

OCTOBER 2020

WHAT'S GROWING ON?

TCFPC Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture Working Group

CGUA MEETING NOTES

Virtual CGUA Meeting on September 17th - The Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture working group met last month to touch base on current projects and to brainstorm new ones. Attendance was high with a total of 18 attendees.

- **Michael Higgins of USDA NRCS** gave a presentation about the resources available to urban farmers and community gardeners.
- **Becca Knutson of TAFB** discussed how TAFB efforts to support and increase community gardening in our area will be expanded beginning in October 2020.
- **Jesse Herrera of CoAct** gave an update on the Grow Southeast farm projects and the SARE grant they're applying for.
- **Celina Esekawu of the UNTHSC Community Garden** led the discussion on potential new garden projects and how CGUA can help during and after this time of elevated need.

New Project Ideas:

- Connect underserved areas to resources with long-last solutions
- Community Garden Advisory Committee to mentor new garden projects

Please join us for the next CGUA meeting, Thursday, Nov. 19 from 3-4:30pm. For meeting info and the Zoom link, contact our Chair, Dave Aftandilian at d.aftandilian@tcu.edu.



IN THE NEWS

- Small home development coming to town with urban farming as focus <https://www.star-telegram.com/news/business/growth/article245902885.html>
- The State Fair strives to feed neighbors in southern Dallas via newer techniques in urban farming <https://www.nbcdfw.com/about-nbc-5/community/fighting-hunger/south-dallas-reaps-benefits-of-big-tex-urban-farms/2450082/>
- A look at urban farming in Houston and its struggles and successes <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/local/gray-matters/article/urban-farming-houston-land-costs-13161112.php>
- USDA announces start of county committees focused on urban agriculture <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/news-room/news-releases/2020/usda-announces-new-farm-service-agency-county-committees-for-urban-agriculture-requests-nominations>



Virtual Events

TCFPC GENERAL MEETING

Oct. 1st, 4PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89822829552>

TARRANT AREA FOOD BANK

Kitchen Garden
Cooking School -
Mushrooms Oct. 7

Companion Planting
Oct. 23

tarrantareafoodbank.eventbrite.com

WATER UNIVERSITY Composting Oct. 17

DIY Rain Barrel
Oct. 20

Family Friendly
Gardening
Oct. 22

wateruniversity.tamu.edu/events

BRIT Compost and Compost Tea - Parts 1 and 2 October 3 & 10

brit.org/events

SAT. & WED. 8AM-12PM
Cowtown Farmers
Market

3821 SOUTHWEST BLVD.



"(a
le
af
fa
ll
s)
one
li
ness"

E.E. CUMMINGS



OCTOBER TO-DO

Remove warm weather crops as they finish producing. Cut them from the garden to let the root ball break down and return to the soil.

Continue planting broccoli, cauliflower, kale and cabbage transplants throughout the month.

Continue to direct-seed spinach, lettuce, peas, arugula, radishes, carrots, turnip and beets throughout the month.

Broadcast wildflower seeds throughout perennial beds late in the month.

THE WONDERS OF FALL GARDENING

BY BECCA KNUTSON

Every year, in about mid-September, there is a day that distinctly stands out as the turning point from summer to fall in North Texas. It is the day that surprises you with air that is noticeably more crisp - a little easier to breathe. It is the type of day that makes you stop to appreciate the break from the hot, summer sun. This day seems calm and provides relief. This changing weather indicates to the experienced gardener that it is now safe to begin planting crops that prefer cooler weather.

In mid-September, our gardens are getting tired; the plants are mature and have given all they can give. We've harvested tomatoes, peppers, beans, cucumbers, eggplant, squash and okra. The state of our gardens reflect the hard work it took to produce such abundance. Tomato vines encompass whole raised beds; their leaves are browning and few fruits remain. Eggplant, peppers and okra now stand as small trees, producing at a capacity that slows daily. All signs point to an inevitable change coming to the garden.

Warm weather crops usually grab the attention of the masses - massive tomatoes, spicy peppers, endless zucchini. Homegrown summer vegetables provide a happiness and enjoyment that is hard to rival, but all great things must end. As the cool air settles in and we say goodbye to steamy mornings and long days by the pool, we can also welcome in the beginning of fall gardening.

