



The Garden Path Summer 2019 Newsletter

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"All gardeners live in beautiful places because they make them so."

- Joseph Joubert

Patty's Summer Garden Notes

The first garden newsletter is full of information to help your garden production after our exceptionally WET spring/dry summer. Please don't give up!!! Try to remember when we have excessively dry summers, this weather is considered to be positive. Plants can adapt to more moisture better than they adapt to dry and hot.

I recently received a call that someone took the garden gate down and drove through the standing water back to their garden plot. The garden gates are put up to prevent the bypass of cars into the areas of the garden with standing water and mud!

Gardeners are expected to follow the garden rules and to keep the garden roads in good shape for everyone! Make sure you are considerate of our rules. If you do not know the rules, or would like a copy of the rules, please contact me.

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Vegetables That Thrive in Very Moist Soils

If your vegetable patch is constantly moist, growing plants that thrive in wet conditions improve your chances of success. Excess water causes rotting and encourages root diseases in most vegetables, but varieties that were originally aquatic or marginal plants thrive in very moist soil. Slugs and snails also love moist soil, so go on patrol after dark or before dawn with a flashlight to find and dispose of these annoying pests.

Constant Wet

Constantly wet roots don't affect American groundnut or arugula. A perennial climbing plant, groundnut is hardy in USDA zones 4B through 8B and grows up to 4 feet tall. Edible tubers appear along its long thin roots, which take two years to grow to a usable size. American groundnut bears brown, bronze or maroon spring flowers and can be invasive in its favored moist conditions. Arugula is an annual vegetable that provides salad leaves and edible flowers. Grown from seed sown in winter or early spring, arugula grows 24 to 36 inches tall and 12 to 18 inches wide and can self-seed around the garden.

Even Moisture

Some vegetables only grow steadily and healthily in permanently moist soil. Celery grows best in full-sun sites and rich, constantly moist soil. Usually grown as an annual plant, celery is a perennial that's hardy in USDA zones 3 through 6 and is invasive in some areas. Another plant that thrives in constant moisture is garden pea. An annual vegetable, garden pea provides edible pea shoots as well as peas in their pods. Although garden pea grows well in moist soil, pea seeds rot in cold soil, so wait until late spring before sowing or sow smooth-seeded varieties, which resist rotting.

Rarely Dry

Vegetables in the brassica family grow best in soil that never dries out. To form large, firm heads, cauliflower requires constantly moist soil, and related plants such as cabbage, also thrive in damp conditions. Brassicas are grown as annual, cool-weather plants. They can't tolerate heat or drought and are usually sown during early summer and ready for planting out during late summer or fall. Because brassicas suffer from a range of soilborne diseases, they should be planted in a new site each year.

Source: <https://www.hunker.com/12274518/vegetables-that-thrive-in-very-moist-soils>

Crispy Citrus Salad

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups shredded spinach
- 1 1/2 cups shredded kohlrabi
- 1 cup shredded celery
- 1 1/2 cups shredded carrot
- 2 tablespoons shredded fresh basil
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh parsley
- 3/4 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- Zest and juice of 1 lemon
- Zest and juice of 1 lime
- Zest and juice of 1 orange
- 1 cup grapefruit segments
- 1/2 cup orange segments

Instructions

Toss all ingredients together in large bowl except for grapefruit and orange segments. Top with citrus pieces. Try it with cod for a hearty twist!



Primary Sources: University of Nebraska—Lincoln Extension; 5 to 9 a Day for Better Health program at www.5aday.gov; <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/recipes>



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Broccoli Alfredo

Ingredients

4 cups broccoli, cooked
4 cups cooked whole wheat pasta
2 cups milk
1 cup parmesan cheese
1 teaspoon basil
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
2 tablespoons cornstarch
Pepper to taste

Instructions

Heat milk over medium heat and then add basil and garlic powder. When hot, add Parmesan cheese.

Mix cornstarch with 2 or 3 tablespoons of milk and add to hot mixture. Heat until thickened.

Pour mixture over pasta and broccoli.



Primary Sources: University of Nebraska—Lincoln Extension; 5 to 9 a Day for Better Health program; <https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/>

Spinach-Parmesan Quiche Bites

Ingredients

Cooking spray
1 10-ounce package frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry
1/4 cup chopped roasted red bell peppers
2 medium green onions, thinly sliced
1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon shredded or grated Parmesan cheese
1 cup egg substitute
1/2 cup fat-free milk
1 teaspoon dry mustard
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly spray 16 cups of two 12-cup mini-muffin pans with cooking spray.

Put the spinach in a medium bowl. With a fork, separate it into small pieces. Stir in the roasted bell peppers and green onions. Spoon into the muffin cups. Sprinkle 1/2 teaspoon Parmesan over each.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the remaining ingredients. Pour into the muffin cups. Fill the remaining 4 muffin cups with water (to keep the pans from warping).

Bake for 18 to 20 minutes, or until a cake tester or wooden toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Transfer the muffin pans to a cooling rack and let the quiche bites cool for 10 minutes. Using a thin spatula or flat knife, loosen the sides of the quiche bites. Serve warm.

