



JULY 2021

WHAT'S GROWING ON?

TCFPC Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture
Working Group

CGUA MEETING NOTES

The Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture working group met on May 20th at 3pm.

Meeting Notes:

- **Grow Southeast** - Jesse provided updates on Alethia Temple, Tabor Farms, and Opal's Farm; Jovita's Kitchen has reached out, wanting to join the group; a major challenge is infrastructure costs for Tabor Farms, including irrigation, a shed, and a parking lot; Jesse raised issue of how to communicate with funders that grants are needed not just for education, but for infrastructure to support new urban ag projects like these.
- **School Gardens** - Mary Jo gave an update on the current state of school gardens in Fort Worth, based on her own observations and a survey she is leading for CGUA; we discussed hosting an open conversation about school garden challenges & resources for Dig Deep.
- **TAFB Community Garden Program** - Susan shared news that HeadStart is looking to put in new gardens at their sites, Brewer MS is installing accessible raised beds, Southside Community Garden now has a vacant lot to use, and Pine Tree Community Garden recently installed irrigation.
- **Dig Deep** will be at BRIT this year on July 17th. Let us know what session topics you would like to see. Email Becca at becca.knutson@tafb.org.

The next CGUA meeting will be on Thursday, July 1st at 3pm. **Meeting ID: 947 4419 8004. Password: 916500.** All are welcome to join!

For questions and more information about CGUA, contact our co-chairs, Dave Aftandilian at d.aftandilian@tcu.edu or Charlie Blaylock at shinesfarmstand@gmail.com.

IN THE NEWS

- How the Farmer's Market Nutrition Program helps people at the Cowtown Farmer's Market
https://www.nbcdfw.com/news/local/farmers-market-nutrition-program-makes-fresh-produce-accessible/2659117/?_osource=db_npd_nbc_kxas_eml_shr
- The Tarrant Area Food Bank's Learning Garden cultivates change in teaching people to grow their own food <https://www.nbcdfw.com/news/local/tarrant-area-food-bank-learning-garden-cultivates-change/2654347/>
- Gardening non-profit in Austin, TX serves underprivileged communities <https://spectrumlocalnews.com/tx/austin/news/2021/06/28/black-lives-veggies-brings-gardening-to-underserved-communities->
- A look at one local family's urban farm born in the pandemic <https://spectrumlocalnews.com/tx/austin/news/2021/05/15/north-texas-family-starts-an-urban-farm-during-the-pandemic->

Events & Classes

NEXT CGUA MEETING

July 1st, 3pm

Meeting ID: 947 4419 8004

Password: 916500

DIG DEEP CONFERENCE

July 17th, 2021 at BRIT

Register TODAY:

<https://digdeepconference2021.eventbrite.com>

SAVE TARRANT WATER

Backyard Composting - July 1st-9th

Organic Gardening - July 11th-17th

Virtual Garden Tour - July 13th

Gardening for Pollinators - July 17th

DIY Drip Irrigation - July 27th
<https://savetarrantwater.com/events/>

SAT. & WED.
8AM-12PM

Cowtown Farmers Market

3821 SOUTHWEST BLVD



"Do what we
can, summer
will have it's
flies."

**RALPH WALDO
EMERSON**



JULY TO-DO

Plant fall tomatoes late
in the month.

Plant pumpkins in order
to get a harvest for
Halloween.

Continue to plant corn,
summer squash, winter
squash, dried beans,
okra, southern peas and
sweet potatoes.

Water planting areas
deeply, but infrequently
during dry periods.

Turn the compost pile
and mulch bare areas.

Start broccoli, cabbage,
mustard, kale and
cauliflower seeds inside
for fall planting.

JOIN US FOR THE DIG DEEP CONFERENCE!

Join Tarrant Area Food Bank and the Tarrant County Food Policy Council for another great gardening conference at BRIT | Fort Worth Botanic Garden on July 17, 2021 from 8am to 4pm. The details are coming together very nicely for us to have an exciting event.

Growers from across North Texas will come together in the spirit of education and passion for what the soil can produce. Dig Deep: A Conference for Growers provides a unique opportunity for growers from different fields to share experiences, knowledge and resources. All conference topics are suitable for beginner- and intermediate-level growers.