The crops we can plant during the colder months reflect the weather we encounter. They provide a welcome contrast to the hot chaos of the summer. Onions and garlic stand upright and still, growing slowly and with steady cadence as we march through winter at a reliable, crisp temperature. Cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower are tidy and compact as if they are cuddled up against the cold. Carrots and beets mature secretly underground, protected from the rain and frost. Lettuce grows willingly with a delicate strength that defies first impressions. The fall garden seems more patient and intentional. If only everyone knew the quiet plenty that waits for us!

The fall garden requires less maintenance, but more patience, than a summer garden. Take advantage of sunny days to water, fertilize and pull weeds. On cold, rainy days, watch and wait from the comfort of your home for the beautiful produce you will receive.

If you haven't tried fall gardening, there is still time. The best time to plant is in September and October, but if we're having a mild winter, you can plant throughout the cooler months whenever you have time and open space in your garden. Try planting these crop by seedling: broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, mustard, collards, perennial herbs (oregano, thyme, rosemary, lavender, sage) and kale. Plant these crops by putting the seed directly in the garden: carrots, onion, lettuce, beets, radishes, turnips, rutabaga, arugula, spinach, peas, garlic cloves, cilantro, dill, and parsley.

For more technical gardening information, check out the virtual gardening content libraries listed on page 3 of this newsletter.



Pumpkin Jalapeño Soup

Recipe by: Hannah Lamar

Winter squash is the star of this rich and creamy soup. The vegetable-filled base is punctuated with a subtle heat from the jalapeño that will keep you warm as the seasons change. This soup is flexible: use pumpkin or substitute butternut, acorn, or delicate squash. Make it vegetarian with the use of vegetable stock or vegan with the use of coconut milk.

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups of cooked pumpkin puree, either from your own roasted pumpkin or canned
- 1 medium yellow or white onion, diced
- 1 large carrot, diced
- 1 large celery stalk, diced
- 1 jalapeño or other hot pepper, finely diced
- 2-4 cups vegetable, chicken, or other broth or stock of choice
- 1/2 cup of coconut milk or heavy cream, with about a tablespoon reserved
- Olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste



PREPARATION

- In a heavy bottomed, large pot, heat a tablespoon of olive oil. Add your prepared onion, carrot, celery, jalapeño and a pinch of salt. Cook until starting to brown and fragrant, about five minutes.
- Add your cooked pumpkin to the diced vegetables and stir. Cook for about a minute, and then add in your broth or stock and stir the mixture. Bring it all to a boil, then turn the heat down to medium-low and cook for about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- After the soup has cooked, add in your coconut milk or heavy cream.
- Add salt and pepper to taste at this juncture, When the seasoning is to your liking, remove the soup from the heat.
- At this point, you can eat the soup as is or you can blend it with a standing or immersion blender for a smoother, creamier texture.
- Serve with your favorite bread, and enjoy!

DON'T FORGET TO REGISTER TO VOTE!

With Fall approaching, so are the 2020 presidential elections and the deadline to register to vote! If you aren't currently registered, you have until October 5th to do so. You can register online, here:

<https://www.votetexas.gov/register-to-vote/index.html>

While the world of local community gardening and urban agriculture may seem a tad removed from the realm of national elections, it is as subject to its whim as everything else. So, regardless of political affiliations or preferred candidates, it's important for every farmer and gardener to be informed and exercise their right and responsibility to vote.

Garden Resources

Local Nurseries:

Archie's Gardenland
Calloway's

Free Seeds:

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

Bulk Soil/Compost:

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

Garden Curricula:

CGUA-
<http://www.tarrantcountyfoodpolicycouncil.org/garden-2.html>

Community Food Systems Map:

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

Virtual Gardening Content

Tarrant Area Food Bank
[youtube.com/user/TarrantAreaFoodBank](https://www.youtube.com/user/TarrantAreaFoodBank)

Water University

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

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

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

BRIT

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

Tarrant County Master Gardeners

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

Dig Deep Conference 2020

tarrantcountyfoodpolicycouncil.org/dig-deep-conference-2020

