



A word about Minnehaha Master Gardeners: We are volunteers trained through the South Dakota State University Extension [Master Gardener Program](#). The mission of MMG is to enhance and supplement community educational efforts of the SDSU Extension Master Gardener Program and to provide research-based education and information on horticulture and environmental stewardship. For more information on becoming a Master Gardener, visit [SDSU Extension Master Gardener volunteer program](#)

Stay in touch with Minnehaha Master Gardeners' news: [on Facebook](#), [our website](#), or [email us](#).

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## Find out more about us!



# MMG Helps Community Gardens Bloom

## Leaders Park Community Garden

Dan Heinemann, Master Gardener

I am a first year Community Garden manager at Leaders Park on the east side. Many of the gardeners at Leaders Park are from all over the world. It is rare for me to go to the garden to tend my plot and not meet a new gardener.

It has been a challenge for all of us to keep ahead of the weeds with all the rain. Most of the plots look great and are well cared for. We have had two gardeners give up their plots for varying reasons. Other gardeners snapped the plots up very quickly.

It is fun to see the excitement these gardeners have when working their plots.

There are many families represented in the garden. There are whole plots of potatoes and other vegetables. I have been asked to water and check on plots while they are on vacation so it gives the garden a family feel.

If you have not been involved I would encourage you to give it a thought.

## Mary Jo Wegner Arboretum Teaching Garden

Jerry Mills, Master Gardener

The successes and failures of the cool-season vegetable bed was the focus of the June Teaching Garden public tour. All eight Teaching Garden beds were discussed by the various Minnehaha Master Gardener bed managers. The public tour attendees had numerous garden questions and concerns. The Master Gardeners provided research-based information and answers to all questions. Everyone received a free Garden Journal from McCrory Gardens to record their month-to-month gardening exploits.

The Teaching Garden public tours are held the second Tuesday of each month, 7:00 pm, at the Mary Jo Wegner Arboretum lower level. The next tour is July 8th and will include the tour and the newest experiment at the Teaching Garden, a straw bale garden.

There's no charge to attend and the public is welcome. Come and learn! Come and get your gardening questions answered! Look for the signs!



We have seven amazing gardens in Brandon and Valley Springs this year. Tickets for the tour will be on sale through Eventbrite soon.

Tickets will also be available at Sunshine/Lewis in Brandon 12:00-4:00pm, ONLY on the day of the tour. Watch for details on our [Facebook](#) page and also on our [website](#).

## Gloria Dei Community Garden

Dean Trautman, Master Gardener

The Gloria Dei Community Garden, in just its third year of existence, is proving to be a dynamic addition to Southeast Sioux Falls.

The partnership between the church congregation, the city of Sioux Falls, and the Minnehaha Master Gardeners is working well.

A diverse group of gardeners in 2025 are exhibiting many gardening skills and abilities. The 40 plots have already started producing early season crops such as radishes, lettuces, herbs, and kohlrabi with mid season crops like peas, beans, cucs, and zucchini soon to mature. Over 150 tomato plants will be producing bushels of tomatoes in the weeks to come.

Stop by 5500 E. 57th St. to see what's happening!

Photos from Dean Trautman,  
Gloria Dei Community Garden





## What Influences When Tomatoes Ripen

Carla Goetsch, Master Gardener

We are getting closer to the time when we can pick that first ripe home-grown tomato. And many of us may think that the hotter the weather the faster the tomato will mature, which is not true. So, what does influence how tomatoes ripen?

**Temperature:** The best temperature range for ripening green tomatoes is 70-75 degrees F. Tomatoes will ripen outside this range, but the process is slower. When temperatures are 85 to 90 degrees, the plants don't produce lycopene and carotene, the two pigments responsible for ripe tomato color. When the temperature is high for an extended period, the ripening process may stop, and you could end up with orange or yellowish green tomatoes. There is not much you can do other than to be patient until the weather cools.

**Too Much Nitrogen:** Over-fertilizing tomatoes spurs the plant to divert energy to producing leaves instead of the business of ripening fruit. Cut back on fertilizing when plants start setting fruit.

**Too Many Fruits:** If there are too many tomatoes on the vine trying to ripen at the same time, this can slow the process. As difficult as this may be, removing some of the tomatoes will help the rest ripen quicker.

**Type of Tomato:** In general, the larger the tomato, the longer it takes to ripen once it gets to its full size. A cherry tomato may only take a couple days, and a huge heirloom fruit may take a couple weeks. Know what kind of tomato you are growing and how it should look when ripe. Certain varieties are ripe and may still be green, yellow or orange.