Session topics will include: School Gardening in Fort Worth, Refarming Black Land Loss, The Spirituality of Agriculture, The Myths of Seed Saving, Empowering Communities Through Food, and much more! Our presenters will be divided between five different breakout sessions that will last an hour each. Attendees will be able to choose the sessions that best fits their needs.

Throughout the day, there will be breaks that can be used for networking, visiting the vendor tables, and picking up a beverage or light refreshment. Lunch will be catered by Tarrant Area Food Bank's Mission Kitchen led by Production Chef Robyn Frascella. Many of the ingredients for the lunch will be gathered from TAFB's gardens or purchased from local farms. The selections will be fresh, healthy and full of great, local food!

TAFB's President & CEO Julie Butner will provide the welcome and set the tone for the day. The lunch hour will make space for conference attendees to network and connect about ongoing garden projects.

Volunteers are needed to help with registration, moderating panels, monitoring breakout session rooms, preparing lunch, and welcoming conference attendees. If you are interested in volunteering, please email Becca Knutson at becca.knutson@tafb.org.

If your organization would like to host an educational vendor table at the event, please fill out this form: <https://tafb.wufoo.com/forms/sinp2ccp1ek4arx/>

For more information and registration, please visit
<https://digdeepconference2021.eventbrite.com>.



SEASONAL VEGGIE FUN FACTS - HOT PEPPERS

It is estimated that 50,000 varieties of peppers exist. Peppers come in many different shapes, colors and levels of heat. Most peppers are ready to harvest in 60-90 days.

- Peppers are believed to be one of the first domesticated crops. Evidence of cultivated peppers can be traced back 6000 years in Mexico and Peru.
- Hot peppers are rated on the Scoville Scale which was invented by pharmacist Wilbur Scoville in 1912. Bell peppers rate at a zero while the Carolina Reaper rates at 1,500,000!
- The heat in peppers comes from capsaicin which is a crystalline compound found in the ribs of the pepper.
- Capsaicin and water don't mix. Drinking water after eating a hot pepper will only make the pain worse! Eat or drink something from the dairy food group. Casein, a protein found in dairy products latches on to the capsaicin and scrubs it away.

For more fun facts about hot peppers, visit:

<http://justfunfacts.com/interesting-facts-about-chili-peppers/>



@TARRANTCOUNTYFOODPOLICYCOUNCIL

Summery Succotash

Recipe by: Hannah Lamar Gibson

This is a beautiful dish in which summer produce takes center stage. Highlighting crunchy okra, sweet corn, juicy tomatoes, and hot peppers, this succotash can combine much of the summer garden's harvest for a great side dish for a barbecue or dinner.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
- 1 jalapeño, serrano, or habanero pepper, finely diced and to taste
- 2 ears of corn, kernels cut off
- 2 cups of fresh okra, sliced into coins
- 2 cups of fresh tomato, diced or halved (if cherry tomatoes)
- Salt and pepper to taste



PREPARATION

- In a large skillet or sauté pan heat olive oil.
- Add your prepared onion, garlic, and hot pepper into the olive oil and cook for about 5 minutes, stirring regularly, until fragrant and just starting to brown.
- Add in your okra coins and stir in to coat in oil. Add a pinch or two of salt and cook the okra with the onion mixture for a few minutes.
- Add the tomatoes and corn into the pan and cook until the tomatoes begin to soften and release their juices.
- Season with salt and pepper to taste and enjoy!



