

NRH COMMON GROUND JUNE/JULY '22 NEWSLETTER

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GARDENERS IN THE WILD
Meet our new members and see pictures from our work days!

JUST A LITTLE GARDEN HUMOR

"A weed is a plant that has mastered every survival skill except for learning how to grow in rows." -Doug Larson

Have you heard of the garlic diet? You don't lose much weight, but from a distance, your friends think you look thinner.

I always put 239 beans in my bean soup, because if I added one more bean, it would be two "farty".

If a man is alone in the garden and speaks, and there is no woman to hear him, is he still wrong?



TOO MANY ZUCCHINI?

We have started a new partnership with the food pantry at St. John the Apostle Church! Throughout your gardening journey, if you find yourself with an overabundance, please consider donating your extra produce to help those in our community that could really use it.

Volunteers from the food pantry pick up the donations on Mondays and Wednesdays at 8am, so please make sure to put your contributions in the cooler (located in the shed) the night before a pickup, or before 8am on those mornings, to make sure it doesn't go bad before they can get it. Check out the member email from Common Ground sent May 5, 2022 if you have questions about specific instructions for donating.

We are so excited about this opportunity to serve local families in need! A huge thank you to all who donate – helping feed hungry families with nutritious food is such a great way to give back and strengthen our community!

MONTHLY GARDEN TASKS



The Texas A&M Agrilife Extension office has a ton of information on gardening in our area. They've put together informational brochures for most vegetables as well as brochures for common gardening topics and issues. Starting with this issue of the newsletter, all vegetables listed in the monthly task list will now be linked to their corresponding info booklet so that you don't have to search for them! If you have questions about a vegetable not listed below, or you want to read the PDFs in Spanish, or you want to see what other fliers are available – check out <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/vegetable/easy-gardening-series/> for a wealth of information!

JUNE

- Add shade cloth or other cooling/shady measures if necessary, it is unusually hot for this time of year and most plants can struggle in 100°+ temps.
- Help reduce weed pressure and keep moisture in the soil by [making sure mulch is applied](#) in a thick layer throughout the entire garden.

NOTE: Your plot must be maintained in a weed free state. Weeds that are not pulled will spread to the plots around you making more work for your garden neighbors. All plot holders are responsible for keeping the walkways around their plot clear of weeds as well

JULY

- Start [broccoli](#), [brussels sprouts](#), and [cauliflower](#) indoors for transplant in mid- to late-August.
- (late July) direct sow [muskmelons \(cantaloupe\)](#) and [okra](#) for harvest in September and October.
- Transplant [tomato](#) and [pepper](#) starts for harvest in September/October.

COOKING WITH THE SEASONS



VEGAN GUMBO

4-6 cups vegetable stock
2/3 cup safflower oil
2/3 cups chickpea, all-purpose or whole wheat flour
1 1/3 cups chopped onion
2/3 cup chopped bell pepper
2/3 cup chopped celery
1 cup button or portabella mushrooms, washed and sliced
1 medium carrot, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup chopped tomatoes
2 Tbsp soy sauce
1 tsp Cajun seasoning
1/2 tsp dried thyme
1/2 tsp garlic powder
1/2 tsp onion powder
1/4 tsp cayenne pepper powder
1 1/2 cups whole-kernel corn
1 1/2 cups green peas
1 pound okra, halved lengthwise or chopped
cooked brown rice
gumbo filé powder (optional)

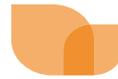


Heat stock in a medium saucepan; cover and keep warm over low heat. In a 4- or 5-quart Dutch oven (or heavy-bottomed soup pot), heat oil over medium-high heat. Whisk in flour, constantly scraping sides and bottom to prevent burning. Continue until mixture (called “roux”) becomes silky and a light milk chocolate color, about 5 minutes. Be careful not to let it scorch.

Reduce heat to medium-low. Add onion, bell pepper, and celery; cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are just softened. Remove from heat and transfer to a bowl. Measure out 1 1/2 cups and return that amount to Dutch oven.

Return heat to medium-low. Add mushrooms, carrot and minced garlic; cook, stirring occasionally, until carrot is tender but not soft. Whisk in 4 cups warm stock, tomatoes, soy sauce, Cajun seasoning, thyme, garlic powder, onion powder, and cayenne powder. Bring to a boil, stirring frequently. If soup seems too thin, add more roux, 1/4 cup at a time, until soup reaches desired thickness. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, 45 minutes to develop flavor, adding broth or roux to thin or thicken soup as desired.

Add corn, peas, and okra; return to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer until vegetables are tender. Season to taste with salt/pepper, serve over brown rice with a sprinkle of gumbo file powder if desired.



ROASTED TOMATO CHUTNEY ON SQUASH

1 two-pound spaghetti squash, halved lengthwise and seeded
1 Tbsp olive oil
salt/pepper
2 pints cherry or grape tomatoes
2 Tbsp olive oil
2 Tbsp minced garlic
1/4 cup chicken broth
1/2 cup chopped onion
1 8-oz container bite-size fresh mozzarella balls, cut up
1/4 cup chopped fresh basil
2 Tbsp chopped fresh mint
grated Parmesan cheese

Brush cut sides of squash with 1 Tbsp of olive oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place squash halves, cut sides down, in a large baking dish. Prick the squash’s skin all over with a fork. Bake, uncovered, in a 375 degree oven for 30-40 min or until tender.

Meanwhile, place tomatoes in large bowl. Add remaining 2 Tbsp olive oil, minced garlic, and salt to taste; stir well to coat. Place mixture in a 15”x10”x1” baking pan. Bake in oven with the squash for the last 20 min.

In a large skillet, bring the chicken broth to boiling; add onion. Cook about 3 minutes or just until tender. Remove skillet from heat. Add roasted tomatoes to the skillet with the onion. Using a fork or potato masher, gently press down on tomatoes to pop their skin and release juice. Add mozzarella, basil, and mint to the tomato mixture; toss well.

Using a fork, remove the squash pulp from shell. Top squash shreds with tomato mixture and Parmesan cheese.

GARDENERS IN THE WILD



Y'all welcome Elle Ezechukwu and her awesome son, Tariq, who helps her garden! Their family moved to the Grapevine area from Austin last summer. She has mostly worked with hydroponics indoors until now, and we can't wait to see what wonderful things they grow this summer!

