This year we celebrate 25 years of the Brown County Community Gardens Program.

Started by the Extension FoodWise program as a food security initiative, and made possible by the Wisconsin Hunter prevention grant, 12 plots were offered. The program quadrupled in size by the second year, offering 48 plots, and a garden coordinator was hired the third year. By the fifth year in 2000 the program expanded to six garden sites, offering 178 plots. Today the program has 12 gardens, on over 4 acres, offering 370 plots and over 230 gardeners.

On August 5th a celebration was held at the Community Church site to commemorate 25 successful years of community gardening! Thank you to everyone who joined us in planting a perennial pollinator garden, donated by Stone Silo Prairie Gardens. It was a great turnout with WLUK Fox 11 and WBAY TV-2 in attendance, as well as representation from all our gardens. Use the links below to view each station’s coverage of the event.

WBAY TV-2: Brown County Celebrates 25 Years of Community Gardens
WLUK Fox 11: Brown County Admires Growth of Community Garden Program On It’s 25th Anniversary

Planting for a Purpose

It’s hard to believe, but depending on the variety, the time to harvest potatoes is almost here! Here is some harvest and donation information for your Planting for a Purpose potato crop:

Harvesting & Curing

Vines will grow upright most of the season. Once they start to sag, the potatoes are reaching maturity. Remove the vines and then harvest about 2 weeks later. (If harvested right away after vines start to sag, the potato skin will be too soft and won’t hold up well.)

One important note: Potatoes will be growing under the ground and need to be dug up. Your plants may develop berries like the ones pictured here. These are poisonous and should NOT be harvested or eaten. Find out more here.

Donating

Click here for a list of pantries that accept fresh produce donations. Pick a convenient location and donate at least half of your potato harvest. Report the total number of pounds donated here. Please make sure to note these are donated potatoes from the free seed potato handout. You can also report any other produce donations using this same form.

We’d love to see photos of your harvest! Send them our way (werya@packers.com & browncountycommunitygardens@gmail.com), or tag #PlantingforaPurpose when you share socially.

Thanks again for participating. Happy Harvesting!

Amanda Wery, Green Bay Packers
Judy Knudsen, Extension Brown County
Common Tomato Problems: A Fungus Among Us

Have you ever had brown spots on the lower leaves of your tomato plant, causing the leaves to turn yellow and die? Well, you are not the only one! There are two quite common diseases of tomatoes that cause concern for gardeners resulting in many calls to the Horticulture Help Desk. The culprits responsible for these problems are early blight and Septoria leaf spot. While these diseases are caused by different fungi, the symptoms created are very similar and management recommendations are the same.

The best management practices begin before the disease hits since with fungal issues it is always better to try and prevent rather than cure. Below are steps you can take in to attempt to stay ahead of these problems.

1. Use varieties that are known to be resistant to early blight and Septoria leaf spot. Please note that “resistant” does not mean immune, so you can’t always solve the problem this way.

2. Fungi thrive with humidity and leaf wetness. Decrease both by spacing out plants, thinning outside branches and watering at the base of the plant rather than overhead (to avoid wetting leaves). The more air flow you maintain within and between plants will help dry the leaves out more quickly.

3. At the base of your plants, place about 1” of mulch like straw, grass clippings (not chemically treated), shredded leaves, etc. This can help prevent fungal spores in the soil from splashing onto lower leaves during heavy rains.

4. Rotate your tomato crops each year. This can be difficult in small gardens or raised beds but moving plants as much as possible to separate them from the fungal source can be helpful.

5. Prune out and destroy (burn or bury) infected leaves as soon as you see signs of infection. At the end of the season, dispose of any affected plants. If you compost, make sure the pile gets to at least 140 degrees to kill the fungal spores.

6. If necessary, apply fungicides labeled for use on vegetables. Products containing copper and chlorothalonil can be effective if applied before the fungus gets too established. Remember- fungicides prevent, not cure.

Black Bottoms on your Tomatoes?

