

NOVEMBER 2024

WHAT'S GROWING ON?

TCFPC Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture Working Group

CGUA MEETING NOTES - 9/19/24

The CGUA working group met on September 19th at Tarrant Area Food Bank. Eleven people were in attendance.

Lauren Hickman and Mark Quast provided a tour of TAFB's Ag Hub after the meeting. The Ag Hub currently helps TAFB receive and distribute more produce to those in need. In the future, the facility will also house an early learning facility, market and edible garden space.

During the meeting, we also received updates from several different groups:

- Lauren Hickman provided updates from TAFB's Community Garden Network.
 - They are currently working on gathering year-end data from their partner gardens to show the impact of the last fiscal year (Oct.-Sept.).
 - Three of the partner gardens are currently recruiting volunteers through TAFB's system.
 - TAFB would like to grow their garden network in the next fiscal year.
- Joey Hughes provided updates from the Grow Southeast group with a focus on the happenings at Opal's Farm.
 - All of the Grow SE farms are looking for volunteers!
 - Grow SE has begun some major work on suggesting updates to the current urban agriculture ordinance.
 - At Opal's:
 - There will be a 5k in November - they need volunteers.
 - They are currently in a good place for a nice fall harvest. Lots of crops planted already with more on the way.
 - Field trips will start up again in October.
- Becca Knutson reminded the group about the current, local farmers markets and encouraged everyone to visit their favorite one.
 - The Farmers Market Nutrition Program and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program began in May at Cowtown Farmers Market and will run through October of this year.
- MaryJo Greene shared news about school gardens.
 - School is back in session and students are getting back out in the dirt.
 - Several area schools were awarded small grants for the school year which will help keep more gardens up and running!
 - MadeGreene is currently mentoring 30 different schools.
 - The shared space MadeGreene is occupying at the Ridglea Giving Garden is working out very well for professional development events and opportunities.

We are always looking for newsletter submissions, both big and small! If you have a poem, pictures, events or articles to share, please send them over to tarrantcountyfoodpolicycouncil@gmail.com.

The next CGUA meeting will be on Thursday, November 14th at 3pm. Location, TBD.

For questions and information about CGUA, contact our co-chairs, Dave Aftandilian at d.aftandilian@tcu.edu or Lauren Hickman at lauren.hickman@tafb.org.

Events & Classes

NEXT CGUA MEETING

November 14th, 3pm

Location: TBD

TCFPC GENERAL MEETING

TCFPC Networking Meeting

Nov. 7th, Details TBD

FORT WORTH BOTANIC GARDEN

<https://fwbg.org/calendar-events/main-event-calendar>

NTX SCHOOL GARDEN NETWORK

Garden workdays are posted!

<https://ntxschoolgardennetwork.org/events>

COMMUNITY LINK MARKETS

Azle Farmers Market

<https://azlefarmersmarket.org>

Saginaw Farmers Market

<https://www.saginawmarket.org/>

MINDFUL MARKET

November 2nd, 11am to 2pm

<https://coactntx.wixsite.com/funkytown-mindful-ma>

COWTOWN FARMERS MARKET

EVERY Saturday, 8am to NOON

www.cowtownmarket.com



“The August noon in us works to stave off the November chills.”

RAY BRADBURY



Featured Farm

ARMAGH CREAMERY

Owners: McDowell family

Location: Dublin, TX

TYPE OF OPERATION:
Dairy farm

GROWING METHODS:
Pasture raised, heritage breed cows, on-site creamery, organic

TYPES OF PRODUCTS GROWN/RAISED:
Yogurt, cheese, and raw milk

WHERE TO FIND THEM:
Cowtown Farmers Market and other drop sites
armaghcreamery.csaware.com



TO-DO TO GROW FOOD IN NOV!

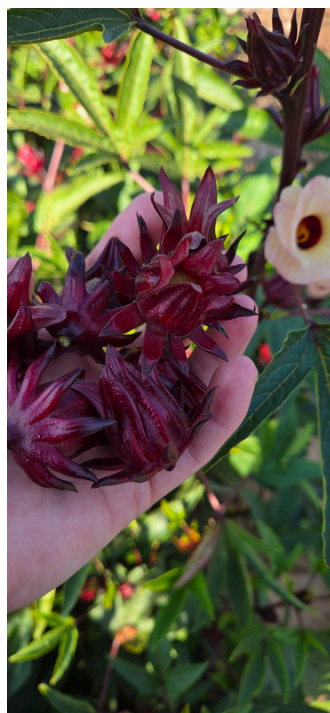
BY BECCA KNUTSON, HOLLOW TRACE MARKET FARM

TIPS AND TASKS FOR GROWING FOOD IN NORTH TEXAS

I keep hoping for a month with fewer chores and tasks in order to focus on organization, bookkeeping and planning, but the weather continues to be mild and the summer crops still need tending and harvesting. Hopefully we can find some rest, relaxation and time to enjoy family this month amongst the garden tasks.

