

JULY 2024

WHAT'S GROWING ON?

TCFPC Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture Working Group

CGUA MEETING NOTES - 5/16/24

The CGUA working group met on May 16th at UNT Health Science Center. Nine people were in attendance.

During the meeting, we 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 is working on a way to purchase excess local produce for their food pantries - akin to TAFB's purchasing program from 2022.
 - The Mindful Market will continue on the first Saturday of the month at Texas Wesleyan. A location change in the future may increase accessibility to the surrounding community.
 - Opal's Farm staff attended the Growing Hope Conference in Fayetteville, AR.
 - Delve Experiences continues to be a good opportunity for Agritourism income for local farms.
 - Blue Zones Project continues to host educational workshops with the different farms and Transform 1012.
 - A local Boy Scout will be installing some biointensive beds at Opal's 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.
- Mary Jo Greene and Anne Santana gave great insight into their school garden successes as the school year comes to a close.
 - Made Greene's USDA grant is ending. Mary Jo and Anne talked about their experiences and agreed that it was positive, overall. They learned a lot and will apply for more grants in the future. Workshops for teachers that were born out of this grant will continue, even without funding, because they were so beneficial.
 - Made Greene is looking forward to hosting field trips to their section of the Ridglea Giving Garden going forward.
 - They have also applied for a VELA grant and await the results.
 - Future projects will focus on addressing students' mental health.

During the meeting, the group participated in a seed/plant swap. A few people brought items to share and everyone was able to take home what they wanted.

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 July 11th at 3pm. Location, TCU, SCHAR 4002 (Anthro Lab).

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.

CENTER FOR HUMANS & NATURE: OPEN SUBMISSIONS

<https://humansandnature.org/submission-guidelines/>

Events & Classes

NEXT CGUA MEETING

July 11th, 3pm

Location: TCU, SCHAR 4002
(Anthro Lab)

TCFPC GENERAL MEETING

TCFPC Networking Meeting
Time & Location TBD

FORT WORTH BOTANIC GARDEN

Preserving the Harvest:
Introduction to Pickling
July 6th, 10am-12pm

Good4U: Nutrition 101
July 23rd, 6-7pm

<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

July 6th, 11am to 2pm

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

COWTOWN FARMERS MARKET

EVERY Saturday, 8am to NOON
www.cowtownmarket.com



“To see the Summer Sky Is
Poetry, though never in a Book
it lie -
True Poems flee.”

EMILY DICKINSON



Featured Farm
**BRUSHY CREEK
FARM**

Owners: David Parr & Family

Location: Montauge, TX

**TYPE OF OPERATION:
Small-scale family farm**

**GROWING METHODS:
Sustainable growing methods
that focus on soil health**

**TYPES OF PRODUCTS
GROWN/RAISED: annual fruits
& vegetables**

**WHERE TO FIND THEM:
Cowtown Farmers Market
Denton Community Market
Coppell Farmers Market
Facebook & Instagram
@Brushy Creek Farms**



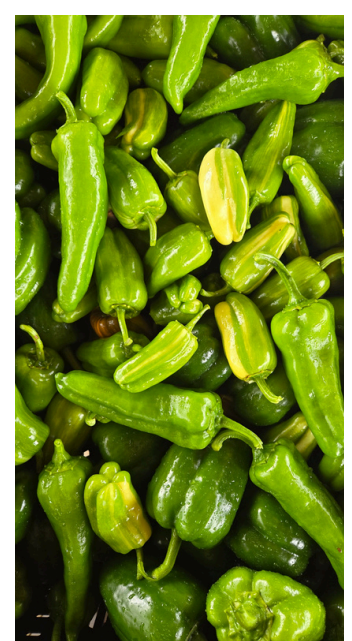
TO-DO TO GROW FOOD IN JULY!

BY BECCA KNUTSON, HOLLOW TRACE MARKET FARM

TIPS AND TASKS FOR GROWING FOOD IN NORTH TEXAS

July is upon us along with triple digit temperatures and a little bit of a lull in garden activity. During this month, farmers and gardeners can focus on maintenance, planning and resting!

