



Garden Notes...

Issue #156
September 2005

Welcome!
What's new?
Cool stuff I found,

- out shopping!
- Out back, in the garden...
- Soil Builder/Compost Alert!
- Book of the Month
- Monthly Reminders
- To Ponder...
- Growing Community
- Closing Comments
- Garden Notes Archives

WELCOME Garden Notes Subscribers!!

It is **STATE FAIR** Time again! So don't forget to check out our **Growing Community** section for some great information for your area!

We've lined up EVERY fair in EVERY state for you, whew, and school started this month too!

Hannah is proud! 🍅 (Guess I get the 'Smiley Green Tomato Award' this month.)



YOUR yard this spring if you act NOW!



Fall planting season is HERE!

Garden Simply's Bulmall is open and stocked, ready for your planting (genius!) decisions! Check out the **Spring Daffodils** to get you started!

Thanks so much and Happy Reading!

- **Some Okies have a beef with Idol's latest title**
An article from the 'Oklahoman'. I'm sorry, I couldn't resist.
- **Growing Cucumbers**
Learn How to Plant, Pick and Preserve This Crisp Vining Squash
- **The Top 10 Best Companion Plants**
Are you getting the most out of your garden arrangement?
- **Stormy Weather**
Incessant rain, rampaging ivy and a squelchy lawn can combine to make autumn a particularly trying season.
- **Stress Management and Relief – The Keys to Health**
Stress has become one of the main causes of poor health in the modern world. We all 'know' stress; we have all felt its impact upon us. But did we also know that we

can easily and readily reduce it, saving ourselves the pain and anguish of many illnesses? It's time to remember how!

- **WHO Endorses GM foods in its New Report**

The recently released report of the World Health Organization (WHO) titled "Modern Food Biotechnology, Human Health and Development: An Evidence –Based Study" makes an unapologetic case for the acceptance of GM foods saying they can "contribute directly to enhancing human health".

- **Environmental Toxicants and Developmental Disabilities**

With their underdeveloped livers and kidneys and their greater intake of food, air and water on a per bodyweight basis, young children are more vulnerable to the effects of environmental contaminants than adults. Just last week the Centers for Disease Control's Third National Report on Human Exposure to Environmental Chemicals found that virtually all U.S. adults and children carry a mixture of contaminants, including pesticides, in their bodies.

- **Gardening Projects for Children**

A Whole New Category!

- **Do Good Bugs!**

A guide to choosing and using beneficial insects, mites and nematodes.

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Put your leaves to work!

These are SO convenient. When I was an apartment manager back in the early '80's they even let me keep them for the groundskeepers to use. (Ja! I know, they've been around forEVER!) Well, it's because they are handy and useful. What I like the most is that after you use them to store all the leaves you can in the winter, you can break them down and put them in the garage in the spring. (at least until the grass clippings start to take over! They are like those shoes in your closet, the ones you only wear with that 'certain' outfit... but when you wear it, you NEED them!

Economical, Expandable Compost Bin

[Click photo for more information!](#)

You may need only one composter most of the year, but where can you put that mountain of leaves every fall? This wire bin holds 150 dry gallons (20 cubic feet) of leaves and garden scraps, without the investment of an enclosed composter.



In fact, it's so inexpensive that many gardeners connect two or three together: one to collect waste, one for cooking compost, and one for finished compost.

- Each bin holds 150 dry gallons.
- It's easy to connect 2 or 3 together.
- Save when you buy 2 or more.
- Hold's a yard's worth of leaves!



Out back, in the garden...

Seeds germinate fast when the soil is already nice and warm. For delicious, picture-perfect fall crops of spinach, lettuce, peas, kale and broccoli, now's the time to plant. Here are 4 easy steps to ensure your success.

Pull Some, Plant Some. As soon as any early season plants have passed their prime, pull them out and replant. Even little sections where a cucumber plant expired or the cilantro went to seed. Put the old plants in your compost pile, then aerate and replenish the soil by forking in some compost and organic fertilizer. Rake the surface smooth and sow something new!

Screen the Sun. For good late-summer germination, it's important to keep the soil surface from drying out and not let soil temperatures rise over 80 degrees F. **Wire Hoops** and **Shade Netting** are an easy solution. Fall-planted seeds should be sown twice as deep as in the spring. Natural shade from a trellis or tall plant can also provide a good spot for seeding a second crop. When cold weather arrives, keep plants warm with a floating Row Cover.

Sow the Right Crops. Plants that thrive in fall weather include: carrots, beets, broccoli, Swiss chard, kale and all kinds of salad and Asian greens. Choose disease-resistant varieties that mature quickly. All can be direct sown into the garden, though broccoli can also be **started indoors under lights** or in a **greenhouse**. If planting a fall crop of peas, choose bush peas rather than traditional climbers.

