

Gardening Tip of the Month: Growing Tomatoes to First Frost

There are several things you can do to keep your tomatoes producing:

- ◆ A tomato is made up of 95% water, so keep the soil evenly moist.
- ◆ With late summer heat comes cracking of the fruit. Harvest all the fruit you can to avoid attracting insects to the plants and fruit.
- ◆ Snip off any suckers that are growing, to keep the growth concentration on the main stem of the plant.



- ◆ A tomato ripens its fruit from the bottom upwards, so the lowest fruit ripens first. As soon as that lower fruit truss is ripe and harvested, you can remove the leaves on that main stem all the way to the second truss of fruit, but not above it. This increases air circulation and sunlight onto the next fruit truss. You'll find the plants will ripen the fruits a little faster if you do this pruning.
- ◆ With staked tomatoes, you want to cut the top off the growing point sometime in

the first week of September, and prevent any side shoots from developing. This increases the energy going into the fruit development, giving you a chance to ripen those last few tomatoes before the killing frosts arrive.

Information from: <http://blog.douggreengarden.com/vegetable-gardening-tips/>



If you have an announcement, anecdote, recipe or story that you want to share with other gardeners, please feel free to call or email the garden (vfriick@camdenchildrensgarden.org) and we may include it in a future newsletter!

Support for this newsletter was provided by grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the William Penn Foundation.

"The Community Gardener" is a publication of the Camden City Garden Club, a 501 (c)(3) private, non-profit organization, registered in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The Camden City Garden Club is the operator of the Camden Children's Garden on the Camden Waterfront.



- President**
Mike Devlin
- Vice President**
Gloria Bivens
- Treasurer**
Valerie Frick
- Secretary**
Gladis Zambrana
- Sergeant at Arms**
Sam Moton

Camden City Garden Club, Inc.
3 Riverside Drive
Camden, NJ 08103
(856) 365 8733
www.CamdenChildrensGarden.org

Come Outside And Play!

Camden City Garden Club, Inc.
3 Riverside Drive
Camden, NJ 08103
(856) 365 8733

The Community Gardener

Volume 2 Issue 8

www.CamdenChildrensGarden.org

August, 2010



** Camden Children's Garden is now open Friday, Saturday and Sunday 10 am - 4 pm for the 2010 season, and Thursday by reservation. The Garden offices are open all year round. **

In this issue:

- Family Festivals 2
- August Club Meeting 2
- Growing Great Cauliflower Tips 2
- Safe Gardening 3
- Faith Based BarBQue 3
- Eggplant Recipe 3
- Gardening Tip of the Month 4

Gardening News!

The Camden City Garden Club is very pleased to announce the release of the Harvest Report about Community Gardening in Camden, NJ. The report was funded by the University of Pa. Center for Public Health Initiatives and was directed by Professor Domenic Vitiello. The report focuses on the production and distribution of food. It identified that the Camden City Garden Club's community gardening program is growing at a rate that outpaces most US cities. In 2009, the club distributed some 150,000 seedlings from the Camden Children's Garden and hosted many food events and fresh food BBQs. The report estimated that community gardeners produced about 30,836 pounds of summer vegetables, and if these were purchased this food would have cost about \$64,756. The top ten crops yielded an estimated 138,762 servings of fresh veggies. The report concluded that "undoubtedly, food production in Camden is expanding

the options, availability and interest in fresh, healthy, local vegetables." We will have more information about this report in our next newsletter, but for now, congratulations, gardeners, and keep on growing! On August 10th, we hosted the Camden City Food Security Advisory Board meeting. The board decided to meet on the 1st Wednesday of every month, beginning in September. Members will select a chairperson and vice chairperson at that time. The board will discuss several issues having to do with our Camden City gardens, including being able to grow fruit trees and have other small features in our Adopt-A-Lot gardens. On August 11th, we hosted the Faith-Based Garden Club Advisory Council meeting. Among many things discussed, members talked about how to get more youth involved in gardening. Both boards will try to work hand-in-hand to try to make changes for the better for Camden City residents.

Plant This Month

- Beans
- Cauliflower
- Chinese Cabbage
- Lettuce
- Radishes
- Spinach



Harvest This Month

- Beans
- Eggplant
- Melons
- Okra

NEXT GARDEN CLUB MEETING: MONDAY, September 20, 2010 @ 5:30 pm!

Volunteers Needed for Family Festivals

August 28 and 29
12 noon to 4 pm

Vanilla and Chocolate Family Festival.

A delicious event dedicated to two of nature's most flavorful plants. Vote for your favorite flavor, and take a tropical smell test. Join us for crafts, educational activities, and our Flavors of the Forest concession stand. Enjoy chocolate and vanilla treats -- learn about these tropical flavors



As a volunteer, you will interact with children and their parents at the education and craft stations positioned around the garden.

