What the Gardens Teach Us

Carey Thornton, Program Manager Adult Education

Tomatoes, cucumbers, squash and peas. Seattle Tilth maintains several community learning gardens...at the Good Shepherd Center in Wallingford, Bradner Gardens Park in the Mount Baker district, in Rainier Beach and at the Pickering Barn in Issaquah. During the past year we have added two farm-to-market job training programs, Seattle Youth Garden Works and the Farm Incubator Program.

Though these gardens and farms show-off tasty crops throughout the year, our outdoor classrooms demonstrate more than just annual vegetable gardening. These sites showcase clever techniques and features that you can try at home including irrigation, water collection, raised beds, creative use of containers, perennial vegetables and production scale farming.

**Smart Watering**

At Bradner Gardens Park, learn how to integrate a drip irrigation system into your landscape. Check out the automatic drip irrigation lines running throughout the veggie beds and soaker hoses used to water established plantings. Protective mulch prevents evaporation of moisture from the soil. Creative approaches include a 2-liter plastic bottle screwed into a water spike, sending water directly to plant roots.

**Water Collection and Storage**

At the Good Shepherd Center you can see a rain garden where native plants mitigate storm water by slowly absorbing excess runoff into the soil. There are multiple rain barrels that store water for summer use. If you want to collect more water, large cisterns are featured at Bradner and the Pickering Barn in Issaquah.

**Unique Raised Beds**

The Rainier Beach Learning Garden shows off several beautiful raised beds. Constructed out of stacking blocks and rough-hewn logs, they are the perfect

United People's Farm at Red Barn Ranch

Eddie Hill and Katie Pencke, Farm Incubator Program Managers

After months of making plans for our Farm Incubator Program with our new partners at Burst for Prosperity, Seattle Parks Department and Camp Berachah, contracts are signed and seven acres of land are now plowed. One 20’ x 40’ hoop house is up and sheltering plant starts. So exciting! We have reactivated a well on-site for irrigation and 60 yards of Cedar Grove compost has been delivered. The farmer’s chose a name. The United People’s Farm is established and growing!

During our first year, we are working with twelve Somali Bantu farmers, who represent five family businesses. They were resettled to the Pacific Northwest from refugee camps in Kenya. Historically they worked in Somalia as a labor class typically relegated to hard labor and agriculture. Despite this history, the Somali Bantu continue to be very enthusiastic about farming as a way to achieve economic self sufficiency in the United States.

“Farming is hard in America,” is a refrain heard often at the farm. Program participants

Continued on page 3

**Buy our Produce!**

Somali Bantu Family Farmers of Washington (Farm Incubator Program participants) will be at the Des Moines Waterfront Farmers market, Saturdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., June-October. Visit the website and blog for updates about where to buy produce: seattletilth.org/about/farmincubatorprogram.
New Staff and Board Members
Spring Into Action

Spring not only produces crops of fresh veggies but a new crop of board members and staff. Please join us in welcoming three new board members and three new employees to Seattle Tilth.

Joining the Board

Amy Grooms currently lives in Wallingford and works at Nordstroms. Her background as a CPA makes her a valuable member of our finance committee. Besides her business and finance acumen, Amy’s mission is to expand the horizons of what it means to provide organic, sustainable food for the entire Seattle community.

Josh Piper is an avid amateur gardener from the Wedgwood neighborhood. He joined our board because he strongly feels that Seattle Tilth’s core mission is in tune with his concern about the environment, sustainability, the American food system and the health of our communities. Josh works for the local law firm Riddell Williams and is our treasurer.

Anne DeMelle has a strong background in development and fundraising. In her Crown Hill neighborhood she is known for her love of cooking and her specialty “deep-fried poached eggs” (oh yes, they are as amazing as they sound!). Anne loves live music, especially when her husband is in the band. Anne is excited about meeting all our members and looking forward to upcoming events. Anne serves on our development committee.