Don't Delay. Summer-planted crops usually require an extra 2 weeks to mature (since days are shorter and air temperatures are cooler). Using the days-to-maturity figure on the seed packet, count back from your fall frost date, then add a 14-day "fall factor". This will give you your fall planting date.

PRIORITY LIST

- Remember to keep up with watering. And when you do, be sure to irrigate deeply

and infrequently. If you're watering for a few minutes each day, it's like sipping the bottom of the cup when it's empty and you're dying of thirst!

- Early autumn is the best time of the year for the sowing of grass seed. Grass sown in spring is often killed by hot, dry, summer weather. For more vigorous growth, spread a very thin mulch of clean straw over newly seeded areas. The straw shades delicate seedlings from the hot sun and helps preserve moisture in the soil, yet lets enough light through for germination. By the time cold weather arrives, the grass is fairly well established and ready to grow and thicken early the following spring.
- Take special care of any wooden handles on your tools. Handles should be smooth (sand if needed). Apply a coat of bright-colored, water-resistant paint to keep wood from drying out, prevent shrinking or splitting, and make them easier to see if left out in the garden.

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Compost Alert

Turn over a new leaf this fall!

George Dickerson (New Mexico State University's **Cooperative Extension Service**) says "This time of year leaves make up the biggest component of landscape wastes. Leaves are one of the easiest landscape wastes to compost. Another benefit of removing leaves around shrubs and trees in the landscape is that it helps expose overwintering bugs to freezing weather."

Before placing leaves in a compost bin or pile, it's best to run them through a shredder or rotary mower. Shredding speeds up the composting process because it increases surface area, making it easier for microorganisms to do their job of decomposing wastes. Adding food waste, grass clippings, livestock manure, or a nitrogen fertilizer to the shredded leaves also will help microorganisms break down carbon in the leaves.

"Don't forget to add some water to the pile or bin when you're mixing everything up," Dickerson said. "The consistency should be that of a damp sponge. It's also a good idea to add some soil because it contains microorganisms to help the pile decompose."

- **Soil Building for September**

Just make sure that you get a pile started if you haven't already. And (*honestly!*) if you're as **lazy** as I can be when it comes to compost I have found fall to be the very BEST time to start one as you can load it all up and just let it sit all winter! It is also a great time to build the pile since there's an abundance of organic matter to add to it from lawn mowing and other plant care activities that keep us busy during the growing season.

The basic process is the same; it just takes longer. Since the outside temperatures will quickly drop, count on fall composting as being less precise, less demanding, and much less work. Fall composting is more like planting flowering bulbs. You won't see much success until spring, but you won't do much work in the meantime.

It is truly the lifeblood of your garden!

Not sure where to start? **Learn to Compost.**

Need an *entire* compost primer?

Check out our **Master Series Gardening Courses!**

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BOOK OF THE MONTH

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Greenhouse Gardener's Companion: Growing Food and Flowers in Your Greenhouse or Sunspace

Smith writes simple enough for beginners. His saving grace is a quiet sense of humor that's evident throughout the book--from his warnings about weather to his "biased opinion of hydroponics." When Smith does get around to soil, he goes at it from the point of view of providing plants with a healthy root system--covering soil pH and nutrients and organic soil amendments in beds and pots.

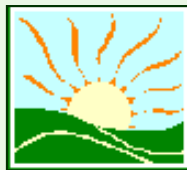
There's something refreshing about a gardening book that doesn't *start out* with soil. Smith (**The Bountiful Solar Greenhouse**) puts off the nitty-gritty subject until chapter nine. In the meantime, he covers such subjects as vegetables, flowers and herbs, light and temperature, ground beds and containers, and crop spacing and scheduling. This is not a complicated book; the operative word for it is "companion." And while some of the advice is rather elementary, it does lead the reader painlessly through the steps and requirements of owning and gardening in a greenhouse.

The extensive final chapter is devoted to everything that can go wrong--i.e., pests and diseases, for which Smith recommends *mostly* organic and biologic controls. As he points out, a "greenhouse or sunroom garden is probably the closest garden you'll ever live with." *This* is a book to live with. As a Wyoming gardener, he puts a good deal of emphasis on using the greenhouse in summer as well as in winter, but this is a useful, practical guide for readers in most of the continental United States.

>> Buy It!

GARDEN MONTHLY

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Check out what goes on in the sustainable garden in the month of **September!**

Great Prices
on Trees
& Shrubs

**Click Here to Visit
Our Online Nursery**

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TO PONDER

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There is much to do this month, and reading an online newsletter may not be high on your list of priorities, but there is much to learn!

Much to be involved in!

Take Back Your Time Day

Date: Monday, October 24, 2005

Contact Information:

Web Site: **Take Back Your Time**

Description:

Take Back Your Time is a major U.S./Canadian initiative to challenge the epidemic of overwork, over-scheduling and time famine that now threatens our health, our families and relationships, our communities and our environment.

