

SEPTEMBER 2024

# WHAT'S GROWING ON?

TCFPC Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture Working Group

## CGUA MEETING NOTES - 7/11/24

The CGUA working group met on July 11th at Texas Christian University. Twelve people were in attendance.

Jhamal Huckaby and Diamond Moss gave a presentation all about Tabor Farms. From the beginning of the story to the most recent updates, the group got to learn more about the beloved urban farm. Tabor Farms is a nonprofit farm located in Southeast Fort Worth. They collaborate with Grow Southeast, Afrogreen'd, Black Heart Association and other community organizations to help improve health and food access in the surrounding areas. Learn more about Tabor Farms at <https://coactntx.wixsite.com/grow-southeast/greater-mount-tabor>

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

- Greg Joel provided updates from the Grow Southeast group with a focus on the happenings at Opal's Farm.
  - Blue Zones Project has been purchasing excess produce from the farms attending the Mindful Markets.
  - At Opal's:
    - There will be a 5k in November - they need volunteers.
    - Next year, they will be adding another acre to their production area.
    - The farmstand is currently not doing very well due mostly to weather.
    - They are getting an intern through Hope Farm.
- Becca Knutson reminded the group about the current, local farmers markets and encouraged everyone to visit their favorite one.
  - New markets include: Kennedale, Crowley, Azle and Alvarado. Most have Facebook pages or websites to visit for information.
  - 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.
- Anne Santana reminded everyone that it is summer and school gardens are resting at the moment. School begins on August 14th.

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](mailto:tarrantcountyfoodpolicycouncil@gmail.com).

The next CGUA meeting will be on September 19th at 3pm. Location, Tarrant Area Food Bank, 2525 Cullen St. Fort Worth, 76107. Sid Richardson Meeting Room, 1st Floor.

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

## Events & Classes

### NEXT CGUA MEETING

September 19th, 3pm

Location: TAFB, 2525 Cullen St. 76107  
(Sid Richardson Room, 1st Floor)

### TCFPC GENERAL MEETING

TCFPC Networking Meeting  
Thursday, Sept. 5th 5:30-7pm  
Community Link, Saginaw

### AGRILIFE EXTENSION

Texas Strawberry Conference  
Tuesday, Sept. 10th 8:30am-4:30pm  
[More Information Here!](#)

### 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>

Lake Worth Farmers Market  
<https://lakeworthmarket.com/>

Saginaw Farmers Market  
<https://www.saginawmarket.org/>

### MINDFUL MARKET

September 7th, 11am to 2pm

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

### COWTOWN FARMERS MARKET

EVERY Saturday, 8am to NOON  
[www.cowtownmarket.com](http://www.cowtownmarket.com)



“One of the first conditions of happiness is that the link between man and nature shall not be broken.”

LEO TOLSTOY



## Featured Farm

### SKYE FARMS

**Owners:** Dana Brewer and Travis Brewer

**Location:** Fort Worth, TX

**TYPE OF OPERATION:**  
Indoor urban farm

#### GROWING METHODS:

Clean and sustainable growing practices, indoor under grow lights

#### TYPES OF PRODUCTS GROWN/RAISED:

Microgreens, sprouts, herbs

#### WHERE TO FIND THEM:

Cowtown, Dallas, & Clearfork Farmers Markets  
Facebook & Instagram  
@skye\_farms