Now on Staff

Robert Servine leads our teen garden crew at the Seattle Youth Garden Works farm (SYGW). As the program coordinator for SYGW, he is responsible for all aspects of maintaining a productive one-acre farm at the Center for Urban Horticulture. Robert is a Vashon Island resident and ran an organic farm for three years in Roy, WA. Prior to joining Seattle Tilth he also worked at the Chief Seattle Club, which is a day center for homeless and low income Native Americans in downtown Seattle.

Stephanie Seliga is the program coordinator for the Just Garden Project (JGP). JGP seeks to create a just food system and culture of gardening for all people by building free and subsidized gardens for low income families at their homes. Stephanie brings experience in community engagement and organizing; we are excited that JGP adds to the diversity and scope of our organization.

Chris Iberle joins the staff as our new events and volunteer manager. He currently lives in Ballard and enjoys bicycling, camping, hiking and backpacking, playing soccer and traveling. His heart is in the nonprofit social service world and he wants to be an advocate to make good food available for everyone.

Seattle Tilth inspires and educates people to garden organically, conserve natural resources, and support local food systems in order to cultivate a healthy urban environment and community.
Planting the Seeds for Seattle Tilth’s Future

Justine Dell’Aringa, Seattle Tilth Board President

Seattle Tilth is an organization that is well attuned to the seasons. Each year we plant, tend, harvest, and eat the bounty of our gardens. This cycle is reflected in the growth of the organization itself.

Developing and implementing plans, then evaluating and learning from results is how Seattle Tilth has evolved over time. This year, we are nearing the completion of our short-term strategic plan developed in 2009. The goals of that plan included strengthening the organization’s infrastructure, adding much needed staff resources, developing program evaluation tools, and determining an appropriate role in advocacy. Most of our goals have been accomplished, which gives us a stronger base to support future growth and development. Now we’re ready to begin the cycle again and think ahead to 2016.

This summer, the board and staff will come together at a retreat to think creatively about Seattle Tilth’s future. We’ll revisit our mission and vision and discuss what untapped potential there may be to have a positive impact on our community. We’ll spend the day asking ourselves several questions: What important work can Seattle Tilth do that will most benefit our community? What should we do that we’re not currently doing? How can we get better at what we do? Are there new directions we should explore? In short, what is our vision for Seattle Tilth for the next 3-5 years?

For us to develop a robust and exciting plan for the future, we also need to hear from you and from others who care about Seattle Tilth and our community. Please give us your valuable input by taking a short online survey at the following link: surveymonkey.com/s/stmemberv2011. Or contact me directly at justine.dellaringa@seattletilthboard.org.

School Gardens Inspired by Educator Workshops

Lisa Taylor, Children’s Education Program Manager

Teachers, parents and anyone interested in school gardens are learning how to get students growing food during Garden Educator Workshops (GEW). Past participants are doing amazing things with what they’ve learned in our workshops.

The garden at Maple Elementary started like many school gardens do, with the initiative of one teacher, a small grant, and many small hands moving soil and rocks. Since 2004, students in Marcia Ingerslev’s third grade class have been connecting to the natural world and the food they eat in a dynamic outdoor classroom. Marcia is passionate about the garden because the results are rewarding for her students, integrating the garden program into all areas of her curriculum.

Marcia said the GEW is the “single best training I’ve ever taken.” She appreciated the diversity of attendees from childcare staff, to public school teachers, principals and parents. It inspired her to hear everyone’s success stories and learn new tools to integrate the garden into the classroom. Marcia said teachers are busy, and “you can only get them to garden if they know how to integrate it into what they already do.” Seattle Tilth garden educators understand this and consciously work from the classroom perspective to support teachers in their important work.

School gardens make a big difference in the lives of kids and families by encouraging healthy eating and stewardship. Parents report that after working in the school garden they had to start a garden at home because it was so important to their kids. After sampling food from the garden, kids eat and enjoy a wider variety of healthy food asking for second and third helpings of veggies.

Read more stories about wonderful school gardens on our website: seattletilth.org/learn/classes-and-workshops/teachertrainings
Thank You Edible Plant Sale Supporters!

