

HOW'S IT GROWING?

Community Gardens & Urban Agriculture
Working Group Newsletter



CGUA HAPPENINGS

The last CGUA meeting was held on May 31st at the Tarrant Area Food Bank. 8 people were in attendance.

The group discussed ways to network and collaborate with the Southeast Fort Worth Urban Agriculture group. Opportunities to problem-solve and work together on issues pertaining to urban agriculture may arise.

Dave shared a new, three-part curriculum on "Sustainability in Gardening" that was created by TCU student, Henny Rau. Several members of the group will review the curriculum before it is made available for download at www.tarrantcountyfoodpolicycouncil.org.

The next CGUA meeting will be on **Thursday, July 19th from 3:00-4:30pm** at Tarrant Area Food Bank (2525 Cullen St. Fort Worth, TX 76107) in the Rodriguez Meeting Room-2nd Floor.

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

6/5, 6:30pm-8:30pm
Utilizing Seed by
Making Seed Tape
Brit.org

6/7, 4pm-5pm
June Council Meeting
TCFPC Eventbrite

6/9, 8:30am-11:30am
Rainwater Harvesting &
Rain Gutters
tarrantmg.org

6/16, 10am-1pm
Organic Pest Control
Products
TAFB Eventbrite.com

6/16, 1pm-4pm
Garden Leader
Gathering
TAFB Eventbrite.com

7/14, 8am-4:30pm
Dig Deep: A
Conference for
Growers @ UNT
Health Science Center
TAFB Eventbrite.com

M.L. PHILLIPS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GARDEN

LAUREN MESSEMER & CARISSA MILBURN

In a courtyard outside of the school cafeteria, students involved in the Garden Club at Mary Louise Phillips Elementary School grow a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. This after-school program is led by TCU senior, Sylvia Rosenkrans, who teaches 3rd- to 5th-grade students how to grow fruits, vegetables and herbs both inside and outdoors. Andrea, a 5th grader in the club says, "today we're growing pumpkin, squash, watermelon, cantaloupe, zucchini, cucumber, strawberries, kale, and spinach. I get to grow the kale and spinach!" While Malachi placed plants and seeds into soil beds, Daniella, a 4th-grader, explained what they do with their food; "last week we made tabbouleh with our cucumber and herbs. I like eating the food the best." This club meets every Monday and Wednesday, with new students coming in every six weeks. Very soon Sylvia will be teaching a whole new group of students how to garden!



DIG DEEP: A CONFERENCE FOR GROWERS

Becca Knutson, TAFB

Registration is now open for **Dig Deep: A Conference for Growers**! This is the fifth year for Tarrant Area Food Bank's annual gardening conference. It will be hosted by UNT Health Science Center again this year with help from the Tarrant County Food Policy Council and the Cowtown Farmers Market. The conference is scheduled for **Saturday, July 14th from 8am-4:30pm**.

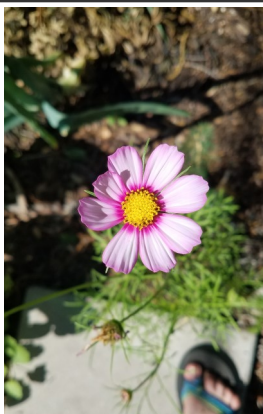
You won't want to miss the educational sessions on topics in the Home, Community and Market Gardening tracks. We will have experts from all over North Texas presenting on topics that no gardener will want to miss.

If you would like to be a presenter at Dig Deep this year, visit www.tafb.org and find the Events page. We are looking for passionate gardeners to share their knowledge with their fellow food growers.

You can also submit an application to be a vendor at the event. Spaces are limited and vendors are not allowed to make any sales—educational information and samples only, please.

This conference is a great opportunity to learn more about gardening, network with other growers in our area and enjoy a day on a beautiful campus when it's too hot to be outside anyways!

To register and get the Early Bird pricing, please visit TAFB's Eventbrite page at tarrantareafoodbank.eventbrite.com.



DID YOU KNOW?

The water from boiled foods can be used to water and feed your garden. After you are done cooking, save the water from vegetables, eggs and pasta to add back to your garden. Make sure to let the water cool first before pouring it back on the garden!

The boiled water will contain nutrients that are needed for the rest of your garden to thrive. Hardboiled eggs leave calcium in the water, spinach deposits iron and potassium, and pasta creates a starchy water that will encourage the release of plant nutrients in the soil.

Adopting this practice will benefit your garden and save water!

To learn about other cooking liquids you can reuse, visit: <https://www.mnn.com/lifestyle/recycling/stories/cooking-and-canned-liquids-you-shouldnt-toss>.

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.tarrantcountyfoodpolicycouncil.org/cgua-working-group.html

Texas AgriLife Extension:

- www.agrilifeextension.tamu.edu

Community Food Systems Map:

- <http://www.tarrantcountyfoodpolicycouncil.org/community-food-systems-north-texas.html>



Easy Tomato Basil Soup

Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 15 minutes
Servings: 6
Serving Size: 1 cup

Ingredients

- 1 Tbs. olive oil
- 1 medium onion
- 3 cloves garlic
- 10 cups fresh tomatoes
- 1 cup basil leaves
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. pepper



Preparation

Chop the onion and garlic.
Remove the seeds from the tomatoes and chop.
Heat a large saucepan over medium heat and add the oil.
Add the onions and garlic when the oil is hot. Cook for one minute.
Add the chopped tomatoes and continue to cook until tomatoes are soft and broken down, about ten minutes. Stir occasionally.
Remove from heat. Add basil, salt and pepper.
Use a blender or immersion blender and mix until smooth.
Serve immediately.

Substitutions

- Canola oil may be used instead of olive oil.
- Use any kind of tomato available. Be sure to remove seeds.
 - Try heirloom tomatoes for a rich flavor.
- Stir in a cup of cashew milk or cream, before pureeing, for a creamy soup.

JUNE TO-DO

- Pinch off basil flowers to promote leafier growth.
- Add leaf or straw mulch to help retain moisture through the hot summer.
- Harvest potatoes early in the month.
- Replace bolted lettuce with Malabar spinach.
- Continue to plant corn, okra, peanuts, southern peas, summer squash, winter squash and sweet potatoes.
- Start seeds indoors for fall tomatoes, if planning to replant.



CGUA PROJECTS

Is there a North Texas gardening matter that you'd like to see more accessible information about? Some specific kind of advice for community gardeners that you've been wishing for? Then please let us know; CGUA is looking for new, small-scale projects to tackle.

All questions and ideas can be sent to our chair, Dave Aftandilian at d.aftandilian@tcu.edu.