- **Continue planting your cool season crops** - While it may be riskier to plant larger winter crops like broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage without protection, smaller crops like radishes, turnips, salad greens, lettuce, kohlrabi, and fennel can be planted throughout the winter. They are tolerant of our winters and thrive with a light frost cloth when the weather gets chilly. See Greg’s article on the last page for advice on frost cloth!
- **Harvest and remove summer crops** - Many of you may still have okra, beans, tomatoes, peppers and eggplant still producing since we’ve had such a warm fall. Continue to harvest them until the first frost takes them and then remove the dead crops from the garden as soon as you need the space.
- **Continue with maintenance tasks** - If you’re anything like me, you still have weeds growing all over the garden that can be cleaned up in preparation for a winter rest or for more cool season crops. If you’re resting during the winter, this month is a great time to clean up your borders, tend to your compost pile and apply mulch where needed.
- **Plan for irrigation and watering** - Continue watering crops and newly planted seeds and seedlings. As the weather cools, decrease the amount of water your plants receive. Monitor the forecast for potential rain and cooler nights. Be sure to protect your irrigation and water source during freezes.
- **Make any final plans for winter** - Do you have frost cloth available to use as the weather begins to shift? Will you be using mulch, landscape fabric or greenhouse plastic at all in your winter setup and have it available? Will you even be growing winter crops or will you take a break until the new year?

There is a lot to do in the garden in November (or maybe not)! Have fun and embrace the changing of the seasons and everything it brings. Happy growing!



Sweet Potato Bread

Recipe from Casey Elsass

When the temperature drops, the days are short, and a cozy vibe is in order, one autumnal treat is better than the rest: Sweet Potato Bread! This delicious treat can be enjoyed all season long, just freeze the unglazed loaf for up to 3 months, defrost and serve!

INGREDIENTS

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 2 large eggs
- 2 Tbsp. sour cream
- 1 c. granulated sugar
- 1 c. mashed sweet potato (from canned sweet potato or a 10-oz. cooked sweet potato)
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 c. vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 c. all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- Include your favorite mix-ins: (1/2 c) pecans, golden raisins, chopped dates, coconut, chocolate chips, hazelnuts
- Add spices as desired: 1 tsp. ground cinnamon, 1/2 tsp. ground ginger, 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg, 1/2 tsp. ground allspice, 1/2 tsp. ground cloves

Topping

- 1/2 c. powdered sugar
- 4 to 6 tsp. whole milk, plus more as needed
- 1/4 c. chopped pecans, toasted

PREPARATION

- Preheat oven to 350°. Coat a 9"-by-5" loaf pan with nonstick spray.
- Make loaf: In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, sour cream, and sugar until combined. Whisk in sweet potato, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, allspice, cloves, and salt. Whisk in oil.
- Use a rubber spatula to fold in flour and baking powder until just combined. Fold in pecans and raisins.
- Transfer batter to prepared loaf pan. Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 60 to 70 minutes. Set on a rack and cool completely in pan.
- Make topping: In a small bowl, whisk together powdered sugar and 4 teaspoons milk. Add up to 2 teaspoons more milk until icing is just barely runny.
- Remove loaf from pan and transfer to a cutting board. Drizzle icing all over top of loaf, letting it drip down sides. Sprinkle toasted pecans on top. Slice and serve immediately.

IN THE NEWS

- **Bonton Farms launching FARMacy program with healthy low or no-cost meals, education, and medical monitoring** <https://www.nbcdfw.com/news/local/bonton-farms-launching-farmacy-program-with-food-is-medicine-mantra/3635173/>
- **Black farmers in Texas build a home-grown community with nonprofit support** <https://www.keranews.org/environment-nature/2024-10-23/black-farmers-in-texas-build-a-home-grown-community-with-nonprofit-support>
- **City kids focus on food chain basics at the Arlington Agricultural Science Center** <https://fortworthreport.org/2024/10/01/city-kids-focus-on-food-chain-basics-at-the-arlington-agricultural-science-center/>

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-map.html>

VIRTUAL GARDENING CONTENT

BRIT | Botanic Garden

youtube.com/user/BRITplanttoplanet

Paperpot Co Blog & Podcast

<https://paperpot.co/the-blog/>

Tarrant Area Food Bank

youtube.com/user/TarrantAreaFoodBank

Tarrant County Master Gardeners

youtube.com/c/TarrantCountyMasterGardeners

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

youtube.com/c/txextension



GREG'S TOP CROPS

Radishes
Beets
Salad Mix
Mustard Greens
Turnips



FARM RESOURCES

Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance
farmandranchfreedom.org

GROW North Texas
grownorthtexas.org

Natural Resource Conservation Service
nrcs.usda.gov

Texas Center for Local Food
texaslocalfood.org

Texas Health Resources Community Hope
<https://www.texashealth.org/About-Texas-Health/Community-Hope>

Texas Department of Agriculture
texasagriculture.gov

Texas Organic Farmers & Gardeners Association
tofga.org

USDA Farm Service Agency
fsa.usda.gov

USDA National Institute for Food and Agriculture
nifa.usda.gov/

OPAL'S PICKS

It's hard to believe that November is already here! Thanksgiving is right around the corner and what would Thanksgiving Dinner be without wonderfully fresh produce from the farm or garden?