Seattle Tilth sold 60,000 locally and sustainably grown plants thanks to the efforts of 400 dedicated volunteers, 5,000 shoppers and our generous event sponsors. Thank you all!

Plan Now for Fall Gardens and Over-wintering Veggies

Laura Matter, Program Coordinator Garden Hotline

In the Puget Sound we are fortunate to have a mild climate that allows gardeners to stretch the growing season beyond summer without using special season extension tools. This makes it possible to grow lots of greens and cole crops, plants that perform well in cool weather throughout spring, fall and winter. There can be some general confusion about the differences between fall crops and over-wintering plants because they are often planted at the same time and are members of the same cool weather families.

Fall crops are generally grown and harvested in a short window of time, between July and the end of fall. Use varieties that mature in 60 days and thrive in the cooler fall weather like lettuce, a second round of carrots, or a fall crop of spinach or cilantro.

Over-wintering crops can have very long life spans in the garden, exceeding 200 days. Purple sprouting broccoli and garlic are two examples. Or they can be short-season plants that endure the cold of winter, like kale. Some plants, like collards, benefit from that touch of frost which brings sweetness to the leaves. In some cases a plant can be both a fall harvest and over-wintering choice. See the chart for more ideas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VEGGIE</th>
<th>VARIETY</th>
<th>WHEN TO PLANT</th>
<th>DAYS TO MATURITY</th>
<th>WHEN TO HARVEST</th>
<th>F=fall</th>
<th>O=overwinter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arugula</td>
<td>Sylvetta</td>
<td>By mid-Sept.</td>
<td>45 days</td>
<td>Oct.- April</td>
<td>F &amp; O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli</td>
<td>Purple Sprouting</td>
<td>By mid-July</td>
<td>220 days</td>
<td>March-April</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brussels Sprouts</td>
<td>Catskills, Falstaff</td>
<td>By mid July</td>
<td>90 – 100 days</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulbing Fennel</td>
<td>Perfection</td>
<td>By mid-July</td>
<td>75 days</td>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>Mammoth Red Rock</td>
<td>By mid-July</td>
<td>100 days</td>
<td>Oct. until hard freeze</td>
<td>F, possibly O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celeriac</td>
<td>Brilliant</td>
<td>By mid-July</td>
<td>110 days</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chard</td>
<td>Bright Lights, Ruby Red, Fordhool Giant</td>
<td>By late July</td>
<td>55 – 60 days</td>
<td>Sept. until hard freeze</td>
<td>F, possibly O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrot</td>
<td>Meridia</td>
<td>By late Sept.</td>
<td>240 days</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collards</td>
<td>Champion</td>
<td>By mid-July</td>
<td>60 days</td>
<td>Sept.-April</td>
<td>F &amp; O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garlic</td>
<td>Any</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>200 + days</td>
<td>June and July</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kale</td>
<td>Winter Red, Nero de Toscana</td>
<td>By late-July</td>
<td>50 - 60 days</td>
<td>Sept.-April</td>
<td>F &amp; O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leeks</td>
<td>Bleu de Solaize</td>
<td>By mid-July</td>
<td>110 days</td>
<td>Nov.-April</td>
<td>F &amp; O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettuce</td>
<td>Any leaf or butterhead type</td>
<td>By mid-July</td>
<td>50-65 days</td>
<td>Sept.- Nov.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinach</td>
<td>Space</td>
<td>By mid-July</td>
<td>40-50 days</td>
<td>Sept.- Nov.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These generous businesses supported our volunteers:

Ballard Market
Big Dipper Wax Works
Chaco Canyon Café
Essential Baking Company
Field Roast
Fremont Brewing
Mighty O Donuts
Tall Grass Bakery
Veraci Pizza
Chickens in the Big City

Chris Iberle, Events and Volunteer Manager

In urban backyards from Seattle to Miami, Chicago to New York, chickens are fast becoming our new next-door neighbors. Whether supported by increasingly friendly city codes, or kept covertly as a challenge to current laws, more and more local foodies, urban farmers, and fresh-egg-lovers are building coops and raising chickens in the city.

