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# September Events:

Master Gardener Meeting September 14th – 7:00 pm Falls Park picnic shelter

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## Fresh Food Storage

by Pam Conklin, Master Gardener

Everyone can agree that eating fresh vegetables and fruits is healthier for us. As these fresh foods start pouring into your kitchen, wouldn't it be nice to know how to store them for maximum flavor, length, and safety, so you can enjoy the bounty and reduce waste?

It is best to clean and store your produce as soon as it enters the kitchen. The CDC provides some great guidelines regarding general food handling safety.

One thing to be aware of when storing your fruits and vegetables is the effect of ethylene gas in fresh vegetables and fruits. Ethylene gas is a naturally occurring plant hormone that plays a major role in plant growth throughout the plant life cycle. As consumers, we are most familiar with the process of food ripening that results from ethylene gas, such as bananas turning brown. Some foods produce and release more ethylene gas, while others are more sensitive to it. Thus, the reason to separate and store foods properly to get the longest storage for your produce.

There are several references available to guide you through questions about how to best store your fresh produce to ensure safety, longevity, and flavor. A great reference for separating and storing fresh produce is Food Print, as it offers some specifics for safely preparing and storing various types of fresh produce in order to keep them fresher longer. The University of Minnesota has a vegetable specific on-line tool that gives quick, direct tips. The following list, copied from SDSU Extension, Storage of Fresh Vegetables, by Rhoda Burrows, Professor & SDSU Extension Horticulture Specialist, is a perfect place to start. Also check out the USCD Community Health chart for a look at which fresh foods are ethylene gas producers vs. ethylene gas sensitive.

Table 1. STORAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR FRESH VEGETABLES						
	Cool & Humid	Cool & Dry	Humid	Warm & Humid	Warm & Dry	Storage Life
Temp.:	32-40°F	32-40°F	45°F	50-60°F	55-60°F	
Humidity:	95-98%	65%	95%	90%	65%	
CROP:						
Asparagus	X					2-3 wks.
Basil				X		1 wk.
Beans (dry)		X				1+ yrs.
Beans (green)			X			8-12 days
Beans (lima)	shelled-37-40°		un-shelled			1 wk.
Beets	X					4-10 mo.*
Broccoli	X					2-3 wks.
Cabbage	X					1-6 mo.
Carrots	X					5-6 mos.
Cauliflower	X					2-3 wks.
Cucumbers				X		1-2 wks.
Eggplants				X		1-2 wks.
Honeydew melons			X			3 wks.
Lettuce & other greens	X					1-2 wks.
Muskmelon (Cantaloupe)	X					10-14 days
Onions (bulb)		X				6-9 mos.
Onions (green)	X					7-10 days
Parsnips	X					4-6 mos.
Peas	X					1-2 wks.
Peppers			X			2-3 wks.
Potatoes			X			2-9 mos.**
Pumpkins					X	2-3 mos.
Radishes	X					3-4 wks.
Rutabagas	X					4-6 mos.
Squash (summer)			X			1-2 wks.
Squash (winter)					X	2-3 mos.
Sweet Corn	X					4-7 days
Sweet potatoes				X		6-9 mos.***
Tomatoes				X		2-14 days
Turnips	X					4-5 mos.
Watermelon				X		2-3 wks.
* 10-14 days if green tops are left on ** longer storage times require curing at 60-68 degrees for 1-2 wks., with gradual lowering of temperature thereafter ***Need to be cured at 82-86 degrees for 4-7 days, prior to storage						

# Garlic ☐,

by Cathy Frederickson, Master Gardener

What is garlic? A member of the Allium family, modern garlic is allium sativum. There are basically two types of garlic: hard neck and soft neck. Elephant garlic is not a true garlic but a leek. There are many varieties of hard and soft neck available for growing. The entire underground part of the plant is a bulb, the separate sections are cloves. Most of my experience is with hard neck varieties as they seem to handle the cold weather very well. One of my favorite vegetables is garlic because it is simple to grow, harvest and cure, but also because it keeps really well. Garlic was a common ingredient in my mother's cooking so I have a warm spot in my heart for this plant.

