

Licking County Master Gardener Volunteers



2023 Licking County Master Gardeners Food Pantry Garden

Chairs – Linda Mash, Brad Gamble, Steven Cohen

Volunteers – Jo Walters, Rachel Engelhardt, Patricia Finkelman, Tiffany Smith, Polly Kemp

In the Spring of 2019, a new Intern Class of Master Gardeners developed and planted a 36 x 72 foot garden area addition to the north of the existing Learning Garden specifically designed to demonstrate how to grow weed free organic vegetables. The garden was created after the book “Raised Row Gardening” written by local authors, Jim and Mary Competti. We were very impressed with the results and 2650 pounds of produce was donated in the first year of this new plot!

A new deer fence along with wooden gates were built and installed in 2021 by Master Gardeners Volunteers. Gardening has always been a competition between gardeners, rabbits, deer, and groundhogs.

The garden is divided into four plots and the vegetables are rotated from plot to plot or zones on a yearly basis, to stave off diseases and keep our food healthier.

This year we are partnering with Licking County Aging Partners – Meals on Wheels. They have assured us that they will use all vegetables and herbs we can furnish them, to go to their low salt diets, which currently they prepare 300 meals daily just for the low salt diets.

New this year, we also are a trial garden for certain spinach, beets, green beans, tomato and summer squash varieties, research and run by Ohio State University.

A huge thank you to the Licking County Commissioners for all the support they have given to the Licking County Master Gardener Volunteers as they strive to give back to residents of Licking County in as many ways as possible.

Raised row gardening - <https://oldworldgardenfarms.com/raised-row-gardening/>

Trial gardens information - <https://athens.osu.edu/program-areas/agriculture-and-natural-resources/yard-garden/vegetable-gardening/vegetable-trials>



Pantry Garden - ZONE 1 - Potato Section

Key Facts:

Varieties	Red Pontiac Yukon Gold Kennebec Red Norland
Spacing:	Potatoes were planted about 1'-0 apart in 14' rows
Count:	A total of 98 potatoes were planted
Expected Yield:	490 potatoes (5 to 1 ratio)
Planted:	May 9th, 2022
Harvest Date:	August 9th (90 Days) estimated



I like to plant potatoes in the first two weeks of May. If you plant them too early, when the soil is too cool, they may rot in the ground before sprouting. It is always best to plant them when the soil is relatively dry and workable. If the potatoes have more than four eyes, I will cut them in half or quarters. You do not need more than 3 or 4 eyes per planting. If you do cut them, make sure they dry for 24 hours before you plant them to prevent premature rotting. I typically work the soil in advance and mix in compost, organic fertilizer and a little bit of potash for higher yields. I plant them in rows about 6" deep and 1'-0 apart.

I like to plant different viarieties at the same time. Every year, due to different weather environments, some potatoes do better than others.

It will take about a week for the potatoes to appear above the soil's surface. When the potatoes are about a foot high, I will use a hoe and hill them up by pushing another 3" or 4" of soil around the stem of the plant. This will prevent the potatoes from popping up above ground and greening, or ruining the tubulars. It's important to keep the potatoes below surface.

Keeping them watered and watching for insects will be your biggest task during the growing season.

If you see insect holes in the leaves, you may want to dust them with an insecticide. Only dust your plants if you see significant damage. A few insect holes won't hurt the yields.

In about 75 days, you will see your plants begin to mature, fall over and brown a bit. This is normal for the tops to begin to die while the potatoes are still growing.

Only after the potato tops have completely died, in about 90 days, will the potatoes be ready for harvest. Harvest the potatoes when the soil is relatively dry and they are easy to separate from the soil. Brush the dirt off thoroughly, but do not wash until you are ready to cook them.

Enjoy! Potatoes are relatively easy to grow and grow well in gardens or containers 18" or larger.