Seattle Tilth’s Chicken Coop and Urban Farm Tour shows off many of the ingenious ways both experts and beginners can house and raise chickens in their own backyards. Someone who went on the tour last year said, “It gave me lots of ideas about how we might have a coop that works with our yard. It was also just a fun and interesting adventure for my family.”

Adding chickens to your urban farm has become easier as land use codes change in many cities. Many city dwellers are now realizing that raising chickens is possible, even encouraged, in their backyards. In cities like Seattle, you can take workshops and find many resources that make raising city poultry easier -- everything from ready-made coops to chicken feed and baby chicks.

In 2011, learning to raise your own chickens in Seattle has never been easier. Seeing is believing! Seattle Tilth’s Chicken Coop and Urban Farm Tour will allow hosts around the city to show off their livestock operations. This year we’ll also highlight other types of urban livestock including mini dairy goats, honey bees and ducks as well as water catchment methods, green building, well designed organic gardens and market gardens - hence the new name! If you can’t make the tour, but want to learn how you, too, can have fresh eggs, goat milk or honey and your own pile of animal manure in your own backyard, check out one of Seattle Tilth’s urban livestock classes at seattletilth.org/learn or our new book “Your Farm in the City” which you can find at local bookstores.

Seattle Tilth’s Chicken Coop & Urban Farm Tour

Take a self-guided tour of Seattle’s most innovative urban farms!
Saturday, July 9, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
In various Seattle neighborhoods.
Get tickets and find out more: seattletilth.org/special_events

What the Gardens Teach Us

Continued from page 1

height for students at South Shore School to lean against and plant their seeds. You can see flocked concrete beds with shapes and baubles pressed into them at Bradner. At the Good Shepherd Center you’ll find two types of beds made from layers of recycled organic waste – a straw bale garden and a hugelkultur bed.

Container Gardens

Container plantings are an important resource for gardeners without a lot of space and integrate wonderfully into larger gardens. At our learning garden in Issaquah, you can see examples of horseradish, comfrey, sunchokes and even a columnar apple tree living permanently in containers. The children’s garden at the Good Shepherd Center features a demonstration patio garden incorporating many different and creative containers.

Perennial Flavors

Because they are easy to care for and have bright textures and tastes, perennial herbs are a favorite in our children’s garden at the Good Shepherd Center. Silver-shield sorrel, fennel, lemon balm, rosemary and thyme are always a hit as well as less obvious perennial eats like cardoons and burdock. And of course, who can forget the espaliered fruit trees and giant fuzzy kiwi vines.

Farm-Scale Food Production

Two new Seattle Tilth programs showcase large scale production. Seattle Youth Garden Works (SYGW) empowers homeless and underserved youth through farm-based education, employment and life skills. Visit SYGW at the Center for Urban Horticulture. The Farm Incubator Program (FIP) provides small farm education, training and support for individuals starting farm businesses at the United People’s Farm in Auburn.

To find out more about these programs and our learning gardens, see our website seattletilth.org/about. Or learn more about these topics by taking a class. Visit seattletilth.org/learn.
The Sophisticated Peasant

The Disgruntled Gardener

You know it’s an unusual spring when your early transplants of lettuces and cabbages actually grow smaller with the passing weeks instead of larger. What’s up with that?

Now, I should say that I can tolerate a slow warming as well as anyone—I grew up in the British Isles—but surely it’s too much to expect any Seattle gardener to tolerate February weather which extends into late April. What’s up with that?

What’s up—the meteorologists tell us—is La Niña which is brought about by cooler equatorial ocean currents in the Pacific. It’s part of an oscillation, they say. What bothers me is the idling about, waiting for the weather to be warm enough for us to plant stuff. I’ve spent March and April preparing beds, sifting through the compost, spreading and tilling and raking—only to end by covering those prepared beds with burlap bags, waiting for the warmer weather we trust will come.

I know that idling about is not the only option open to me. I could be taking care of other kinds of business, such as cleaning the debris off the roof, or putting the garage into good order, or even washing the car. My wife would applaud any of these endeavors, and I do like to please my wife if I can. But it’s June, and this is a gardening month (or should be) and as worthy as those other pursuits may be, they do not involve gardening and do not satisfy the spring urge to plant.

