

Spring 2015
Children's Vegetable Garden Program
April 25, 2015

Agenda 10: Gardening Session #10 for spring 2015

Instructors: *Please review with all children together.*

Friendly Reminders for Children, Parents and Volunteers:

- ❖ Mark your calendar for the spring Vegetable Contest and Picnic on Saturday, May 16. Sections, please get together early to decide what each family is bringing.
- ❖ Today's Junior Master Gardener Activity (JMG) will be conducted by Keith (Long-time Program Parent) and Trevor (Junior Gardener Assistant) on 'Determining Harvest Criteria' for the May 16 Vegetable Contest. Everyone please complete and return last week's Take-Home Assignment on 'Home Food Safety': Checklist and Stickers?
- ❖ Is everyone liking us on Facebook and following the Bexar Youth gardens blog for updates on the Children's Vegetable Garden Program (CVGP) and more?
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Bexar-County-Youth-Gardens-Program/1447247425548890>
<https://bexaryouthgardens.wordpress.com/>
- ❖ We are starting to compost **behind the brown-fenced area**. Dump any green material to the side of the compost pile facing the gate as designated by the pylon marker. Everyone can and should start bringing coffee grounds, tea leaves and approved 'Green Materials' at this time to dump in the allocated location. It's better than the landfill, unless you are composting at home!
- ❖ *Please: don't return any dirty tools to the tool shed. It is everyone's responsibility to keep that area clean!*

Pre-plant Chores this Morning

- ❖ Pick up debris (weeds, rocks or trash) in-and-around your section and walkways. Throw material away in assigned trashcans. **After all these rains, some of the Sections are starting to get a lot of weeds in and around their plots and section walkways. Please stay on top of weeds as soon as they appear.**
- ❖ Be very observant on recognizing and properly disposing of all roly-polys/sow bugs, cabbage looper caterpillars, cucumber beetles and tomato hornworm caterpillars. Dispose of these pests by crushing them. If not, they will eat leaves and flowers off your plants. Use the pictures on the next page to help you identify these pests.



Roly Poly Bug or Sow Bug



Cabbage Looper Caterpillar



Cucumber Beetle (spotted or striped)



Tomato Hornworm Caterpillar

- ❖ Notify your Instructor if you see any fire ant mounds so he/she can flag them immediately.

Let's check on our plantings

□ 'Tycoon' and 'BHN 968' Tomatoes:

- Without breaking any branches, carefully tuck all the tomato branches back into their cage. If this isn't possible, then you might need to tie the plant stem to its cage.
- Gently pinch or cut off **ALL leaves and stems** that are in contact with the soil by removing the entire stem or at least half-way to the plant's main trunk. **This will minimize soil splashing up on the foliage and help reduce disease potential.**
- Fertilize both plants with one cup of organic granulated fertilizer on the outer lip of their tomato cages.

□ Irish potatoes 'Red La Soda' and 'White Kennebec':

- Make sure to remove any weeds, debris and rocks **as well as any yellow leaves** on your plants. Also destroy any roly-polies in this planting area.
- Let's continue to "dirt-up" both the **front side** of the main stem (near the irrigation

- line) as well as the **back side** of the main stem of ALL your plants with another 2 to 3 inches or so of compost. If necessary, use some fresh 'Children's Vegetable Garden Compost' from behind the brown fenced area. When you are finished, the pile in the middle of your plot should be leveled off to the main stem of your plants. Do not dig deep into the soil, just remove and reset the loose organic material.
- **Note: This step may require the help of two people. One person to place the garden soil and the other to lift the lower stems of the plants. Take care not to break any of the plants' stems. Use grubbing hoes, if need be for this process.**
- **White and yellow Onion plantlets:**
 - How do ALL your plants look? Remove any yellow leaves by carefully cutting them.
 - Fertilize your entire onions area with two cups of organic granulated fertilizer. Take caution to keep the fertilizer away from the crowns and leaves of the plants.
 - Thoroughly water the fertilizer in with your water cans.
 - **'Cheers' Head Cabbage, 'Green Magic' Broccoli and 'Toscano' Kale:**
 - *Check the backside of the leaves ON ALL these plants for any cabbage looper caterpillars or their eggs and manually crush them.*
 - Consider harvesting some kale leaves and some of the very small tender broccoli leaves at the end of the day. Coarsely chop these with some onion and lightly sauté with olive oil to make up some nice tasting greens for supper tonight.
 - **Anise Hyssop/Licorice Mint:**
 - How does your plant look? Is it blooming yet? You can pinch back a few stems and add the leaves to tonight's salad.
 - **'Provider' Bush Green Beans:**
 - How do your plants look? It's probably time, to set up six bamboo anchor stakes and start tying your plants up with some string.
 - **'White Stream' Lobularia:**
 - How do your plants look? Remember this part of the plot needs to be thoroughly hand watered today. Make sure your plants are helped off the ground if the water or fertilizer pushed their stems to the soil.
 - Flea beetles are doing some damage to our plants. **Drench your plants at the end of the day with liquid Spinosad.**
 - **'Little Ruby' Alternanthera:**
 - Plants look pretty nice, right? Remember this part of the plot needs to be thoroughly hand watered today.
 - **Violet carpet petunias:**
 - Are they blooming yet? Gently remove any yellow leaves and spent flowers.
 - **Yellow squash seeds:**
 - All three seeds should be up by now with nice and healthy leaves on them.

- Some plots have as many as six plants. If you have more than three plants in your plot, thin to the healthiest three plants.
- Roly-polies are doing some damage to our plants. **Drench your plants at the end of the day with liquid Spinosad.**

□ **‘Diva’ cucumber:**

- How does your plant look? Is it nice and straight? Have the tendrils attached to the trellis yet?
- Do any plants need to be replaced? Check with Miss Mary on this.
- Look for and destroy and cucumber beetles eating the leaves or blooms of your plants. **Drench your plants at the end of the day with liquid Spinosad.**

Water Management

Spot watering with water cans is needed in any areas your irrigation isn’t completely reaching and deep watering.

- Be very observant of how your plot and section drain. A grubbing hole or a rod may be needed if water is puddling in your plot.
- Become familiar with the irrigation system. There are many irrigation lines that are clogged up. Your Instructor will show you how to unclog them with a paperclip. Without getting anyone wet, water your planting area with low pressure for about 10-15 minutes.
- Take care to not flood plots or walk-ways. If the plots start flooding, let them drain a little, then proceed with watering.

Special Projects for Garden

Everyone needs to participate.

This is everyone’s garden.

- Before leaving today, please check with Miss Mary and Miss Anne Marie for your Section assignments.
- Are you completely finished? Make sure your Instructor or Garden Mentor walked your plot and section, everything looks neat and clean (no weeds, trash, rocks, etc.), all plants are watered and all your tools are cleaned and placed neatly in the tool shed.
- Homework Assignment: Look at what you are growing and compare it with what is being sold at the produce section of your grocery store. Use this as a guide for what should be ideally submitted for the May 16 Vegetable Contest.
- Remember, your ending time at the Children’s Vegetable Garden is 12 noon. Even though you have attended the Junior Master Gardener Activity, you are still expected to complete your *Daily Agenda* assignments prior to your departure.

Thanks Everyone! It is a great spring.

David Rodriguez

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<http://agrilife.org/about/>