- **Harvest summer crops!** - July will bring more harvest from all of our favorite crops like beans, tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, cucumber, summer squash, southern peas and okra. Check your crops every few days for items that are ready to eat. Be sure to look up some recipes, storage tips and preservation options for different crops to make the most of your bounty. It is normal to see a drop in production as the temperatures rise. Keep everything watered and healthy and most crops will continue to produce through the fall.
- **Continue with maintenance tasks** - During the cooler parts of the day, continue to pull weeds, tie up tomatoes, stake peppers and eggplant and observe crops for pests and disease.
- **Plan for irrigation and watering** - Make sure you have a watering plan in place for the hot summer. Whether you are hand watering or have timed irrigation, consistent watering will help your crops survive the upcoming temperatures.
- **Plan for mulch & shade** - Many summer crops will benefit from straw or leaf mulch in the summer to retain moisture and help insulate the soil against the high temperatures. Shade cloth can also be used to extend the harvest and protect from sunscald on peppers and tomatoes. I prefer to use a 30% shade cloth.
- **Begin planning for your fall crops** - As you're harvesting your summer crops and enjoying every delicious bite, make note of things you want to do more of next year or varieties you really enjoyed. You can also start planning for your fall garden. Early season brassicas like cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower can be transplanted into the garden as early as August 15th with shade cloth to protect them. Begin starting these crops inside 6-8 weeks out from when you would like to plant them. I will begin starting my seedlings as early as July 1!
- **Rest and reorganize** - It's hot out there! Be sure to plan time for rest and relaxation this month. Find tasks that can be done inside or in the shade like organizing supplies and doing seed inventory. You've worked hard all year; this is a chance to take a breath.



BLT

Recipe from Hannah Lamar Gibson

Your favorite classic sandwich and the perfect vehicle for tomato season. This recipe is not reinventing the wheel, but focusing on the best of each ingredient and good seasoning.



INGREDIENTS, PER SANDWICH

- 2 slices of bread, preferably a crusty sourdough
- A few slices of a fresh garden or farmer's market tomato
- Bacon, at least 3 slices
- Leafy green lettuce
- Your favorite mayo
- Butter, salt, and pepper

PREPARATION

- Preheat your oven to 375, line a sheet pan with parchment paper and arrange your bacon slices on it. When preheated, cook bacon for 10–15 minutes.
- Melt butter in a saucepan, then place your bread slices and toast them until fragrant and golden on one side. Allow to cool.
- Spread mayo on each slice of bread on the non-toasted side.
- Arrange your tomato slices on one slice of bread, season with salt and pepper. Top with bacon slices, followed by lettuce.
- Place the second bread slice on top, toasted side facing out. Enjoy!



IN THE NEWS

- A look at our areas cultural and agricultural past and the effort to preserve them in the historical black settlements <https://www.star-telegram.com/news/local/fort-worth/article288591341.html>
- The Heirloom Garden Project preserves history, culture, and expertise through gardening and food <https://civileats.com/2024/06/04/oral-history-project-preserves-black-and-indigenous-food-traditions/>
- The Urban Garden Project seeks to help community gardens around the country flourish <https://foodtank.com/news/2024/06/urban-garden-project-to-connect-and-empower-community-gardens/>

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](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

- Tomatoes
- Peppers
- Eggplant
- Peas
- Beans
- Kohlrabi



OPAL'S PICKS

It's hard to believe it's July at Opal's farm. June has finally come to a close and with it almost all the last Juneteenth celebrations. Ms. Opal says that we should celebrate freedom from Juneteenth until July 4th so....

Our Volunteer Appreciation Picnic will be on July 4th starting at 4:00 PM. Everyone, volunteers or just friends of the farm, is invited to the farm for an old-fashioned Independence Day picnic with hamburgers, hot dogs, and goodies from the farm. Then settle in to watch the fireworks from one of the best spots in Fort Worth. You don't have to deal with all the traffic ,either!

Right now, we are enjoying the benefits of summer harvests with lots of tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, and other summer fare. July is the perfect time to finalize plans for our Fall crops, order our seed, do maintenance on equipment, and catch up on weeding and spreading mulch. The last planting date for Fall tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant is July 15th and August 1st is the first day to start planting Fall crops such as beans, peas and kohlrabi.

We don't plant Fall tomatoes but opt to keep our tomatoes growing through summer until it cools off enough to set new tomatoes. We'll start prepping the beds we've been solarizing before those plant dates. Keep in mind that all planting dates are suggestions, and they often depend on the weather and soil temp that all plant dates are suggestions, and they depend on the weather and soil temperatures.

The long-term forecast is for a somewhat cooler and slightly wetter summer season. It's hard to believe considering how June ended, and July began, but they are only predicting twenty-four days of hundred-degree weather. This is summer in North Texas so it's possible I suppose, but we are hurriedly trying to figure out new materials and ways of shading several of the crops, such as our tomatoes and cucumbers, to extend their growing season.

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

FARM RESOURCES

Organizations & Associations:

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 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/