Primary Sources: University of Nebraska—Lincoln Extension; 5 to 9 a Day for Better Health program at www.5aday.org; <https://recipes.heart.org/>



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What Vegetables Grow in Wet Soil

Several vegetables thrive in wet soil, as they need regular hydration and nutrients from the water. Most vegetables that require such high moisture level also need full sun. These include common summer plants such as peppers, tomatoes and cucumbers. Water these wet soil plants on a daily basis, especially when young and during hot temperatures.

Cucumbers

Cucumbers need soil that is on the verge of moist to wet to survive, especially for the vines that crawl around the growing area or trellis. Cucumbers also need full sun and a nutrient-laden fertilizer each month.

Peppers

Peppers come in a wide range of varieties, from mild sweet bell pepper, to jalapeno, to the fiery ghost chili, to name a small few. They can range from one to four feet tall, peppers need warm temperatures, warm soil and lots of water to keep them healthy and consistently strong. Keep the soil regularly watered and well-drained, and apply fertilizer help to create a perfect vegetable.



Tomatoes

The hundreds of varieties of tomato plants all need moist soil and full sun. Whether you are growing them indoor or outdoor, tomatoes need daily watering especially in hot climates. Fertilize tomatoes after watering every month during the growing season.

How to Keep Your Tomato Plants Healthy and Productive

Since tomatoes are the most popular homegrown vegetables, there are tips listed below on how to keep your tomato plants healthy.

Watering

- Consistent soil moisture levels will help produce the best quality fruit. When soil moisture levels fluctuate during fruit growth, blossom-end rot can develop.
- Avoid overhead sprinkling. Wet leaves are more disease prone, and soil splashed up onto the leaves can contain disease spores.
- Always soak the soil thoroughly when watering.
- Light watering can cause shallow root development, increase the crop's exposure to hot weather and drought stress, and reduce fruit quality.
- One inch of rainfall or irrigation per week is ideal.
- An inch of water will wet a sandy soil to a depth of ten inches, a heavy clay soil to six inches.
- Very sandy soils may require watering more often.
- Use a trowel to see how far down the soil is wet. If it is only an inch or two, keep the water running.

Controlling Weeds

- Frequent, shallow cultivation with a garden hoe or trowel will kill weeds before they become a problem.
- Cultivate just deeply enough to cut the weeds off below the surface of the soil.
- Mulch with **herbicide-free** grass clippings, weed-free straw or other organic material to a depth of three to four inches to help prevent weed growth, decreasing the need for frequent cultivation.

Source: Lauren Wise, 2017 <https://www.gardenguides.com/106329-vegetables-grow-wet-soil.html>

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Common Problems

- For assistance in diagnosing unknown problems, visit the University of Minnesota Extension diagnostic site "[What's wrong with my plant?](#)"
- Learn more about tomato pest identification and management.
- It is possible to have a satisfactory crop of tomatoes even though the plants and fruit show some disease and pest problems.

Diseases

- Use good cultural control practices to reduce disease problems and allow for a successful harvest.
- Some tomato varieties are very vulnerable to diseases. Others are naturally resistant. A series of letters often follows the variety name on seed packets or plant tags such as HR: F, IR: N or HR: F2, FOR, LM, TMV, TOMV, V. These letters are code for the diseases that these plants can resist. If the variety name has no code letters, it may be vulnerable to all known tomato diseases.
- Even if you have not noticed disease symptoms previously, it is best not to plant tomatoes where other plants in the same family have grown recently. Disease spores in the soil can easily infect new plantings.
- If you start your own plants, be sure you start with clean seed. If you buy plants, examine them carefully and reject any that have spots on their leaves, wilting leaves, or appear pruned.

Harvest and Storage

- Harvest fruit when they have reached a usable size and color. Some tomatoes will drop when ripe. Others cling to the plant and you should cut them off in clusters. You may choose to pick the fruit of varieties that drop before it is completely ripe. Most types will come off the plant easily when ripe or close to ripe.
- When frost threatens at the end of summer, pick all

the fruit and bring it indoors. Tomatoes picked truly green will probably never ripen to a good flavor, but those picked when the green color is decreasing and starting to turn white or pink should not disappoint.

- Fruit that is mature green, fully developed in size, but not color, will often ripen satisfactorily. Some gardeners look for a star, or streak of white, on the bottom of the tomato. If the fruit is so truly unripe that the bottom is as green as the rest, it will not be worth ripening indoors.
- Store unripe fruits at room temperature, one layer deep, spaced apart without touching each other. Light is not necessary. Warm temperatures are more important than light in ripening the fruit. Fruit will ripen over the next few weeks. Check them often and eat them as they ripen.



Preservation

- Tomatoes are one of the easiest foods to can at home. Ripe tomatoes canned whole or in chunks, tomato juice, tomato sauce, and tomato-based salsas are common recipes.
- You can also try drying tomatoes.
- You can also prepare tomato sauce and freeze it.

Source: Cindy Tong, Extension horticulturalist, and Jill MacKenzie, <https://extension.umn.edu/vegetables/growing-tomatoes-home-gardens#soil-testing%2C-fertilizer-and-mulch-173060>



Extension

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Material**

Requests for reasonable accommodations for disabilities or limitations should be made prior to the date of the program or activity for which it is needed. Please do so as early as possible prior to the program or activity so that proper arrangements can be made. Requests are kept confidential.

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FoodWise Nutrition Educator - Melanie Phillips
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