Not all is despair: I do have a phalanx of several kinds of tomato seedlings growing indoors, along with some peppers and squash plants and a few other things. I’ve potted them up once and I’d hoped to be putting them outside before they outgrow the pots they are in now, but if the weather doesn’t warm up significantly they’ll be staying indoors for a while.

He’s no offspring of mine, but that did not stop Little Sam from wandering into my garden last weekend. He lives across the street and seems curious about the things I am up to in my backyard. “What’s in there?” he asked, pointing to the compost 3-binner. “Compost,” I answered (I’m very good with kids). He considered this for a while, and then pointed to the wormbin. “What’s in there?” “Worm compost,” I responded (I love to share the wealth of my gardening experience with the younger generations). Sam liked the worms and the isopods, and enjoyed digging through the pile. Soon Sam returned to his side of the street. No doubt he regaled his family with tales of critters and composting marvels.

Which is all well and good but it’s not really gardening, is it? Bring me the sun! Let me grow!

Ian Taylor welcomes comments and feedback at crookedcucumberearthlink.net.

Make Dandelions Your Next Meal

Julie Cantrell, Marketing Intern

The next time you’re thinking about weeding dandelions out of your yard, save them for dinner instead! Not only are dandelions delicious, but they are incredibly nutritious as well. Loaded with vitamins, minerals and antioxidants, dandelions have amazing medicinal qualities. They are natural detoxifiers and diuretics, and have long been used to treat digestive disorders, arthritis and eczema.

You can eat the entire plant, including the root, stem, leaves and blossom.

Dandelion greens have a bit of bitterness to them, similar to the unique spiciness of arugula. They are best when picked young and tender, but more mature greens can be blanched to improve taste and texture.

Use dandelions to make sautéed greens, salads, syrup, tea, wine, soup and any other dish that calls for sturdy greens. Try this delicious recipe for Dandelion Cream Soup, a quick and easy version of the traditional French soup Crème de Pissenlits.

**Dandelion Cream Soup**
- 2 pounds (about 6 cups) dandelion greens, chopped
- 1 tablespoon butter or olive oil
- 4 cups vegetable stock
- 1 large leek, white and light parts only, cleaned and sliced
- 2 minced garlic cloves
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 1 medium potato, chopped
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Dandelion flowers or petals for garnish

1. Blanch dandelion greens in a pot of boiling water. Drain and squeeze out the excess water. Chop and set aside.
2. Heat butter or oil in a large pot over medium high heat. Add carrots and leek. Cook for 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Add greens and cook another 5 minutes.
4. Season with salt, pepper and Dijon mustard.
5. Garnish with flowers or petals before serving.
Hot Questions
Falah Jones, Educator, Garden Hotline

The Chicken Coop Tour is coming up on July 9. The Garden Hotline takes a preemptive strike with the chicken jokes and questions.

Q. Why did the chicken cross the road?
A. To get to the other side.

Ha, ha! Funny every time. But it’s not so funny when it is your neighbor’s chicken that crosses the road and eats up your row of lettuce. Chicken owners, that’s a good time to share eggs. Seriously, chicken owners, make sure your chickens are safe (think raccoon, dogs) and can’t escape. Now that Seattlites are allowed eight chickens in our backyards, extra care is needed to keep predators at bay and chickens properly cooped. Discourage your hens from “flying the coop” and hopping over your fence by attaching a section of hardware cloth or netting at the top. The hens will then have no place to land. Keep your hens happy at home by providing them with plenty of greens and snacks to nibble on in your own backyard, so they won’t go seeking tastier snacks on the other side of the road.

Q. What happened when the chicken ate cement?
A. She laid a sidewalk!

Seriously, the stuff that your chicken eats is important. Baby chicks can be fed medicated starter feed until they are 16 weeks old. Starter feed should contain 18-21% protein and around 1% calcium. At 16 weeks, you can wean your chicks off the starter feed and give them layer feed (organic or conventionally grown) which has a lower amount of protein (16%) and higher amounts of calcium. Pullets will start laying eggs when they are 20 to 26 weeks old. Add some ground up oyster shells to their feed so that egg shells come out thick and solid.