# TO-DO TO GROW FOOD IN SEPT!



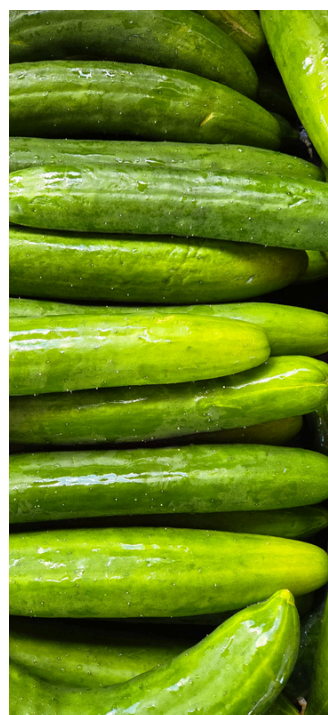
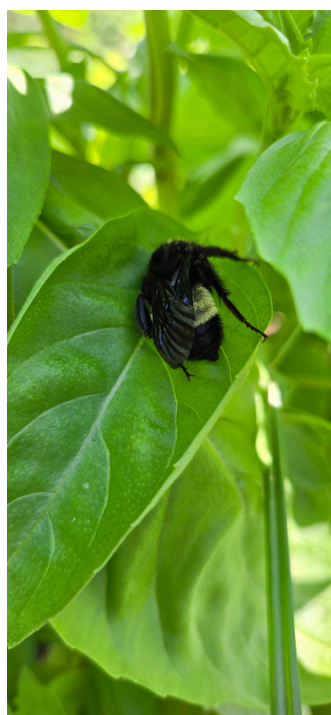
BY BECCA KNUTSON, HOLLOW TRACE MARKET FARM

TIPS AND TASKS FOR GROWING FOOD IN NORTH TEXAS

September is an exciting time to grow food in North Texas! We are finally getting to move out of the consistently high temps and start planting some fall crops. I love the shift of seasons and when cool weather and warm weather crops get to be harvested at the same time!

- **Harvest summer crops!** - Many of our favorite summer crops can be harvested until the first frost. So, you may be harvesting tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, cucumber, okra, melons and more for a couple more months!
- **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 fall crops.
- **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.
- **Begin planting your fall crops** - Many of our favorite fall crops can be planted this month. Monitor the temperatures and consider shade cloth or pushing out your plantings if the weather remains warm. Keep planting broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, mustard greens and Swiss chard. Make room for other crops like beets, carrots, radishes, lettuce, peas, turnips, kale, kohlrabi and endive! These crops can be planted beginning this month as well. Garlic and strawberries get planted in October - start prepping for these crops!
- **Begin planning for winter** - As you are putting in your crops for fall, begin thinking about preparations for winter. Will you plant all available space with crops or do you plan to let some areas rest for the winter under mulch or cover crop? 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 September! Get out there and enjoy some cooler weather and the bounty of the season. Happy growing!





# Watermelon Agua Fresca

Recipe from Sara Wells

Cool down with this light refreshing fruity cold drink on a hot summer's day!



## INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups of watermelon
- 1 ½ cups of cold water
- Juice of 2 limes
- Mint sprigs
- Honey, simple syrup, or agave

## PREPARATION

- Place watermelon and water in a blender and blend for about 30 seconds. Strain through a fine-mesh strainer.
- Add lime juice and sweeten to taste with honey, agave, or simple syrup.
- Serve over ice with mint sprigs. Enjoy!



## IN THE NEWS

- Fort Worth Botanic Garden and Union Gospel Mission partner to fight food insecurity by planting a garden to donate food to the community <https://www.nbcdfw.com/news/local/fort-worth-botanic-garden-union-gospel-mission-partner-fight-food-insecurity/3623326/>
- USDA updates Farm Loan Programs for Agricultural Producers <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Texas/news-releases/index>
- Cookbooks Helping us cut food waste and save the planet <https://foodtank.com/news/2024/08/10-cookbooks-helping-us-cut-food-waste-and-save-the-planet-starting-with-our-next-meal/>

## GARDEN RESOURCES

### Local Nurseries:

[Archie's Gardenland](#)  
[Calloway's](#)

### Free Seeds:

[TAFB Community Garden Program:](#)  
[communitygarden@tafb.org](mailto: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](https://www.youtube.com/user/BRITplanttoplanet)