Garlic is an accommodating plant. It grows in almost any soil as long as the soil drains well and it isn't a heavy feeder. I give it a little composted manure as a side dressing while the leaves are growing, an inch of water a week and keep them weeded so there is no competition.

Planting is done the first week of October (4" deep, about 3" apart), then a good thick layer of straw (6") to prepare it for winter. Snow fence can be used to encourage snow accumulations which is helpful insulation for the plants. Now you can use this interval of snow and peace and quiet to research recipes and the benefits of garlic.

About the end of April you will find the plants reaching out





Time to rake the straw back a little so they can access as much sun as possible. Now is the time to give the plants light fertilizer and regular watering. I use grass clippings to keep the weed activity



minimal.

When the plants begin to scape (the center curly flower-like stalk coming from the center of the plant), cut these off as close to where they begin as possible.



These may be chopped and used like chives. Cutting them off allows the plant to put its energy into bulb production. When I miss cutting the scapes, those plants tend to have smaller bulbs. This means the plants will soon be ready for harvest so carefully rake/pull back all the mulch and stop watering so the bulbs can dry down. When the leaves dry down and turn brown it is time to harvest (about 2 weeks).

If you wait too long, the plants can be hard to find and may also split apart underground. Dig carefully as they are 4" deep with a good root system and delicate. If the bulb gets nicked or bruised it doesn't keep so throw those aside and use immediately. As you dig these gently, rub the dirt off, do not let them sit in the sun, instead, place them in a cool, dark, dry place with good, airflow for 3-4 weeks to allow the skin to harden.



A good place to keep garlic bulbs after they are cured is in the vegetable drawer of your refrigerator. Wash before use and enjoy the flavor, maybe you can make some warm memories too.🧄



### My Little Clove

Oh, garlic bulb,  
Oh, little cloves-  
You never die,  
but grow and regrow  
and multiply  
from original cells  
of some ancient  
Mother-Bulb;

Oh, human spirit-  
You sometimes falter,  
but never die,  
as you grow and regrow  
and multiply  
from original dreams  
of ancient Parents.

It's said that we pass on  
our memories,  
but I suspect  
(that like these bulbs)  
we are our ancient  
memories.

How else could I see  
myself so clearly  
in body  
and in soul  
in my Child?

My Garlic Child  
My Little Clove

-Ron England-  
Growing Great Garlic

# In the Herb Garden

By Priscilla Jurkovich, Master Gardener

*The herb section will highlight an herb that can be grown in the South Dakota region.*

**Evening Primrose** (*Oenothera biennis*) is a biennial herb in the Onagraceae family that grows in zones 3-8. The plant forms a stubby rosette during the first year, but forms a tall, erect, stout, soft-hairy, green or reddish stem that forms a shrub up to 4 or 5 feet in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Evening primrose flowers are regular, bisexual flowers with 4 separate sepals and 4 separate petals and equal or twice as many stamens as petals. The flowers remain open from evening to early morning and have a lemony scent in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. The plant thrives in full sun. As with most biennials, before it dies, a long seed pod develops in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year with small brown seeds.

Evening Primrose oil contains a fatty acid called gamma-linoleic acid (GLA) and a pain relieving compound phenylalanine used for chronic headaches. The oil has been used for arthritis and joint pain, nerve damage from diabetes, eczema, acne, rosacea, symptoms of multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer's memory deficiencies, male impotence, female infertility, nails, hormone imbalances and alcohol withdrawal.



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## The Beauty of Enough

Anelis Coscioni- Master Gardener

A few years ago, we got to a point where we decided what our “enough” looked like. Our baby, our family, our friends, a humble house with a tree, a yard, dogs, and chickens.



Then, as the baby grew, we learned that we ended up having more than enough. Our home started filling up with stuff. Too much stuff. A change was necessary, and it still lives with us. When you come to the house, you will always find a box by the door for things that need a new life in another home.