If you choose to feed your baby chicks organic unmedicated starter feed, you must keep the babies away from any soil, grass, sticks, until they are 12 weeks old. The parasitic disease coccidiosis is endemic in our soils and can be deadly to baby chicks.

If your chicken has a diet that includes greens, e.g. grass, weeds, and table scraps, she will lay eggs that are lower in cholesterol and have a rich golden look and a delicious taste. Remember that chickens are omnivores and love bugs, worms and meat from your table too. Note: lots of garlic might produce a garlicky tasting egg, maybe not such a bad thing!
Learn More  Grow more food, expand your skills and have fun by taking a class!

Two prices are listed for each class; the second price is discounted for Seattle Tilth members. Become a member through our website or use the form on page 7. Advanced registration and payment are required for classes. Class details and registration information are found on our website under the Learn tab. Questions? Call (206) 633-0451 ext. 101.

Classes are held at one of these venues:
BGP: Bradner Gardens Park, 1733 Bradner Place S, Seattle
GSC: Good Shepherd Center, 4649 Sunnyside Ave. N., Seattle
WC: White Center Cultural Community Center; 9421 18th Ave. SW., Room 12, Seattle

Organic Gardening 101, $36/$25
Thursday, June 9; 6-8 p.m., GSC
Thursday, July 7; 6-8 p.m., GSC

Go Vertical, $36/$25
Saturday, June 11; 2-4 p.m., GSC
Saturday, June 18; 10 a.m.-noon, WC
Wednesday, June 22; 6-8 p.m., BGP

City Chickens 101, $40/$30
Saturday, June 11; 2-4 p.m., GSC
Saturday, July 9; 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., GSC

Be Cistern Savvy!, $36/$25
Saturday, June 25; 10 a.m.-noon, BGP

Start Your Fall and Winter Garden, $36/$25
Saturday, July 9; 2-4 p.m., GSC
Wednesday, July 13; 6-8 p.m., BGP

Grow Veggies in your Parking Strip, $36/$25
Saturday, July 16; 10 a.m.-12 p.m., GSC

Garden Educator Workshop: Summer Intensive, $325/$275
July 18-22; 9 a.m.-3 p.m., GSC

Propagation: How You Can Make More Plants, $45/$35
Saturday, July 23; 10 a.m.-1 p.m., GSC

Beyond the Vegetable Garden: Perennial Edible Gardening Series, $95/$75
Thursdays, July 28-Aug. 11; 6-8 p.m., BGP

Easy Techniques for Preserving the Harvest, $45/$35
Wednesday, July 27; 6-8 p.m., GSC

Join the Compost Tea Party

By Graham Haroldson, www from In Harmony Sustainable Landscapes

Stop taxing soils!

Our soils have a right to the nutrients that are cycled and available without being locked up by taxed soil conditions.

Soils should be allowed to freely exchange without the heavy hands of chemical fertilizers interrupting progress and leaching away hard earned nutrients.

We have a right to free soils with the ability to hold and exchange minerals with plants, the atmosphere and organisms, without chemicals encouraging runaway growth or freezing assets.

Grow a School Garden!

July 18-22 - Learn how to grow a garden with kids during a week-long Garden Educator Workshop. Teachers receive clock hours. $325/$275 for Seattle Tilth members.

Summer Camps

There’s still time to sign up for garden adventures! Fun times await kids 1-14 years old in our Wallingford and Rainier Beach children’s gardens. Register at seattletilth.org/kids.

Spoke and Food

June 28 - Bike to and from one of many Seattle area host restaurants and 20% of your bill will be donated to children's garden education at Seattle Tilth. Details at spokeandfood.com.

Omission

In the April/May edition of “Way to Grow” we neglected to credit Karen Luetjen as the author of “Remembering Neal Thayer.” Our apologies!