All Ages Grow Together in the Garden

Sharon Siehl, Garden Program Director

As the sun stays up longer each day, gardeners of all ages begin to dream about spring crops and summer harvests. The joy of every gardener is a new season and the sweet smell of soil. Right?

Not so fast—many people face challenges that make it difficult to garden. It might be finding the time in a busy schedule, decreased mobility or trying to get little ones to plant seeds in the garden bed, not under the fence. In these situations, even the most dedicated gardeners can feel that it’s too much of a hassle to get outside and commune with plants.

Try pairing your parents with your kids in the garden! Intergenerational gardening is a wonderful opportunity for elders and youth to garden and learn together. Adults can share knowledge and in return youth can inspire and help. Consider their needs carefully. Is the child old enough to help if the adult can’t lift or bend well? Adults should be ready with patience and a few quick activities beyond weeding and watering. Have easy art projects ready like making garden signs or “bug houses” to attract beneficial insects. Have a comfortable place to sit for everyone. Stories are bound to emerge and new memories created.
Gardening and Cooking with Grandpa

Andrea Platt Dwyer, Executive Director

My parents were both born and raised in Chicago. While my mother’s home in Oak Park had a big yard with plenty of room for gardening, my father’s family lived in a brick apartment building in a dense, urban neighborhood with barely a blade of grass in sight. With a growing family, and scarce jobs, my parents moved us to Ohio to a big white house with a big yard. This was quite an adjustment for my dad, and my parents often joked about my dad’s lack of prowess, and interest, in maintaining a pristine expanse of lawn.

While my dad did his best to minimize his weekly yard work, my mother always kept a tiny garden, mostly growing a variety of pepper plants and tomatoes. Just before the first frost, she would harvest the last of the tomatoes, putting the green ones in the basement on a shelf in the cool, dark pantry where they would slowly ripen into a pale and relatively tasteless version of the juicy fruit we pulled off the vine during the summer.

After my dad retired, he somewhat surprisingly took up a few domestic pursuits. He started baking bread, experimenting with dark crusty loaves and cheese-flecked focaccias. He also began to garden. Always a more adventurous eater than my mother, whose interest centered on nutrition and quantity when feeding her family of ten, he discovered pesto, and began growing basil with abandon so he could make his own.

Heady with the success of his first garden foray, he started an asparagus bed. At first, the slim stalks looked as if they would never amount to much, but by the third year, he was able to bring in a respectable harvest.

While I watched the evolution of my father from an apartment dweller to successful gardener, my kids only knew him as the latter. Helping grandpa in the kitchen as he made his bread, or digging for worms as he tended his asparagus, helped them develop an appreciation for the art of growing food and the joy of fresh-picked veggies showing up on your dinner plate. I’m grateful that my dad had the patience to share his new pursuits with his grandchildren. The memories they have and the lessons they learned are invaluable.

I hope you’ll make time in your busy life to share your knowledge and expertise, whether in the garden or in the kitchen, with someone who is just learning about the wonders of home-grown food and home-cooked meals, and help us build an equitable and sustainable food system one garden and one table at a time!

ALL AGES GROW TOGETHER IN THE GARDEN  Continued from page 1

For young families, even the most experienced gardener can be no match for a two year old with a desire to dig. Take a step back and consider adjusting your landscape for small children: allow more space for pathways and digging, and choose hardier plants. Fill a pot with soil — a special digging spot just for toddlers. Plant seeds that are easy for small fingers to pick up and that have quick germination rates such as peas and radishes. Transplanting works if the parent can guide each step, emphasizing gentleness.

Busy lives can leave little time for the garden. Growing annual vegetables can be time-intensive. Try edible perennials such as strawberries, artichokes, sorrel, berry bushes, grapes or even asparagus. Perennials are often more tolerant of inconsistent watering as well.

The wonderful thing about gardening is that it can adapt as our lives evolve. As we change, so will the garden, and we can continue enjoying the fruits of our (minimal) labor.
Farmer Profile: Francis & Elizabeth

Micah Anderson, Education Manager, Seattle Tilth Farm Works

Francis and Elizabeth have faith: radical faith that each seedling will emerge; faith that the two inches of humus that took years to build will sustain their crops; faith that the rains will come and that all their hard work will pay off; faith the healthy, nutrient-dense vegetables they raise will nourish themselves, their friends and family. At Faith Beyond Farm, they cultivate faith that compels them to act as careful stewards for all the plants, animals and people that make the farm possible.

