

Turnips, Greens and Thanksgiving Pie, Oh My!

Now that the Great Pumpkin has come and gone, it's time to focus on the Thanksgiving table. Luckily, Thanksgiving gives us another opportunity to enjoy the Great Pumpkin in the perfectly pleasurable form of pumpkin pie! However, we need to include some other tasty edibles on not only our Thanksgiving table, but our everyday table. This is the time of the year to plant root crops, leafy greens, legumes and many different herbs.

Cold Weather Gardens

Taking into account the approach of winter, it is now time to prepare our gardens for cold weather. Start by reducing the frequency of watering your garden, but not the duration of watering. Keep in mind, November temperatures may rise and fall as they did in October. Thus, you should adjust your watering accordingly. Additionally, this is the time to get out your frost blankets. Inspect them for damage and replace if necessary. Remember, never use plastic tarps to cover your vegetation. The plastic freezes and will produce a harder freeze for your plants.

Many cool season vegetables and herbs do not need to be covered on freezing nights. In fact, there are many (particularly collards) that get their best flavor after they have been kissed by the frost! However, those of you growing herbs, protect your basil. It is very cold sensitive and needs to be protected. To be on the safe side, cover your basil with frost cloth or bring it inside (if possible) when temperatures reach about 40 degrees.

You may already have your winter vegetable garden planted, but if you don't, this is a great time to get started. Remove any warm season crop plants. If you have enough space available to rotate crop areas, then let the soil remain "fallow" where your warm season crops were planted as it will give the soil a chance to rest. If you need to use the same space, be sure to add plenty of compost and a good organic fertilizer.

What to do with those old vegetable plants? Compost them, of course! However, if the old plants had any disease problems, such as powdery mildew, do not add them to your compost pile. Furthermore, check the old plants for any insect eggs that may be lurking (look under leaves), as they may survive the composting process. Send the diseased and/or infected plants directly to the trash. The best method for the disposal of diseased plants is to bag the entire plant, including any leaves that fall to the ground.

Plants Going to Seed

This time of the year we see many plants going to seed. When a plant "goes to seed" this time of the year, it typically indicates that the flowering phase is over for the year. The end of the flowering phase signifies the onset of fall and winter weather and is usually brought on by cooler nights. As the nights become chilly, the plants instinctively know they should not be trying to produce more growth and flowers that can be damaged by a freeze. So, before going dormant for the season, they fulfill their duty to nature and the cycle of life, by producing offspring in the form of seeds. You may have noticed that some plants, such as the Red Bird of Paradise, have stopped flowering. Throughout the summer, they

produced small amounts of seed, but with the onset of cooler weather the blossoms are spent and the seed pods remain. Another noteworthy bloomer is the Crape Myrtle. Seed pods on this plant are small, round, brown and usually appear in clusters. One other note of importance: If a plant receives inadequate water, it may cause the plant to go to seed early, as well as developing crispy, brown leaves. Inadequate watering comes in different forms. It can be caused by a faulty drip, forgotten or late watering, or even improper watering techniques. Check with your nursery professional to determine the best watering procedures for your plants.

Thanksgiving Recipe – Compliments of Marisa Vines Gray

See our website for growing herbs for Thanksgiving and additional, delicious recipes from Marisa!

Roasted Root Vegetables with Fresh Herbs

Ingredients

- 2 pounds of mixed vegetables (new potatoes various colors, carrots, beets, sweet potatoes, turnips)
- 2-3 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 2-3 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2-3 sprigs fresh oregano
- 4-5 stems fresh chives
- 2 Tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- Olive Oil
- Salt and Pepper

Preparation

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cut herb sprigs into 4" sections. Top & tail the carrots and chop into 2" lengths. Peel sweet potatoes, beets and turnips. Chop these and new potatoes into cubes. Put all vegetables into a large mixing bowl and toss with olive oil until well-coated. Place either in a roasting pan or wrap in a foil packet with the herb sprigs. You may also add several cloves of crushed garlic if desired. Place in oven and roast for about an hour. If using a roasting pan, toss vegetables two or three times to cook thoroughly. If using foil packet, turn two or three times during baking. Test vegetables with a fork to make sure they are cooked. Remove from oven, place in serving dish. Add balsamic vinegar, salt & pepper to taste. Toss vegetables. Serve immediately. Serves 4-6.

Special Extended Holiday Hours

Our Holiday Hours will begin Friday, November 25th and Saturday, November 26th. Our gift shop only will stay open until 7:30 P.M. Watch our website for other holiday shopping hours. Be sure to check out our December Newsletter for Special Holiday Events!

Reminders – Frost cloth

Temperatures are dropping! Be prepared to cover your frost tender plants with Frost Cloth.