**Ripening green tomatoes after harvest:** When temperatures are consistently below 50 degrees, tomatoes won't ripen on the vine. Pick full size tomatoes that have at least a hint of color and store them at 60-65 degrees. Undeveloped tomatoes will not ripen. Tomatoes don't necessarily need sunlight to ripen. Place them in a paper bag with an apple or banana to speed up the process. These fruits give off ethylene gas that helps tomatoes ripen.

# Growing Artichokes in the North

Debi Ulrey-Crosby, Master Gardener

What can I say? “I love artichokes.”

Having lived in California for many years, I am used to getting artichokes everywhere all summer. In South Dakota, not so much. And when I do find them in the store, they are really small. So, after finding out that one of our Master Gardeners, Karla Smith, was growing artichokes last summer, I decided to give it a try.

Karla grew them for the architectural interest in her garden. They look like beautiful, giant thistles. I know, I know...who wants to grow thistles in their garden?

But these are different. Trust me.



*Photo by Karla Smith, 2024 garden artichoke*

Anyway, put away your spade; we aren't digging these out and I'm not going to let them bloom; I'm going to eat mine!



*Photo: Lubbeck Avalanche Journal*

Let's begin with a bit of artichoke history. The Globe Artichoke is often confused with the Jerusalem Artichoke, which is a tuberous relative of the sunflower, while the Globe Artichoke is closely related to the Cardoon, which is an edible and ornamental plant.

Humans have been eating the stems, leaf stalks and the immature large flower buds since biblical times. Many believe that it was likely introduced to Europe by the Arabs. Thomas Jefferson grew the globe artichoke at Monticello and with the immigration of the Italians, better selections of artichokes were introduced.

Commercial growers purchase root stock, vegetative divisions or potted nursery plants for consistent stock. The home growers in the north, like South Dakota, where winters are harsh, can grow artichokes from seed with a little extra work.

Artichokes are botanically perennials. They grow roots, stems and leaves the first year, then produce flowers the second season. But through a technique called vernalization

(chilling), we can trick it into thinking that the plant has gone through a mild, mini winter and is now growing in its second season – the season in which it produces the artichoke flowers.

Before it was realized that this process would work, one would have to move to California or a similar climate in order to successfully grow artichokes to eat.

I planted two different varieties (Green Globe and Imperial Star) in seed starting mix in February (8-12 weeks before our last frost) and kept them on heated mats in a small greenhouse in my sunroom. Even though my sunroom gets east, south and west sun, I provided 16 hours of supplemental lights with 8 hours of rest (no added lights) once the seed germinated.

When outdoor temperatures were around 50 degrees consistently, I gradually moved them into slightly larger pots (4") and in early May, began the vernalization process by setting them outside on my front porch under protection for 10 days, while making sure the temperature didn't drop below 50 degrees.

After 10 days, I brought them back into my indoor greenhouse with lights as before. I have planted them in my garden only recently, but they are growing and enjoying these recent rains.

Artichoke plants get huge. They can be 4 to 8ft tall and 4 to 5ft wide, so give them plenty of space in the garden and preferably not in your raised bed unless you're willing to give up a lot of space.



*Debi next to artichoke in Monet's Garden, Giverny, France 2025*

Now that mine are in the ground, I just have to wait and see what grows. I will post updates on the artichokes as the season progresses. Keep your fingers crossed!

**Resources:**

Matt Mattus, Growing with Plants

Charles Dowding-Globe Artichokes YouTube:  
Charles Dowding@CharlesDowding1nodig

Johnny's Selected Seeds

Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds/Rareseeds

# Tomato Plant Wilting - What to Do

Carla Goetsch, Master Gardener

A tomato plant may be a bit of a drama queen. It may look great one day and then be wilted the next day.

## Common causes of wilt

**Drought Stress:** Tomatoes have greater water needs than other garden plants. They may battle through stress by wilting during the day and reviving in cooler nighttime temperatures. Tomatoes require 1 to 2 inches of water per week to thrive, depending on the soil type. So properly water your plants.

Water when the soil two inches below the surface is dry to the touch. It is better to water slower over a long period of time. Soaker hoses are better than watering just with a hose. Try to avoid getting the foliage wet, watering at the base of the plant to cut down on fungal and bacterial diseases.

**High Heat:** Temperatures above 90 degrees can cause wilt during the high temperatures of the day, recovering at night. Again, make sure your tomatoes are properly watered to help the plants survive the hottest days.

**Nearby Walnut Trees:** Juglone is a chemical exuded from the roots of walnut trees. Remember tree roots may reach well beyond the canopy of the tree. Juglone may exist for years in the decomposing roots of a walnut tree that is removed. Using containers to grow the tomatoes are the only solution to this problem.

**Fungal Wilt Disease:** If your plant is well watered and still wilting, it may be related to a fungal disease. These fungi enter the plant through its roots and block the movement of water and nutrients.