Elizabeth has a bright laugh, radiant smile and beautiful voice. It is a treat, a mood-altering, uplifting treat to hear Elizabeth sing as she toils in the field on a spring day. Francis is more reserved, possessing a quiet, gentle strength. Quick and attentive, Francis often appears as if he is fresh off the soccer pitch, only with gumboots in place of cleats. They are a sweet couple with a sweet story (Francis spent days in the bush collecting a very particular honey to offer Elizabeth’s family on their wedding day – just one example) but they are also dedicated, skilled farm partners.

One of Francis’ strengths is seeding. He’s focused and meticulous. Elizabeth is a master cultivator, wielding her hoe with aplomb. “We value natural ways of farming,” Elizabeth says, “stewarding the ground the way the Creator intended, protecting habitats and feeding the soil.” They have matured quickly as farmers during the two seasons they’ve spent with Seattle Tilth Farm Works. Faith Beyond Farm was one of the few farms that successfully raised carrots and parsnips in our rocky soils. They were also one of the first to utilize caterpillar tunnels to improve tomato and bean yields, and one of the best at estimating yields and communicating that valuable information to staff.

This year, Francis is keen on honing his tractor skills so that he and Elizabeth can cultivate and prep their own fields. Elizabeth is working hard to select crop varieties suited to their strengths, the market and their piece of ground. They intend to increase the yield of their farm and have confidence their planning will pay off. Francis says, “We have faith the best is yet to come.”

Support Francis and Elizabeth through the Seattle Tilth CSA! They’ll be growing cherry tomatoes, carrots, kale, peppers and much more.

SUMMER ADVENTURES CALL  Continued from page 1

Amazing Arts
We’ll focus on inspiring creativity in our arts-based camp Get G’Art-ening. Campers will work together to create soil poetry, plant-dyed textiles, original tunes and a spectacular mural in our children’s garden in Wallingford. The week will culminate in a musical performance featuring kid-crafted instruments made out of veggies!

Growing New Gardeners
Our camps for 1-4 year olds are almost too cute for words. We have a diverse series of toddler camps that are designed to get the little ones out in the garden with their parents, tasting veggies and using real tools to dig in the dirt. We’ll look at worms and ladybugs, sing songs and even try out some garden-inspired yoga during these fun-filled mornings.

Opportunities for Tweens & Teens
Your 11-15 year olds will have the opportunity to make a difference this summer by becoming a junior counselor during our week-long camps. Junior counselors participate in the fun of camp while providing leadership to younger campers. We’re also offering Survive and Thrive with Wild Plants, a program just for teens and tweens that focuses on native plants, a field trip to a Seattle Tilth farm and more advanced gardening techniques.

Our camps are located at farms and gardens in north Seattle and in south Seattle. All of our camps feature science, art, music, gardening, eating and enjoying Seattle’s beautiful summer. We’ll play lots of games, explore nature and make new friends. We received some great feedback from parents which we’ve incorporated to make this year better than ever. Summer is coming up fast and our camps tend to fill quickly. Head to seattletilth.org to register soon. See you in the garden!
Give Your Garden a Fresh Start

Amanda Boyle, Events Manager

If you are a vegetable gardener, you mostly start anew every year. Your garden has enjoyed hibernation and waited with bated breath for spring. Now it’s time to thrive!

Everything you need to kick off gardening season can be found at our May Edible Plant Sale. It’s the largest selection of edible plants in the region – the choices will delight you, your garden and your future table! The plants are sustainably and organically grown and adapted to this climate. You’ll find garden tools, soil amendments and 480 varieties of vegetables, herbs and edible flowers.

**Launch Into Summer**

Take full advantage of our plant selection with these tips.

**Try something new in your garden.** New varieties include Autumn Star kale, Iko Iko sweet pepper, or braising mix greens. Add a fruiting tree or shrub for more longevity.

**Grow up.** Consider growing Yellow Crookneck squash, Marketmore 76 cucumbers and Moonshine pumpkin on trellises. Watch them climb!

**Cover your garden** with a cloche to protect your plants and heat up your beds. Little Fingers eggplant, Hot Paper Lantern Habanero peppers and Thai basil are crops that love the extra heat. Cloche kits will be available at the Seattle Tilth store.