We've been super busy with an abundant Fall harvest and certainly hope you all can say the same. We'll be harvesting our sweet potatoes next week (thanks for the sweet potato slips, Becca!). Our kale, collards, and mustard greens are going full steam ahead. The okra is still growing strong from the summer, cantaloupes and watermelons are still producing, and all our pumpkins have been harvested just in time for Halloween and Thanksgiving.

Salad greens and lettuce are doing likewise, and the green beans just came in. We should have several good picks before the first frost hits. Our winter squash should also be ready before the frost.

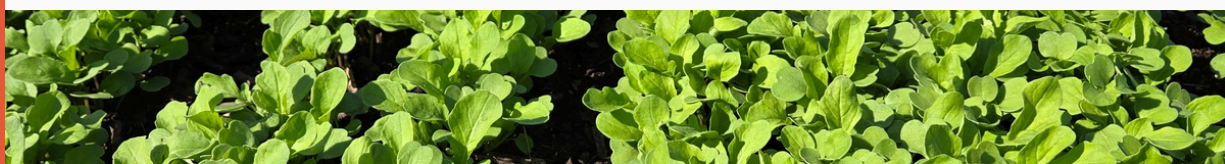
The Old Farmer's Almanac sets the first frost date on November 20th. The National Weather Service says November 22nd so it looks like we need to be ready to harvest the rest of our Fall tomatoes and get ready to cover many of our crops by then. We've already put out the support hoops on the rows in preparation for cold weather. We've found Agribon 30 frost cloth to be sufficient frost cloth for our needs here (barring another 2021 deep freeze), especially when combined with the Agribon 19 insect cloth that we cover most of our bio-intensive beds with.

Agribon is available from several suppliers online. We prefer Agribon as it's easier to use with larger spaces. It comes in several weights for insect and frost protection. The Agribon 19 is a light-weight insect cover that allows about ninety percent of the sunlight to get through. We use it year-round for certain crops. Agribon 30 is a middle-weight frost cloth that allows about seventy percent of sunlight through. It's great for our North Texas winters. They also have heavier cloth for colder climates, but as the climate warms each year it is probably way too heavy for the North Texas growing zone.

The most wonderful thing about North Texas growing is that we can usually grow year-round with a little preparation and cooperative weather. We have a number of root crops in the ground – various radishes, beets, Haukeri turnips, – and they'll all overwinter well. The long-term weather prediction for this winter calls for warmer than usual temperatures and drier than normal precipitation. October is a great example – far above average temps and no rain until the last couple of days of the month. We're hoping we have great crops to overwinter. We hope you do, too!

P.S. – Opal's Farm Stand is now open every Saturday from 8 AM until Noon. Please visit us at the farm stand or at Cowtown Farmers Market on Saturday mornings!

Greg Joel
Farm Manager - Opal's Farm
<https://www.facebook.com/opalsfarm>



NTxSGN Farm to School Grant Data Report

Grant Cycle September 2023 - July 2024



Growing the North Texas School Garden Network: providing opportunities for connection, support, and collaboration among urban educators to increase student access to edible gardens in schools.

In-School Work

We helped school garden programs in **4** different schools across **4** school districts in Dallas/Fort Worth.

"Our participation in this grant program has been a great source of learning, community connections, and student engagement."

School Principal

"THROUGH THIS GRANT IT HAS SHOWN US HOW CRUCIAL SCHOOLS' ADMIN AND PRINCIPAL'S SUPPORT IS TO THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL GARDEN."

Garden Educator

"Student participation in all 4 school gardens increased due to their involvement in this program."

NTxSGN Data Analysis

"I JUST LOVE THE GARDEN!"
Second Grade Student

169

Teachers involved

1,697

Children served

 **196**

Community members

10

Tasting events held

 **100%**

Schools involved reported their programs improved due to our participation

GARDENS + EDUCATION = 

Professional Development

3 workshops were delivered to over **50** garden educators.



"The workshop was very informative and helpful. I got several practical ideas and met some wonderful people."

Workshop Attendee

"THIS GROUP IS WHAT I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR THESE PAST FEW MONTHS."
Workshop Attendee

 **100%**

Participants found all the workshops valuable and left feeling supported in garden education

Expanding Networks *MAKING A DIFFERENCE!*

Engaged **12** stakeholders to further networks goals/mission.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for us helping school gardens share resources, collaborate, and make a difference!"

Community Stakeholder

2,832

New visitors to the website

 **9%**

New Facebook followers

 **24%**

New Instagram followers

 **24%**

Email newsletter open rate