A sign of fungal wilt is brown streaking just under the surface of the stem tissue. Remove any of the affected plant. Since these fungal spores can over-winter, the best way to reduce the risk is for plant rotation and consider planting more resistant varieties such as 'Celebrity.'

**Bacterial Wilt:** Likely your plant will die quickly and not even turn yellow before turning brown. There is no cure. Avoid planting tomatoes in this location for 4 years.

**Other tips to avoid wilt:** Grow in full sun with well-drained soil. Provide 1 to 2 inches water per week. Stake plants to keep foliage off the ground.



# A Wee Bit of Grass



JoAnn Christensen, Master Gardener

Summer is a time to relax and enjoy our lush green lawns as we labor over the grill and prepare for backyard cookouts. It is a time to appreciate the effort we put into our backyards. And, if you have a pet, you know your yard takes on an extra beating.

Dogs that dig may need some additional toys, play time or walking time to minimize digging. Pet urine also can be an issue. The more one fertilizes a lawn, the greater the burn from pet urine. I tend to fertilize my lawn so it is lush and green. I carry a bottle of water with me when I take my dog outside for her bio breaks. I immediately rinse the urine spot with a bottle of water. There will be less burn and more green but I will take the enhanced green. However, other dog owners aren't aware of your dog. As a result, dogs will mark their territory so additional dog urine may result, especially in boulevard areas.

The damage may be minimized by rinsing dog urine immediately after it hits the grass. I started taking my dog to a different area other than my boulevard. There are a lot of dog walkers in my neighborhood and an area closer to my house won't be accessible to other dogs on a leash.

If there is damage, remove the dead grass. I generally cut it out with garden designated scissors. I use a combination product for repair which provides seed and holds the grass seed in place. You can also add soil made for lawns and mix in seed. Water it regularly and wait for the grass to grow. Another option is to regularly hose down the area and keep your dog confined to one area for potty breaks.

Step 1:  
Remove  
dead grass.



Step 2: Add  
grass soil and  
grass seed or  
a repair patch  
product.



Step 3:  
Water  
regularly.



The new grass is  
very fragile so  
avoid mowing  
over it for 2 to 3  
weeks or per  
package  
recommendations.



# Gardens of the UK: Six Gardens in Six Days

## Part 2 - Gardens of Edinburgh

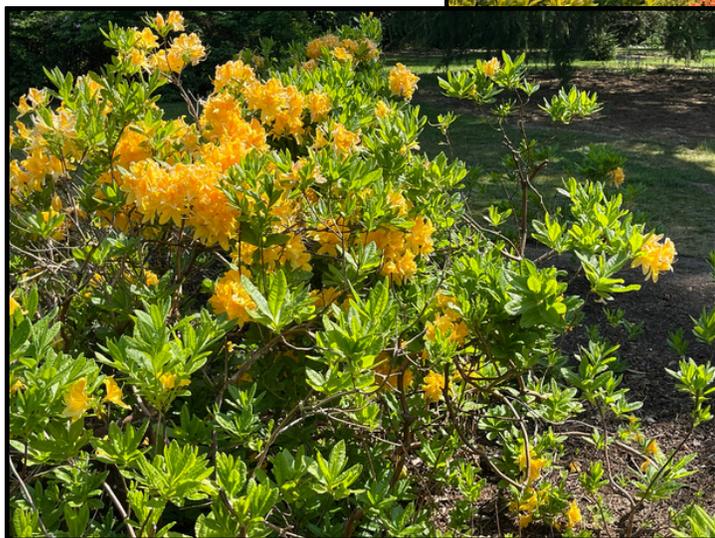
Candy Van Dam, Master Gardener

A group of 27 horticulture students, Master Gardeners and gardening aficionados toured gardens of the United Kingdom in May. The June newsletter highlighted gardens the group toured in London, England. This month features gardens in Edinburgh, Scotland.

On Sunday, May 11, we took the train from London to Edinburgh. On the way, we saw **fields of canola** and grazing sheep. After arriving, our group split into smaller teams to explore Edinburgh.



Our small group headed for Princes Street Gardens. Located in the center of the city, Princes Street Gardens is near the National Gallery of Scotland and the Scott Monument.



Genus name: *Rhododendron*  
Family name: Ericaceae  
Common name: Azalea



Scientific name: *Davidia involucrata*  
Family: Nyssaceae  
Common names: Handkerchief tree, ghost tree



Scientific name: *Meconopsis betonicifolia*  
Family name: Papaveraceae  
Common name: Himalayan poppy

The Royal Botanical Garden of Edinburgh was, for me, the highlight of the trip. In addition to the garden’s beautiful collection of rhododendrons (more than 819 species), it is a scientific center for the study of plants, their diversity and conservation.