**Wait it out.** Don’t immediately put your plants in the ground after purchase. Set your plants outside during the day and bring them in at night for several days to ease the transition and prevent transplant shock.

**Garden to Go = Convenience**

Want to avoid the crowds and pick up a pre-paid, curated plant pack? Reserve a Garden to Go, plant trays focused on themes, including:

- **Container Gardening.** Plants that thrive in a big pot or container.
- **Salsas.** Favorite ingredients for hot or mild salsas.
- **Pickling Pack.** Pickle that! Grow it now and store it deliciously for later.

**Brewer’s Collection.** Brew from the ground up. Get hops and unique flavors here.

**Summer Coolers.** Impress your friends with creative home grown drinks.

**Organic 101.** Perfect for the beginning gardener; easy and delicious favorites.

**Reserve Gardens to Go online before the sale, or purchase them during the sale in the lower field.**

**Be a Savvy Shopper**

These event details are good to know.

- Pick-up a handy wristband Saturday morning for a guaranteed entry time.
- Buy a ticket to the Early Bird Sale on Friday, May 1, 5-7 p.m. for $25 – have first pick of the plants and raise extra funds for Seattle Tilth.
- Visit our vendors and find delicious food, gardening gear and other merchandise in the lower field.
- Bring wagons, carts, trays and friends to help carry plants.
- Renew your Seattle Tilth membership or become a new member at the sale and receive a FREE plant!
- Carpool, take the bus (#16, #44), or ride your bike (and trailer).
- Volunteer for a shift before, during or after the sale and get into the Early Bird Sale for free.

**Pie Plant, Plus Booze**

Katie Vincent, Garden Hotline

With her rosy pink, sour stems, rhubarb is the saucy garden maiden of spring. She is one of the easiest and most satisfying vegetables to cultivate thanks to the little effort necessary -- one only need find a sunny to partially shady location and amend the soil with some compost or manure. After holding off for the first two seasons to let the little lady get established, she will provide your family with bounteous crops for years!

A member of the buckwheat family, rhubarb hails from China and has been cultivated and used medicinally since before 2700 BCE. The robust red stalks are an abundant source of vitamins C and K as well as minerals like calcium, potassium, magnesium and manganese even when cooked. In fact, when cooked the amount of calcium increases! That being said, it is very important to know that only the stalks are edible; rhubarb’s signature enormous leaves contain toxic amounts of oxalic acid and anthraquinone glycosides in its raw or cooked form.

Rhubarb ripens in spring, but her crop can last through the summer, meaning she is able to lend herself to myriad kitchen combinations depending on what’s in season. She is most popularly known as the “pie plant,” whether that be in
Growing Great Tomatoes
A Delicious Art Form

Anthony Reyes, Seattle Youth Garden Works
Farm Coordinator

The summer can bring excitement and joy, but more importantly...it’s finally tomato season!

Understanding tomatoes’ growth habits and how they affect your management strategies is invaluable. Tomatoes are heavy feeders and have extensive root systems. Maintaining good soil structure and nutrition and providing space for each tomato plant (at least 36” apart) are of the highest importance.

When planting tomato starts, wait until late May or early June. Bury the transplant 1/3 up the stem to help the plant establish a strong root system. Set stakes in the ground at this time to ensure roots are not disturbed later in their growth. At Seattle Youth Garden Works, youth participants are taught to prune all but three branches from the leaf axils. This process creates higher quality and larger-sized fruits, and the plant becomes easier to manage.

Once fruit production begins, we prune the lower branches and turn off irrigation. Stressing the plants will create a more complex flavor and prevent the tomato from cracking at harvest. When growing in containers, it is important to fertilize and water more regularly so that the plants have ample nutrients and moisture.

The Seattle Youth Garden Works crew is excited to be producing tomato starts for the May Edible Plant Sale once again, a true source of pride and accomplishment for us. There are a few varieties I would recommend checking out at this year’s sale, unique or tried-and-true varieties that work well for the beginning or seasoned gardener.

• German Orange Strawberry: This oxheart variety has low acidity and can be eaten like an apple.
• Banana Legs: A yellow, fruity paste tomato with a memorable name.

Our newly revised Maritime Northwest Garden Guide offers the following tips for growing great tomatoes. Make it hot. Reserve your sunniest location for tomatoes and other nightshades. Make sure they get at least eight hours of continuous sun. Trellis tomatoes to increase air circulation and fight late blight disease. Plant in fertile, well-drained soil and use slow release organic fertilizer that is low in nitrogen and higher in phosphorus and potassium to encourage flower and fruit development.