As the baby grew, so the yard grew. Slowly the grass gave way to new plants. Slowly, perennials found their favorite place and now, dance in the winds and show us their beauty. They found their place, because several moved here and there, until they were happy. Some will move again.

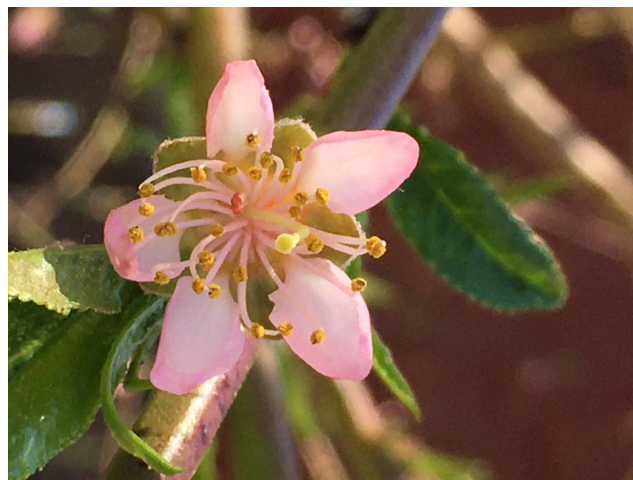
Each new planting season comes with new possibilities. Each new year things changed, and for a long time I worried about my weeds, about how late I was in planting, about my design that never came to an end.

This year things changed once more. But now, it was a bigger change. We had to adapt. We had to stop. Best thing ever!

Since January our family started living on a plant-based diet. What a change! We were adapting to a new life when Covid happened. And we found that we had had enough of eating the SAD- Standard American Diet.

Going back to the garden... as we had to stop, we had to be home more, we had more time to think, to talk, to cook, to eat. Our lives slowed down, and we concentrated on the good we had happening. We were healthier than ever before. We were enjoying every minute in the garden.

I found enough weeds to keep me busy when I had to think. Enough bugs to share our produce. Enough patience to wait for the ones that during their cycle looked like they were going to eat it all. Then they finished, and life bloomed once more. Of course, I'm not sure if we could have ever enough peach trees for the number of squirrels we have. But, we did enjoy the flowers.



Learning about enough is a lifelong experience. And it can make you feel light and happy...

Of course, one could never, ever have enough hugs, kisses, and laughs 😊

Enjoy your garden! Enjoy your life! And at the end of the day, just be happy, because you did enough.

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## Your Questions Answered

Have a question or comment for Master Gardeners? Email us at [mcmgnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:mcmgnewsletter@gmail.com) or post questions to our FaceBook page, [Minnehaha Master Gardeners](#). You may also email garden questions to SDSU Extension Garden Line at [sdsu.gardenseast@sdsu.edu](mailto:sdsu.gardenseast@sdsu.edu).

Q - What's this bug eating my grape plants and zinias?



A - As it stated by Mary Roduner, former SDSU Extension Consumer Horticulture Field Specialist it is called Japanese beetles (*Popillia japonica*) and are pest beetles that came from Japan around 1916, damaging many crop and ornamental plants. They have been serious pests in the Eastern US for many years and have moved into South Dakota in the last few years.

While larvae, which are white grubs, do not do a large amount of damage in lawns compared to other white grubs, the adult life stage does the most damage. Adults like to feed in groups and give off a pheromone called an aggregate pheromone. This lets other beetles know where a good food supply is. They are good flyers and will smell food sources up to a mile away.

Adult beetles feed on leaves giving them a lacey appearance. Damaging the leaf surface by eating the tissue between leaf veins reduces the amount of food the plant can produce by photosynthesis, reducing vigor and ultimately killing the plants. Larvae feed on grass roots in sod. Beetles feed on trees, ornamental plants and food crops. Their favorite foods are soybeans and any other form of bean.

If you want to learn more about them, please visit: <https://extension.sdstate.edu/japanese-beetles>

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*Thank you to everyone that contributed to the newsletter!*