The Royal Botanical Garden’s plant health and host/pathogen laboratory facilities (below) are licensed for work with quarantine-listed plant pathogens, either on host plant material, soil or as pure cultures.



The Gardens of the UK tour concluded on Tuesday with a tour of Dunbar’s Close, (above) a small, formal garden tucked away in a “close” – Scottish for alley or small street. Designed in the 1970s by a landscape architect, the garden is styled after the formal gardens of the 1600s and provides a sense of peace and beauty.



And after six gardens in six days, our Gardens of the UK was complete. Thank you again to John Ball and Sydney Trio for a delightful, educational experience.

# A Guide to Efficient & Effective Watering

Candy Van Dam, Master Gardener

Watering your garden is one of the most important aspects of gardening, but it can also be one of the trickiest. From overwatering to underwatering, improper watering techniques can harm your plants. Watering from the ground level—using methods that deliver water directly to the roots—can be highly effective and water-efficient.



## Why Watering from Ground Level is Important

- **Targeted Watering:** Watering directly at the base of the plant ensures that moisture reaches the roots where it is needed most, rather than just wetting the surface.
- **Water Conservation:** Ground-level watering minimizes water evaporation and runoff, making it more efficient, especially in hot or windy conditions.
- **Disease Prevention:** Overhead watering can create an environment conducive to fungal growth as water droplets linger on leaves and stems.
- **Deep Root Growth:** When plants receive water at their roots, they are encouraged to grow deeper, which helps them become more drought-tolerant over time.

## Best Ground-Level Watering Methods

There are several techniques for watering your garden from the ground level. The best method depends on the size of your garden, the types of plants you're growing, and your water availability.

### 1. Drip Irrigation Systems

Drip irrigation systems are ideal for gardens with a variety of plants. These systems consist of tubes with emitters that release water slowly at the base of each plant.

### Benefits of Drip Irrigation:

- Water is delivered directly to the roots
- Reduces water waste and runoff.
- Perfect for beds with multiple plants

### How to Set Up:

- Install tubing along your garden rows.
- Place emitters near each plant's root zone.
- Use a timer to ensure consistent watering.

### 2. Soaker Hoses

Soaker hoses allow water to seep out along their entire length, delivering moisture slowly and evenly to the soil. These hoses are laid out on the soil surface and can be covered with mulch to minimize evaporation.

### Benefits of Soaker Hoses:

- Provides even coverage over a large area.
- Minimizes water waste.
- Requires little maintenance.

### How to Use:

- Lay the soaker hose along your garden bed, near the plants.
- Connect the hose to a water source.
- Cover with mulch to retain moisture.

### 3. Watering Cans

While watering cans may not be ideal for larger gardens, they are perfect for smaller spaces, raised beds, or plants that need more individualized attention.



#### **Benefits of Watering Cans:**

- Ideal for small or container gardens.
- Controls how much water each plant receives.

#### **How to Use:**

- Slowly pour water around the base of each plant, ensuring the soil is evenly moistened.

#### **4. Basin or Bucket Watering**

This method is especially useful for deep-rooted plants, trees, and shrubs.

#### **Benefits of Basin Watering:**

- Allows for deep watering.
- Water seeps slowly into the ground.

#### **How to Use:**

- Create a small mound of soil around the base of the plant to form a “basin.”
- Pour water directly into the basin, allowing it to slowly soak into the soil.
- Repeat as necessary.

This method is great for trees and shrubs, as it allows you to water deeply, encouraging root development.

#### **5. Wicking Beds and Self-Watering Containers**

This method is ideal for gardeners looking for a low-maintenance and efficient watering solution.

#### **Benefits of Wicking Systems:**

- Provides consistent moisture to the soil.
- Water is used efficiently, reducing waste.
- Excellent for raised beds and containers.

#### **How to Use:**

- Create a wicking bed by adding a layer of water-absorbing material (like gravel or perforated pipe) at the bottom of the bed.
- Fill the bed with soil and install a reservoir at the bottom.
- Water is drawn up to the soil as needed, ensuring plants receive consistent moisture.

#### **Tips for Efficient Ground-Level Watering**

Regardless of the method you choose, here are a few tips to make your ground-level watering even more effective:

- Water early or late in the day to reduce evaporation and ensure the water reaches the roots before the heat of the day.
- Water deeply, not frequently, allowing the soil to dry slightly between waterings. This encourages plants to develop deep, strong roots.
- Check soil moisture before watering. A moisture meter or simply sticking your finger into the soil can help determine if the plants need water.
- Use mulch to retain moisture, reduce the need for frequent watering, and keep the soil cool.
- Avoid overwatering. Overwatering can lead to root rot and other plant diseases. Ensure your plants have good drainage and only water when necessary.

Watering your garden from ground level is not just about saving water—it’s about creating a healthy, thriving garden that grows deep roots and resists disease.