September 11 and 12
12 noon to 4 pm

Hefty Harvest and Scary Scarecrows.

The Garden's annual celebration of the bountiful harvest. For a small fee, you can make your own scarecrow to take home (while supplies last). Bring your Bounty....display a plate of vegetables from your garden. The Bountiful Harvest concession stand will feature the rich fall flavors of pumpkin, cranberries and apples.

Sept 11 - Free Workshop for Camden City Garden Club Members, 2 pm.

September Club Meeting

The next Camden City Garden Club meeting will take place on Monday, September 20th, 2010, at 5:30pm.

We will have fall veggie transplants available to take home. **Feel free to come and get plants seven days a week, ONLY between the hours of 10am and 3pm. The best days are Wed.- Sun.**



Tips for Growing Great Cauliflower

Cauliflower grows best in full sun; partial shade will reduce head size. As with all members of the cabbage family, careful rotations are important to prevent pest and disease problems. Avoid planting cauliflower, or any related cabbage-family crops (Brussels sprouts, kale, cabbage, and broccoli), where they have grown in the last three years.

Start fall crops 90 to 120 days before fall frost (Example: plant in August for an October-November harvest). Set out seedlings or direct-seed. Cauliflower requires a steady supply of moisture. Mulching helps preserve moisture and keeps the soil cooler.

You will need to blanch your cauliflowers to get those pure, white curds. Wait until the head reaches about 2 inches in diameter and starts pushing through the inward-curving leaves that cover it. You can then tie the outer leaves loosely over the head, or better, simply bend four or five of the large, outside leaves over the crown, then tuck the leaf tip into the opposite side. If the leaves partially snap while bending, that's OK. Bend a few more leaves over the following week if the head needs more coverage as it expands. The head will reach harvestable size in 2 to 14 days, depending upon the temperature, because cool weather may slow head development.

<http://www.weekendgardener.net/vegetables/cauliflower.htm>

Safe Gardening

The following Guidelines will help you to protect your body from injury in the garden.

1. Pace Yourself—Remember that gardening is strenuous work. Try carrying out shorter gardening sessions on a fairly regular basis instead of trying to fit everything in on one free afternoon.

2. Be Ambidextrous—Tasks like raking, weeding, turning compost tend to involve favoring one side of the body, so that some muscles are built up while others become weak. Raking with your non-dominant hand is definitely challenging, but with practice it is possible to adapt and it becomes easier. Whenever possible, try to

weed or lift up low-lying vegetables with your non-dominant hand. You will maximize your fitness benefits and protect yourself from strain and injury.

3. Stay Hydrated—Drink a lot of water! Bodies work better when they are well-hydrated. Drinking plenty of fluids will protect you from effects of dehydration and will likely give you more stamina and energy in the garden. Dehydration can lead to increased muscle stiffness after a period of exercise. Water is the best option when trying to stay hydrated.

4. Know When To Stop—Many gardeners become so absorbed when working in their gardens that they tend to ignore the warning signs of their joints and muscles becoming

stressed. Take breaks! Walk around or stretch for a few minutes every quarter hour.

Remember to bend your legs when lifting and to kneel when weeding.



Information from: "Garden Your Way to Health and Fitness"

Upcoming Faith-Based Fresh Food BBQ

The third Fresh Food BBQ of the season will be held on **Sunday, August 29th** instead of August 22nd at the Camden Children's Garden. There are four BBQs scheduled this summer and they are by invitation only. **Please contact your Pastor/ Reverend to see which BBQ of the season your congregation will be attending.**

Children's Garden staff will prepare and grill seasonal vegetables, among other dishes. Admission to the Children's Garden and to the BBQ is free, and each child will get one free ride token. Participants must pay for their own parking (park in the Waterfront Garage).



Recipe of the Month: Herbed Baby Eggplant

Ingredients:

3 lbs Eggplant
3 tspns Salt
2 tspns minced Garlic
1/2 cup Olive Oil
1/3 cup Red Wine Vinegar
Freshly Ground Black Pepper to taste
1/2 cup fresh Basil leaves

- ◆ In a bowl, mix the garlic and oil, and drizzle over eggplant. Bake 30 minutes until brown and tender. Cool slightly.
- ◆ Cut basil into thin strips. Place the eggplant in a large bowl, drizzle with vinegar, sprinkle with pepper, add the basil and toss together.

Directions:

- ◆ Remove eggplant caps and cut lengthwise into four pieces. Sprinkle with salt, place in colander, and let drain for 30 minutes.
- ◆ On baking sheet, spread eggplant pieces in a single layer, cut side up.

Recipe from: "A White House Garden Cookbook: Healthy Ideas From the First Family for Your Family"

