

HOW'S IT GROWING?

Community Gardens & Urban Agriculture
Working Group Newsletter



CGUA HAPPENINGS

The next CGUA meeting will be on **Thursday, September 21st from 3:00-4:30pm** at Tarrant Area Food Bank, 2525 Cullen St. Fort Worth, 76107 in the 2nd Floor Rosenthal Board Room. www.tarrantcountyfoodpolicycouncil.org/news---events

The last CGUA meeting held on July 13th, hosted at TCC's East Trinity River Campus, was attended by 26 people interested in bringing positive change through gardening in Tarrant County.

Chow Koay made an announcement about a festival he is planning for 2019 and presented the opportunity for gardeners in DFW to order blackberry plants at a bulk rate. For more information, email Chow at chow.koay@gmail.com.

The group also heard from Neale Mansfield about his non-profit, Redemption Landscape, that employs, mentors and trains young men who are homeless or recently incarcerated. Visit Redemption Landscape Services on Facebook to see what all he is up to!

For more information on how to be involved in the CGUA working group, please contact our chair Dave Aftandilian at d.aftandilian@tcu.edu.

EVENTS

8/5, 9:30am
Fall Gardening Seminar
nhrcommunitygarden.com

8/12, 10am-12pm
Composting & Compost Tea Workshop
tarrantmg.org

8/12, 10am-1pm
Transforming Landscapes with Edible Plants
tafb.org/events

8/19, 9-10am
Fall Gardening & Natural Pest Control
tarrantmg.org

8/19, 10am-1pm
Planning Your Fall/Winter Garden
tafb.org/events

8/26, 10am-1pm
How to Start and Lead a Community Garden—Level 1
tafb.org/events

8/26, 1:30-4:30pm
How to Start and Lead a Community Garden—Level 2
tafb.org/events

9/2, 10am-12pm
Permaculture Basics for Home Gardeners
brit.org/events

9/2, 1pm-3pm
Intro to Vegetable Gardening
brit.org/events

WATER IS ESSENTIAL FOR GOOD GROWTH AND PRODUCTION

Dotty Woodson, Ed. D.

The essentials for good growth and fruit production are location, sun, soil, mulch, nutrients and water. Water is essential for irrigation, hand and vegetable washing, drinking, dust control, etc. Water supply comes from either a water provider like the city or groundwater from a well. Water from the city is treated at a drinking water treatment plant to provide customers with the safe drinking water. An annual water quality report is available from every water provider. The water quality report includes the water source. Examples of water sources include Lake Eagle Mountain and Lake Benbrook. The water goes through a water meter which measures the amount of water used. The charge for the water is determined by how much water is used. The water charge is not the only charge on the water bill. Depending on your city, the other charges are waste water, storm water, environmental and garbage/recycle pickup.

If your community garden has its own water meter and no waste water lines, you should speak to the water department about designating the water meter as an irrigation meter on the water bill. This will eliminate the waste water charge on the water which will save you money. If you are sharing the water meter with a support group and the water is also being used indoors, the water meter cannot be designated as an irrigation meter. If you want to install a separate meter just for irrigation, ask that the meter be designated as an irrigation-only meter and avoid the waste water charge. *(continued on p.2)*



WATER IS ESSENTIAL FOR GOOD GROWTH AND PRODUCTION

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How much water is used for irrigation? If the garden is the only water user, the total water used each month is on the water bill. If the meter is shared or you do not receive the water bill, use the meter method to figure out how much water is used. On a day when the entire garden requires water, look at the water meter and record the reading. Water the garden thoroughly. Read the meter again. Subtract the first reading from the second reading. This will tell you how much water is used for one irrigation. If the meter records CCF (hundreds of cubic feet), one CCF equals 748 gallons.

Drip irrigation is the best method for irrigation because the water is dispersed slowly under low pressure directly to the soil. Very little water is lost to evaporation and wind displacement, unlike spray irrigation. Dripline comes in a 1/2 inch diameter with emitters every 12", 18" or more, dispersing water at 0.5, 0.6, 0.9 or 1 gallons per hour (gph) at 25 psi. 1/4 inch dripline has emitters 12" apart. Both 1/2 and 3/4 inch irrigation tubing also comes with no emitters which can be used as delivery tubing. Drip irrigation tubing is easy to install and very affordable. Purchase the equipment for drip irrigation at any irrigation supply company. The tubing goes together easily with tees, elbows and couplings. A pressure reducer, drip irrigation filter and backflow prevent assembly is required. Each manufacturer of drip irrigation has very informative tutorials on their web sites. Contact me at d-woodson@tamu.edu if you have any questions.



DID YOU KNOW?

Many gardeners use straw as an effective and affordable mulch to retain moisture in the garden throughout the year. When shopping for straw mulch, be sure to ask for straw and not hay.

Straw is a wheat by-product, typically the stalk of the plant. Hay is usually alfalfa or grass and is used for animal feed. Hay will have more seed heads that can sprout in your garden and cause a weeding nightmare.

Remember: straw is for mulching and hay is for horses!

RESOURCES

Local Nurseries:

- Archie's Gardenland
- Calloway's
- Redenta's

Free Seeds:

- TAFB Community Garden Program
- Contact seed companies

Bulk Soil/Compost:

- Living Earth
- Silver Creek
- City of FW Drop-off Stations

Garden Curricula:

- CGUA-
www.tarrantcountyfoodpolicy council.org/cgua-working-group.html

Texas AgriLife Extension:

- www.agrilifeextension.tamu.edu



AUGUST TO-DO

- Cut back tomatoes to stimulate new growth and continued production.
- Continue to start fall crops indoors to transplant in September and October.
- Prune blackberries as they start to dry out later in the month.
- Add a layer of compost to each garden bed so it has time to settle before fall planting.
- Direct seed cucumber, squash, dill and basil.



Soba Noodles with Eggplant and Mango

Recipe from *Plenty* by Yotam Ottolenghi

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Servings: 6

Serving Size: 1¼ cups

Ingredients

- 1 cup sunflower oil
- 2 eggplants
- 8-9 ounces soba noodles
- 1 large mango
- 1-2/3 cup basil leaves
- 2-1/2 cilantro, chopped
- 1/2 red onion, sliced

Dressing:

- 1/2 cup rice vinegar
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1/2 red chili, chopped
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- Grated zest and juice of 1 lime

Preparation

1. Wash and peel the eggplant. Cut into 3/4-inch cubes.
2. Warm the vinegar, sugar and salt up in a small sauce pan for 1 minute. Remove from the heat and add garlic, chili and sesame oil. Allow to cool and then add the lime zest and juice.
3. Heat the sunflower oil in a large pan and shallow-fry the eggplant. You may want to do this in 3 to 4 batches. Once golden brown, remove to a colander so it can drain. Sprinkle liberally with salt.
4. Cook the noodles in plenty of boiling salted water. Stir occasionally. Cook until they are tender, which should take 5 to 8 minutes. Drain and rinse well under running cold water. Shake off all the excess water.
5. Cut the mango into 3/8-inch cubes. In a mixing bowl, toss the noodles along with the dressing, mango, eggplant, onion, and half of the herbs.
6. When ready to serve, add the rest of the herbs and mix well.