

Spring 2015
Children's Vegetable Garden Program
March 14, 2015

Agenda 4: Gardening Session #4 for spring 2015

Instructors

Please go over with *all* children (together).

Friendly Reminders for Children, Parents and Volunteers:

- ❖ INSTRUCTORS: Make sure **all** volunteers, children and parents sign-in and out every week and check with **Ms. Mary** before you leave.
- ❖ If you have not already turned in your team name to Miss Mary, please do so today.
- ❖ Do not walk in or on any of the beds. It's very hard to replace irrigation lines and broken boards, plus we do not want to compact the soil in the beds.
- ❖ **Handle your plants gently at all times** when planting, removing damaged leaves, checking for insects, tying up stems and harvesting.
- ❖ When you return a bag of fertilizer to the middle shed, please close the bag tightly. Also, try to finish one bag at a time so we don't have so many bags of fertilizer open.
- ❖ **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 trash cans. **Do not put anything in the compost bins unless instructed.**
- ❖ Keeps a watchful eye on any roly-polies wandering throughout your Section and Plot. Dispose of them.
- ❖ Notify your Instructor if you see any fire ant mounds so he/she can flag them.

Let's check on our plantings

□ 'Cheers' Head Cabbage, 'Green Magic' Broccoli and 'Toscano' Kale:

Are all your plants nice and straight? If not, gently dirt-up the stems to support them. Remove all stakes and return them to the tool shed. Do any of your plants have holes in them? Check the backside of the leaves for any cabbage looper caterpillars and manually crush them and their developing eggs. *Spinosad Organic insecticide* will be lightly drenched on these plants at the end of the day.



Cabbage looper caterpillar

What is Spinosad?

Spinosad (pronounced "spin-OH-sid") controls caterpillars, thrips, leafminers, borers, fruit flies, spidermites, aphids, and more. Spinosad must be ingested by the insect; therefore it has little effect on sucking insects and nontarget predatory insects.

□ **Irish potatoes ‘Red La Soda’ and ‘White Kennebec’:** Have any of your Irish potatoes come up yet? Make sure to remove any weeds or debris, like rocks, in this planting area.

□ **White and yellow Onion plantlets:** Make sure that all your plants are nice and straight and that none of them are planted too deep or too high. Do any of your plants need to be replaced? Today is the last day to replace any damaged or bad looking plantlets.

~~~ Today's Planting's ~~~

Use **Plot** #14 as a guideline.

- Handle plants and seeds carefully at all times.
- Use the irrigation on/off valve as a guideline.

Today we are planting:

- 1 ‘Tycoon’ tomato plant

<http://today.agrilife.org/2014/03/13/tycoon-tomato-texas-superstar/>

- 1 ‘BHN 968’ tomato plant

<http://today.agrilife.org/2013/04/01/wbhn-968-cherry-tomato/>



□ Sections 1 & 2, 3 & 4, 5 & 6, and 8 & 9 **ALL** need to come together to make sure that all the tomato cages in their plots are lined up nice and straight after today’s tomato plantings.

□ **‘Tycoon’ and ‘BHN 968’ Tomatoes:** Today, we are planting and covering our two tomato plants. The ‘Tycoon’ tomato plant will be planted in the cage closest to the on/off irrigation valve and the ‘BHN 968’ tomato plant closest to the cage at the backside of the plot. There is always a chance of another cold spell and harsh winds, so we need to follow these instructions very carefully.

- Apply one full cup of Espoma granulated fertilizer to the inside of each tomato cage for today’s tomato plantings.
- **Handle plants with care. The plants may be too top-heavy, have your parent help you.**
- Place an indicator bamboo stake in the middle of each tomato cage. Proceed with the planting instructions, working with one plant at a time. Carefully remove one cage and its stakes and safely place them in an area not interfering with the workspace of other gardeners and not damaging your new tomato plants. Remember not to walk in the plot or on the plot’s baseboards. Each individual tomato cage should have three support stakes.
- **Tomato planting instructions:** Dig a planting hole in the center where the indicator stake was located. It should be deep as and slightly wider than the container of your representative tomato plant. Once this has been completed, fill the hole with water and allow the water to drain to make sure your plant will have

good drainage. After the water has drained, dust the newly planted hole with a half a cup of soft rock phosphate. Carefully remove the tomato from its container and gently set it in its new home. The plant's root system should be even with the soil grade or slightly higher (possibly about half inch higher than grade). Start by back-filling the soil into the hole. Do not get any soil on the plants leaves, especially the bottom leaves. Do not crown any soil on the main stem of the plant. None of the plants roots should be visible. Make a water-well/ring on the outskirts of the plants outer leaves with excess soil. **Water the plant in thoroughly to help settle the soil in.** None of the plants roots should be visible after watering. If the roots are visible, add more soil to your plant.

Note: All empty 1 gallon tomato buckets need to be returned back to Miss Mary.

- **Placing the tomato cage:** Two persons may be needed for this task. The goal is to have the cage firmly anchored to the ground and not swaying back and forth. Carefully place the tomato cage over the well watered plant. **The spike side of the cage should go down into the soil half way its length and not to the first bottom ring.** Three anchor stakes need to be evenly spaced and set at the corner of the lowest ring of the cage (Look at Plot #14 cages). **DO NOT** place and anchor stakes directly on the wring as to bend or break the wring. The stakes may possibly need to be hammered in. Miss Mary will do a walk through when all the cages have been anchored to assure that your tomato plants are well planted.
 - **Wrapping the tomato cages:** Two persons may be needed for this part. Each section should have their N-Sulate wraps cut for their cages. Tightly wrap each cage with the cloth. The cloth should barely be touching the bottom of the cage and proceed as high as it is cut. Be careful not to rip the cloth. Firmly support each cage with no more than three-or-four binder clips. When completed, the cloth should be nice and firm as well as visibly open on the top like a chimney flue. Place the plant tag from the tomato plant on the outside front center of both plants.
- Starter Solution:** Fertilize all of today's and previous "green appearing" plants with a quarter of a gallon of Hasta-Gro starter mix. Due to the weight of the water can (2 gals), your instructors will mix 1 oz. of Hasta-Gro with half of the water can, about 1 gallon of water (not a full water can). Each plot today will need a quarter bucket of mixed liquid fertilizer. This means that a half water can of mixed soluble fertilizer, should feed about four plots. Do not let any of the fertilizer get on the leaves, just on the soil around the plants.

Water Management

- Be very observant on how your plot and section drains. A grubbing hole or a rod may be needed if water is puddling up in your plot. Walkways may need some trenching to move the water out of 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.

- Do not flood plots or walk-ways. If the plots start flooding, let them drain a little, then proceed in watering again.

Do not rely on the Irrigation System to water your newly planted transplants.

- Your Instructor will mix liquid *Spinosad insecticide* at a rate of **four tablespoons** (2 oz.) per **one** gallon of water. Carefully drench **ALL** the cabbage, broccoli and Kale plants.

Special Projects for Garden

Everyone needs to help with this.

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? Has your Instructor or Garden Mentor walked your plot and section? Does everything look neat and clean? No weeds, no trash, no rocks, etc. All plants watered? Are all your tools cleaned and placed neatly in the tool shed? What did you learn today? What time are you supposed to be here next week?
- *How's your Journal coming along?*
- Remember, you're ending time at the Children's Vegetable Garden is around 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's going to be a great spring.

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