The Take Back Your Time Legislative Agenda:

- Make Election Day a national holiday
- Enact paid Family & Medical Leave as part of the Family & Medical Leave Act
- Enact three weeks minimum annual paid leave for all workers
- Enact a cap on mandatory overtime

For more information about how you can get involved please visit the **Take Back Your Time** web site.



GROWING COMMUNITY

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And what could be MORE 'community' than the state fair? All around the country in the good 'ole US of A there is a wonderful tradition that we call the 'state' fair! Everyone's got one... there are little county fairs, BIG county fairs, and then the 'mother' of all fairs, the **STATE FAIR?**

Sure, state fairs have carnivals, concerts, and cotton candy, but they also have some of the best displays of homegrown harvests around. (maybe yours??) **Garden Simply** encourages you to take a trip to your **state fair** this year, and check out grand prize winning tomatoes and blue ribbon dahlias.



Farm Aid. A celebration of Farm Aid's 20th Anniversary and a tribute to the contribution of America's farmers.

American state and county fairs can credit Elkanah Watson, a wealthy New England farmer and businessman, for their start. Watson showcased his sheep under the great Elm tree in the public square in Pittsfield, Massachusetts in 1807. To attract attention, he clanged an old ship's bell with a piece of iron. Watson owned woolen mills and wanted to encourage the local farmers to raise Merino sheep because the wool was of superior quality.

Since then, Americans have attended state and county fairs to see the latest technologies, the biggest pumpkins, the blue ribbon cakes and the most thrilling entertainment. Equal in attraction is the enticing fair foods! Not guaranteed to be especially healthy, but it only comes once a year! (How's that for rationalization?)

A longtime champion of touting the newest, the biggest and the best, fairs continue to inspire Americans to discover the diversity and history of their heritage. From horticulture to arts and crafts, the talents of the area's most gifted are featured at the fair. Some of the oldest and most creative competitions are the "Best Recipe" contests.

The tradition of recipe contests is almost as old as the fairs themselves. The contests originally showcased the best of locally-grown food as well as the best local recipes. Almost two centuries later, delicious and interesting creations are entered by both first-time entrants and longtime winners.

In recent years, sponsorship of recipe contests by national food companies has become popular at fairs across America. The companies award generous prizes for original recipes featuring their products. (Surely *someone* could come up with a **GM FREE recipe?**)

Famous foods have originated at state fairs before, addressing the need of 'the times'. In 1852 at the first State Fair of Texas, a notable entrant named Gail Borden Jr. entered a dried "meat biscuit" recipe. His fame and success arrived later after making his processed and condensed milk into a national brand. I mean, people were starting to look for convenience even then, now that we've got the convenient thing under control, maybe we could bring the health concious that so many millions of Americans are thrilled to see!

Recipe contests used to be considered a women's competition. In 1903 one writer called the contests "monuments to housewifery". Now the contests have grown to include everyone, inspiring generations of families to enjoy competing in this age old American tradition.

Find a State Fair in your state!!

Adapted from [State Fair Recipes.com](http://StateFairRecipes.com)

We at **Garden Simply** would like to encourage anyone that has strong feelings about getting our food in a healthful and local way to support their local food coops and community gardens.

For more information about Community Foods:

Community Food Security: Definitions and Explanations

Want to find one in your state? **See the list!**

You don't HAVE a community garden where you live? **Then START ONE!**

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C L O S I N G C O M M E N T S

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Don't forget your **FREE Gift!!**

Just for our {{ *subscribers!!* }}... it's timely and it's *cute!*

We have **big goals** for **Garden Simply!** Each area of the world has its own unique challenges to gardening. We promise you, our readers; to continue to add to our **reading room** as much a variety of accurate and informative help we can to aide you in your pursuits toward a sustainable lifestyle, no matter where you live!

Your future is very much in your own hands and we hope to help all to see that the task at hand is very 'do' able! "Every journey starts with a single step..." Walk the road to sustainability... nothing gives more peace of mind than to be able to supply your own needs.

We are pleased to offer products from one of the largest, most dependable, and easiest places to navigate on the web, **Gardener's Supply Company**. They offer simply everything you'll need to get done what you want to get done.

We incur expenses every month making **Garden Simply** a truly valuable internet resource and with you visiting our sponsors, it will help us keep it free **Garden Note FREE!**

Thank you for your support!

As you all know, we joined an **eZine Directory** back in March. And it has turned into a contest! If you enjoy **Garden Notes** would you please take a minute and please vote for us! They will ask for your email address, but that is just to prevent unauthorized use. They won't send you anything, I promise.



Until next month, remember the words of Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche... "Those who have a why can endure any how."

Believe it.

*Never underestimate the value of what you are doing.
Life is short,*



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SUBSCRIPTION MANAGMENT
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HELP OUT YOUR FRIENDS - - - - -

People you care about can take charge of their garden by effectively using the information and resources available at Garden Simply, help them learn how -

forward them a copy of this month's Garden Notes.

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