On May 2-3 you can pick up a copy of our guide at our May Edible Plant Sale and choose from an amazing selection of tomatoes.

concert with strawberries, raspberries, figs, peaches... the dessert possibilities are endless. Avoiding sugar? Add rhubarb to mango salsa, as part of a meat condiment, in a savory biscuit, or even in a garden-inspired cocktail. Below is an especially satisfying recipe crafted in the test kitchen-garden at Seattle Tilth’s headquarters. You can stock up on various flavors of thyme and mint at our May Edible Plant Sale – sure to impress your guests!

Rhubarb + Thyme Mojito
1.5 oz. rum (optional)
2 oz. rhubarb simple syrup
10+ mint leaves
2-3 sprigs English thyme
Juice from ½ lime
Lime zest
Club soda
Ice cubes

In a small glass, add mint leaves, thyme sprigs, lime juice and lime zest. Muddle until leaves are bruised with a wooden spoon or a muddler. To make an alcohol-free beverage, at this point add the rhubarb simple syrup, club soda and ice cubes to taste. For an “adult” drink, add rum and stir. Garnish with mint leaves.

Rhubarb Simple Syrup
1 large stalk rhubarb, chopped (or 2-3 smaller stalks)
2 cups water
1 cup sugar
¼ tsp. cinnamon
Lemon zest

Bring all ingredients to a boil in a small saucepan. Reduce to a simmer and cover with a lid. Allow the mixture to simmer for 5-8 minutes. Strain (the leftover rhubarb mash tastes great on ice cream!) and pour syrup into a jar. Let cool and store in a refrigerator for up to two weeks. Use syrup in mixed drinks or as an ice cream, yogurt, or kefir condiment.
Join the Party for Healthy Food

Arianne Bergman, Education and Outreach Coordinator

Did you know that in 2012, an estimated 400,000 children in Washington state lived in food insecure households? Based on the most recent USDA report on food insecurity and hunger in America, this means that about 1 in 5 children in our state do not have adequate access to nourishing food. We all know the importance of good nutrition for children and their ability to learn and to lead healthy lives. So what can we do to address this problem?

The answer seems simple, sort of – improve access to nutritious food. Our Just Garden program sprang into life as a celebration of growing food to make good food more available to the people who need it most. To this end, we work with low-income families and communities to build garden beds and supply them with seeds and education. Our participants tell us that it’s empowering to have access to fresh, healthy food grown with their own hands. In five years we’ve helped over 2,000 people gain access to fresh produce from their own backyards or communities.

Just Garden started out as a party, and that party was the first Spring Into Bed garden building event. Be a part of this work and enjoy a fun day out with friends and family! Join us for this year’s Spring Into Bed on May 16 in Seattle’s South Park neighborhood. We’re building 30 garden beds — all before lunch (on us!), but we can’t do it without you. Sign-up to volunteer at seattletilth.org.

Garden to Table
Seasonal Stir-fry: Wok the Talk

Leika Suzumura, Cooking and Nutrition Programs Manager

The world can learn a lot from a stir-fry. Diverse, adaptable, inclusive, satisfying, not to mention quick and easy! Much like the biodiversity we know is essential to the health of soil and growing strong healthy plants, diversity in flavor, texture and color is the key to a fulfilling stir-fry. When thrown into that hot wok (or pan), each ingredient’s unique character ignites in the heat of the fire and harmonizes into a song your taste buds want to sing!

The humble stir-fry turns no one away, whether it’s the roots, stems, leaves, fruits or animals roaming the field — it welcomes them all with open arms. So head out to the garden and pluck a few of those green onions, spring greens and over wintered carrots to enjoy yourself a seasonal stir-fry.

Teriyaki Sauce
Makes 8 oz.

Ingredients
¼ cup soy sauce
¼ cup mirin (sweet rice wine)
¼ cup sake (rice wine)
1 tablespoon molasses
3 tablespoons brown sugar
1-2 teaspoons red chili flakes (optional)
2 teaspoons corn starch (optional for thickening)
2 tablespoons water

Instructions
• Combine all ingredients in a bowl and stir with a whisk until sugar is dissolved. Add to stir-fry toward the end of cooking and/or use to marinate protein such as chicken or tofu.
• For thicker sauce, combine cornstarch with 2 tablespoons water. Add to the stir-fry while heat is still on, then turn heat off once sauce thickens.

