatoes. We harvested the first ones last week. Just a few, but just wonderful! Delicious – of course.

If you are looking for seeds and seedlings for winter growing, order or pick up from FarmNet, which feature organic heirloom seeds from Seed Savers Exchange, and the FarmNet seed bank – the largest collection of local seeds – and we have gandules!

Seedlings are also available. Right now, we have a good supply of seedlings, including tomatoes, mustard greens, and kohlrabi.

## Market News

The first (trial) FarmNet Evening Market at Plants and Pints on January 21 was very successful; and we will do it again next month. FarmNet will have fresh local produce at Plants & Pints, at Ordinance One, in downtown New Port Richey, on Tuesday February 18, 5:30 to 7:30. We are hoping to have the first tomatoes and first loquats of the season.

In the meantime, 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.

## Fresh Harvest Feature: Collard Greens

This week's fresh harvest feature is Collard Greens. If you'd like a bag of fresh-harvest locally grown organic collard greens from one of our gardens, let us know. Suggested donation, \$3 (more if you can, less if needs be).

Contact us at <https://farmnetnpr.com/> We'll give you a day and time to pick them up.

FarmNet also has a booth at Tasty Tuesday and Wright's Famers Market. Ask for Steve at the Market



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..

**Friendship**



**Farms & Fare**