Another common issue we see each year is a physiological disorder known as blossom end rot. Blossom end rot typically occurs on the first fruits formed by the plant while fruit produced later is not affected. This disorder is evidenced by the rotting of the bottom of the tomato (blossom end) which, interestingly enough, is caused by lack of calcium in the plant. In much of northeastern Wisconsin there is limestone bedrock which results in sufficient calcium in the soil. But the problem lies in plants unable to take up the calcium that is present, primarily due to not enough water, too much water or inconsistent water.

To control blossom end rot, water your plants evenly throughout the season at the base (not overhead to avoid fungal issues) and do not overdo fertilizer since excessive nitrogen can compound the problem. If your soil is low in calcium (determined by a soil test), add calcium sources like bone meal to boost levels. Popular tomato varieties like Big Boy are more prone to end rot so a little research to determine varieties less prone to this condition while still meeting your culinary parameters is helpful.

As always, the Horticulture Help Desk at Extension Brown County is here to help you with any of your horticulture issues. Contact us at horticulturehelp@browncountywi.gov or 920-391-4615 and let us know how we can help!

-Doug Hartman, Horticulture Assistant, Extension Brown County
Gardener Submissions

A Paul’s Pantry donation of cucumbers, bush beans, cherry tomatoes, patty pan squash, and onions from CG gardener Kayla!

Zucchini, radishes, and peas from the Children’s Edible Garden will nourish clients at Paul’s Pantry. Have you signed up to share your garden produce with Planting for a Purpose?

Something has been chewing through my cucumber trellis lines and when I went to repair them I noticed a cucumber plant already did the work for me.

Ratatouille, using vegetables from my garden. Kristin – MacArthur Garden

Link to the recipe: https://tasty.co/recipe/ratatouille.

Thank you to our community gardeners for sharing these images and stories with us!

Does That Gardener Ever Weed?

Some of the many things I enjoy about Community Gardens are meeting other gardeners, learning new gardening methods and what culinary treats they grow. In my garden area, I noticed (“volunteer”) plants between my rows that were intentionally growing in other’s gardens and I had seen them at Saturday Farmer’s Market. I asked my garden neighbor about them and confirmed they were mustard greens. She showed me her methods of growing, harvesting and cooking – stir fry.

She also shared that they are a favorite at Paul’s Pantry, so I decided to test the waters. I took a bag of mustard greens to Paul’s several days later and was thrilled when faces lit up! Unless the garden is too wet to harvest, I take a large bag of mustard greens to Paul’s Pantry each Thursday.

I learned they have significant nutritional value: rich in antioxidants and B vitamins and on par with spinach and kale. What initially seemed to be a “weed” to me, is providing nutrition for the Green Bay community. Under the advice of my garden neighbor, I let some plants go to seed, to prepare for next year’s harvest.

So, do I weed my garden? The answer is yes, I do. However, I allow greens to grow in my aisles and some will go to seed...

-Community Gardener, Kris

### Fresh Fruity Spinach Salad

**Ingredients** (2 servings)

- 2 cups fresh spinach
- 1 cup fresh peaches or berries
- 1 green onion, minced
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 teaspoons salad oil
- 2 teaspoons vinegar

**Instructions**

1. Thoroughly wash hands for 20 seconds and dry all food preparation surfaces.
2. Rinse spinach and remove large, tough stems. Drain. Tear leaves into small pieces. Place in a serving bowl.
5. Pour dressing over spinach mixture. Toss. Serve cold.

**Nutrition Information per serving**

- 150 calories
- 3 g fat
- 5 g saturated fat
- 2 g protein
- 15 g carbohydrate
- 2 g fiber
- 30 mg sodium

**Berries**

- Strawberries that are bright red and blueberries that are dusty blue. All berries should be dry and plump. Avoid wet or mushy berries.
- Store in refrigerator. Don’t wash berries until you are ready to use them. Blueberries will keep 10-14 days but strawberries, blueberries and raspberries keep only a few days.

**How much?** 1 pint = 2 cups of berries.

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Thanks to the City of Green Bay’s Food Wise, the Wisconsin Badger Wellness Program – UW, and Madison Community Foundation, for the presentations and work坊. This project is a collaboration of the Community Garden and the University of Wisconsin – Green Bay.
Community Garden Closing Reminders

All community gardens, unless otherwise noted, close for the season on October 15.