Tips for stir frying:
• Cut ingredients into similar sizes for even cooking.
• Add dense ingredients first, such as roots and stems.
• Add the leafy greens right before turning off the heat so they don’t overcook.
• Heat your wok or pan hot with oil before adding in ingredients — quick, hot cooking is the key to keeping it crispy-yet-cooked, well seasoned but not soggy.

Save the Date: July 11
Chicken Coop and Urban Farm Tour
See Seattle’s “Top 25” urban farms!
Sue Hartman, Garden Hotline Educator

Q. I love kale and it is all I want to grow. Is it OK to do that?
A. Kale is a super food AND a super plant! Hardy kale grows in cool as well as warm weather and will survive the winter if it doesn’t get zapped by an early hard frost. The edible, yellow flowers brighten up a dreary early spring day and feed early flying pollinators. Why grow anything else?

Kale is a brassica, a plant family that includes many crops that thrive in our maritime Pacific Northwest climate. Brassica members are also called cruciferous or cole crops. This large family includes cabbage, mustards, broccoli, collards, bok choy, radishes, turnips, arugula, cauliflower and more.

All of these plants are susceptible to clubroot, a soil-borne disease caused by the fungus-like organism, Plasmodiophora brassicae. Affected seedlings may die. The roots of larger plants swell and resemble clubs. Plants with minor infections can show no above-ground symptoms. As the disease progresses, it is difficult for stressed plants to take up water and nutrients. They may look stunted, wilt during the daytime or prematurely flower.

Clubroot is a very serious pathogen that prefers cool, moist, acidic soils. Some of the spores are able to “swim” through the soil and can survive for a long time, up to 18 years. Planting crops from a different family in a garden bed or row after growing brassicas is recommended to prevent spore populations from growing too large. Crop rotation may not prevent clubroot from developing because contamination can also be spread by infected plants and soils, irrigation water, tools and footwear. Once it shows up, you may not be able to grow brassicas in that bed again for a very long time.

Protect your kale from clubroot by ensuring it has good drainage and keeping the soil from getting too acidic. A soil test will tell you when it is time to add lime and other nutrients. Control weeds; some are also brassicas and can serve as alternate hosts. When it is time to plant another crop, get rid of the whole plant including the roots. If you do get clubroot, put diseased plant material in your food and yard waste cart rather than composting it at home.
Maximize Success and Fun
Sign-Up for Classes this Spring!

Three prices are listed for each class: for the general public, for Seattle Tilth members and for two members of a household taking the class together. For example: $45 non-member/$35 member/$68 household. 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 or by scanning the QR code. Questions? Call (206) 633-0451 ext. 128.

Class venues:
BGP: Bradner Gardens Park, 1730 Bradner Place S, Seattle
GSC: Good Shepherd Center, 4649 Sunnyside Ave N, Seattle

Veggie Gardening
Get Your Garden Growing, $36/$25/$54
Thurs., April 2, 6-8 p.m., BGP
Sat., April 25, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., GSC

Container Gardening 101, $36/$25/$54
Thurs., April 9, 6-8 p.m., GSC
Wed., May 20, 6:30-8:30 p.m., BGP

Organic Gardening 101, $55/$46/$90
Thurs., April 16 & 23, 6:30-8:30 p.m., GSC
Sat., May 30, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., GSC

Grow Great Tomatoes, $36/$25/$54
Sat., May 9, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., GSC

Secrets of Companion Planting,
$36/$25/$54
Sat., May 16, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., GSC

Organic Pest Management, $36/$25/$54
Sat., May 16, 2-4 p.m.

Urban Livestock
All About Chickens, $45/$35/$68
Sat., April 18, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., GSC
Raise City Goats, $36/$25/$54
Sat., May 30, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Private residence, Madrona

Permaculture and Sustainable Landscapes
Urban Weeds and Wild Foods-Part 1: Identify and Harvest, $36/$25/$54
Sat., April 18, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., GSC

Permaculture Design Course, $1000/$1150
One weekend each month, May 16-October 18, South Seattle College

Organic Pest Management, $36/$25/$54
Sat., May 16, 2-4 p.m.

Kitchen Classes
Urban Weeds and Wild Foods-Part 2: Preparing for Your Table, $45/$35/$68
Sat., April 18, 2-4 p.m., GSC