### Paperpot Co Blog & Podcast

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

### Tarrant Area Food Bank

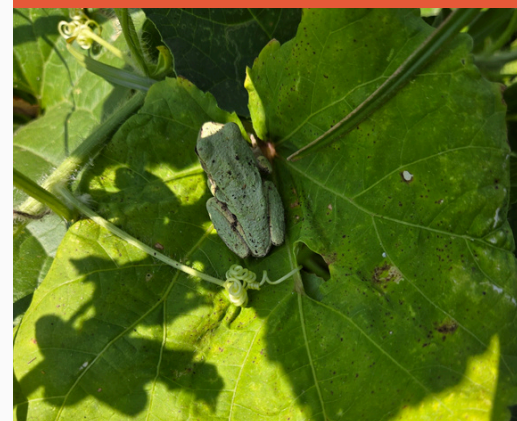
[youtube.com/user/TarrantAreaFoodBank](https://www.youtube.com/user/TarrantAreaFoodBank)

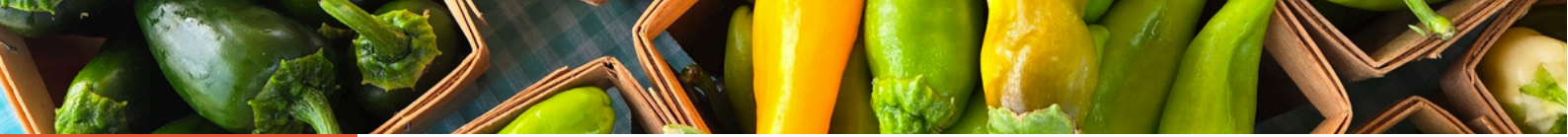
### Tarrant County Master Gardeners

[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)





## GREG'S TOP CROPS

- Green Beans
- Salad Mix
- Mustard Greens
- Turnips
- Broccoli
- Kale



## FARM RESOURCES

Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance  
[farmandranchfreedom.org](http://farmandranchfreedom.org)

GROW North Texas  
[grownorthtexas.org](http://grownorthtexas.org)

Natural Resource Conservation Service  
[nrcs.usda.gov](http://nrcs.usda.gov)

Texas Center for Local Food  
[texaslocalfood.org](http://texaslocalfood.org)

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

Texas Department of Agriculture  
[texasagriculture.gov](http://texasagriculture.gov)

Texas Organic Farmers & Gardeners Association  
[tofga.org](http://tofga.org)

USDA Farm Service Agency  
[fsa.usda.gov](http://fsa.usda.gov)

USDA National Institute for Food and Agriculture  
[nifa.usda.gov/](http://nifa.usda.gov/)

## OPAL'S PICKS

My grandkids started back to school a couple of weeks ago, the forecast for next week calls for a “cool” front and double-digit temperatures, and Labor Day is upon us. We’ve been trying to figure out where summer went (the temps remind us it hasn’t gone far) and rushing to finish getting the Fall beds ready. We’ve already planted some of our Fall crops and most are covered with floating row covers, especially the early brassicas like mustard greens and salad mixes. The winter squashes are coming along nicely despite the summer heat. We’ll soon be enjoying our Fall favorites Butternut and Acorn Squash.

We’ve been trellising and pruning our tomato plants, so they’ll be ready to go when the temperature begins to drop and the blooms begin setting tomatoes again. Some people pull their spring tomatoes and plant new transplants for fall. We never plant fall tomatoes. We leave our Spring plants in the ground and allow them to go dormant during the hottest part of the summer. We continue to feed the plants by spraying compost tea weekly and irrigate them regularly to keep them healthy. Our yield in the fall is often more than the spring harvest but the tomatoes are generally smaller than the initial crop.

I would like to let you all know that we will be hosting a workshop for Grow North Texas at Opal’s Farm on September 5th from 9:00AM to 11:00AM called “Talking Tomatoes with Greg Joel (I didn’t pick the title). The class is free. I’ve included the link so that you can feel free to register and come on out with other local farmers and gardeners to speak about all things “tomato”. We’ll be sharing what’s worked, and equally important, what hasn’t worked at Opal’s Farm.

<https://grownorthtexas.org/event-5804377/Registration>

I hope you all have had a wonderful summer. We’re looking forward to cooler temps, shorter days, and a great fall harvest for all.

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