Please keep the following guidelines in mind as you prepare your plot for the end of the growing season:

**FOR ALL PLOTS:**
Non-plant material, stakes, all string, cages, etc., must be removed and carried out. Please do not use on-site garbage or dumpsters.

**FOR PLOWED PLOTS:**
Plants may be left in the garden plot. Please knock over tall stalks (sunflower, corn), but do not put your plants in a pile. This makes final inspections harder. Please pile the program’s stakes marking your plot’s corners by your garden’s water tank/source or bulletin board. Please do not keep stakes!

**FOR NO-TILL ROWS:**
Please follow instructions for raised beds, but cut the plants at ground level instead of removing them (roots can be left in the soil). Plants can be put on the grass by the tree that is between the sidewalk and the road. If you do not clean up your plot properly, you will receive a warning and/or fine. Each year, coordinators spend many hours cleaning up others’ plots. Please help us change that this year. Thank you!

**FOR RAISED BEDS:**
Please remove everything, including plants, by November 1 (note later date) so that only the soil remains, shaking off plants to keep as much soil as possible in the boxes. Put plants on the grass by the curb (NOT in the road), but please wait to do this until the City lets us know the date when we are allowed to do so. We will be in touch as soon as this is determined.

Friends of the Community Gardens Fall 2021 Auction.

Join us and help spread the word about the 2021 Friends of Brown County Community Garden Fall Auction.

Auction Dates: Oct. 1–8, 2021
Ending Time: 6 p.m. (highest bid at 6:01 p.m. wins)

How to Join:
On Facebook, search for 2021 Friends of Brown County Community Gardens Fall Auction or enter this link: www.facebook.com/groups/269544131359115. In order to bid, you must “join” this group. An admin will add you as quickly as possible, at which time you will be able to bid. Or, request a link from a Community Garden board member.

Auction Items:
Locally grown and preserved produce, crafts items from our gardeners and supporters PLUS, other Made-In Wisconsin items like wine and chocolate. AND, other great new, home garden and personal care items.

Donate:
Would you like to contribute? Consider your unique crafts, homemade, home-grown, home preserved (only those using recipes from Ball Blue Book or National Center for Home Food Preservation – nchfp.uga.edu), or even store bought new home, garden and other items to the auction. Email or call us for drop off or pick up arrangements: cabw333@aol.com. Items ideally received by Friday, Sept 17 end-of-day, with final donations taken Thursday, Sept 30.

Your Support:
Your auction bids will support Friends of the Community Gardens, a volunteer-run 501(c)3 nonprofit, whose members are united to improve the sustainability, growth and future of Brown County’s Community Gardens program.

Contact: Cheryl Williams, 920–619–8963

Shout-out to Our Landowners!

Bridge Point Church
Church of the Annunciation
City of De Pere
City of Green Bay
Encompass Early Education & Care
Green Bay Community Church
Green Bay Plastics
Sisters of St Francis of the Holy Cross
Village of Hobart

Thank You to Our Partners & Supporters

The Community Gardens Program truly is a community effort that wouldn’t be possible without local support, including support from the following:

Bridge Point Church, Brown County, Church of the Annunciation, City of De Pere, City of Green Bay, Creative Sign Company, De Pere Lions Club, East High School, Encompass Early Education & Care, Inc., Friends of the Community Gardens, the Greater Green Bay Community Foundation, Green Bay Botanical Garden, Green Bay Community Church, Green Bay Packers Give Back, Green Bay Plastics, Home Depot, Green Bay Vets Center, New Leaf Foods, Peaceful Valley Farm & Garden Supply, Schroeder’s Flowers, Sisters of St. Francis, St. Philip the Apostle, Stone Silo Prairie Gardens, United Healthcare, the Village of Hobart, Village of Howard, volunteer plowers and tillers, West High School, Wisconsin Certified Seed Potatoes, and many more. Special thanks to Maryann Bricker for newsletter design assistance.