GARDEN RESOURCES

Local Nurseries:

Archie's Gardenland
Calloway's

Free Seeds:

TAFB Community Garden Program;
communitygarden@tafb.org
GROW North Texas

Bulk Soil/Compost/Mulch:

Living Earth
Silver Creek Materials
City of FW Drop-Off Stations

Garden Curricula:

CGUA-
<http://www.tarrantcountyfoodpolicycouncil.org/resources---reports.html>

Community Food Systems Map:

<http://www.tarrantcountyfoodpolicycouncil.org/local-food-systems.html>

VIRTUAL GARDENING CONTENT

BRIT | Botanic Garden

[youtube.com/user/BRITplanttoplanet](https://www.youtube.com/user/BRITplanttoplanet)

Dig Deep Conference 2020

[tarrantcountyfoodpolicycouncil.org/dig-deep-conference-2020](https://www.tarrantcountyfoodpolicycouncil.org/dig-deep-conference-2020)

Tarrant Area Food Bank

[youtube.com/user/TarrantAreaFoodBank](https://www.youtube.com/user/TarrantAreaFoodBank)

Tarrant County Master Gardeners

[youtube.com/c/TarrantCountyMasterGardeners](https://www.youtube.com/c/TarrantCountyMasterGardeners)

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

[youtube.com/c/txextension](https://www.youtube.com/c/txextension)





CHARLIE'S TOP CROPS

Purple Hull peas
Gita Yard Long Beans
Early Girl Tomatoes
Waltham Butternut
Sugar Pie Pumpkins
Green Magic Broccoli



FARM RESOURCES

Organizations & Associations:

Texas Organic Farmers &
Gardeners Association
tofga.org

Farm and Ranch Freedom
Alliance
farmandranchfreedom.org

Texas Department of Agriculture
texasagriculture.gov

USDA Farm Service Agency
fsa.usda.gov

USDA National Institute for Food
and Agriculture
<https://nifa.usda.gov/>

SHINE'S GARDEN CHATS

July is upon us and I hope you are enjoying all the fruits of your spring garden. Housing developments are sprawling out to my area now, so I have been battling with displaced deer for my produce. I'll be building 8-foot-tall fences as soon as I can get all the materials together. We had a great haul of strawberries because I always cover them with shade cloth to keep the birds out, and it kept the deer out, mostly. I have some temporary protection that has allowed me to get some tomato plants big enough for a good fall harvest. The bell peppers and eggplants are starting to produce, as are the yard-long beans. Yard-long beans are closely related to black-eyed peas, so they still produce when the heat has stopped the green beans, and are a great substitute.

Even though we haven't really gotten into the heat of summer yet, it's time to start thinking about the fall garden. The most common question is, "What do I do with my tomato plants?" The beauty of gardening is that the answer is, "Whatever you want to do with your plants!" These are the most common options: replant, let them grow until fall harvest, or pull them and replace them. If you replant, I recommend looking for an early variety, like Early Girl, or a solid performer, like Celebrity. Fall tomatoes are a gamble with early freezes, so raise your chances of a harvest. If you let them grow, you can prune side growth, or suckers, but be careful because pruning the main stem too harshly can kill the plants. Spring tomatoes usually stop producing about the first week of August. If you harvested all you need, or want, feel free to pull those bad boys out, amend the soil and plant something else. There will still be time for cucumbers, squash, green beans, and then the later fall crops.

Before we get too wrapped up planning what to plant in August, let's take a look at what we can plant in July. We still have time to put in transplants of tomatoes, eggplants, and all kinds of peppers. If you didn't start any back in late May, luckily the local nurseries and feed stores are carrying them much later into the year than they used to. Shade cloth helps baby transplants adjust to that Texas sun. I prefer the knitted 30% kind because I can cut it to the shape I need without unraveling, and as long as it isn't near a sharp trellis, lasts for a very long time. July is a good month to directly seed black eyed peas, or my preferred variety, Purple Hull peas, Butternut squash, pumpkins, and okra. In the afternoon, I like to work in the shade. That's where I start the seeds of my transplants for August. I start my seedlings in the shade in the coolest part of my yard, on the North side of a building under a tree, then move them out under shade cloth when they have germinated. The beginning of July is a good time to start broccoli, cabbage, Napa cabbage, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, for transplanting between August 15th and September 1st.

The farmers markets are loaded up with peaches, watermelons, cantaloupes, tomatoes, squash, and all the summer produce. Find the closest certified market to you, and go meet your farmers! Until next time, drink lots of water and enjoy the shade!

I'll talk to you soon,
Charlie Blaylock
Shine's Farmstand

Visit Shine's Farmstand on Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/shinesfarmstand>