You've probably heard about an initiative in WA state that would require labeling of foods made from genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Last fall and winter, initiative supporters collected over 350,000 signatures. I-522, known as the “The People’s Right to Know Genetically Engineered Food Act,” will be on your ballot this November.

What are GMOs?
GMOs are created by inserting the genes from one species into another completely unrelated species. Most GMO crops used today have genes that allow them to tolerate a particular herbicide.

Why should we be concerned?
This new technology brings environmental, health and social consequences.

- **Environment** – A study last year found that U.S. farmers are using more and more pesticides to fight weeds and insects, due largely to the widespread adoption of GMO crops. This is giving rise to pesticide-resistant and hard to kill insects as nature adapts to the new technology.

- **Health** – The jury is still out on whether GMO foods are safe to eat. Given that inconclusiveness, other countries, such as those in the EU, have decided to ‘wait and see’ before widely introducing GMO foods.

- **Social** – GM crops are proprietary technology, meaning that farmers cannot save seeds from year to year. Farmers whose crops have been contaminated by pollen from nearby fields have been sued by Monsanto for growing corn that contains the new genes. In

Gallus gallus domesticus
aka Chicken

Falaah Jones, Eastside Programs Coordinator

We all know that backyard chickens provide delicious eggs and enviable manure to enrich your soil. They also eat insects and weeds and are way more fun to watch than TV. Want chickens but think it might be too much work, too noisy or just plain weird?

Buy tickets for our Urban Farm and Chicken Coop Tour on July 13 and see great examples from your clever neighbors of ways to incorporate chickens into urban lots. And don’t fret about the coop! You can buy or build your own hen house. Your coop can be small or luxurious, heated, or not, made from recycled wooden pallets or painted to match your house.

Careful, though. Gallus gallus domesticus (domesticated fowl) might just give you creative inspiration. Sometimes they drive me to poetry!

Gallus gallus domesticus
Chickens have hips,
but nary a lip
and more neck bones than a giraffe.
Gallus means comb
and they do love to roam;
they might eat your lettuce,
don’t laugh!
My Local Food System

Liza Turley, President of Seattle Tilth’s Board of Directors

This spring I am off to a strong start on my 20 square foot garden. I like to grow a “new” vegetable every year that I haven’t grown before and this year’s new venture will be crisp salad and stir-fry loving kohlrabi. Plant starts from the March Edible Plant sale are slowly growing, giving me time to think about the possible recipes and meals I will share and enjoy with friends and family.

Even though harvest is still a ways off, I have noticed that the act of growing food is affecting how I shop for food and prepare meals. I am more motivated to eat healthy, fresh and locally grown vegetables. Since Rainbow chard is growing at home but is not yet mature, I am drawn to the multi-colored Swiss chard at the farmers’ market, hoping that someday mine will be as robust and colorful. I see baby purple kohlrabi at the market and am inspired to harvest a few of mine when they are small instead of waiting until they are full-grown.

The volume of food grown in my own garden will never be huge, yet I have reduced the trips I make to the grocery store. I try to purchase all the week’s vegetables at the farmers’ market where I can choose from a spectacular array of spring vegetables, visit with the farmers who have my increased admiration and get tips on ways to combine flavors and textures in my cooking. As a “micro producer” and local shopper, I am gladly supporting farmers who have my increased admiration and get tips on ways to combine flavors and textures in my cooking. As a “micro producer” and local shopper, I am gladly supporting farmers who will be picking lettuce leaves from my own garden for salads and appreciating how simple a food distribution chain can be! What new vegetable will you grow in your garden this year?

GMOS AND YOU  Continued from page 1

India and elsewhere, farmers have been driven to suicide by the debt they incur to buy GMO seeds year after year.

What can we do?

Today most of the corn, canola, soybeans and sugar beets grown and consumed in the US are genetically modified. Because these products are so prevalent in processed foods, many of us are eating GMO foods every day, whether we know it or not. Concerned? You can take the following steps:

• Eat fresh fruits and vegetables. With the exception of papaya, sweet corn and some zucchini and yellow squash, most fruits and vegetables in supermarkets today are not genetically modified. This could soon change, however, since several fruits and vegetables currently under GM testing.

• Buy organic. Certified organic foods cannot contain genetically modified ingredients under current labeling standards.

• Grow your own. Growing your own food using heirloom or saved seeds gives you the most control over what you are eating.

• Look for certified non-GMO labels. Look for the Non-GMO Project’s label on the foods you buy. Visit their website, nongmoproject.org, to get a list of non-GMO verified products.

• Support GMO labeling efforts. I-522 will be on your ballot this November. If you feel strongly about your right to know, get involved, tell your friends and vote to approve. You can find out more at labelitwa.org.
Where Does Food Really Come From?

Kristen Roewer, Seattle Youth Garden Works Program Coordinator

Food in its simplest form comes from plants. Over the past ten months at Seattle Youth Garden Works (SYGW), we’ve spent a lot of time discussing this question and that was our conclusion. And food that comes directly from the farm is full of nutrition and that’s what we need to make our bodies healthy.

As uncomplicated as this sounds, where food comes from is not a concept that is immediately obvious to the youth crew of SYGW, who have grown up in a food culture that consists mainly of prepackaged, overly-processed fare that is far removed from its botanical origins. It is not surprising that our discussion about the origins of food quickly turned into a discussion about food justice. The corporate control of the food system has led to unequal distribution of food, poor food quality, complex transportation requirements and huge energy consumption. These factors keep people disconnected from where their food comes from.

In our latest conversation about this, one young farmer spoke up. “I’ll tell you where food comes from,” he said, shovel in hand. “Food comes from hard work!” It’s true. While we’ve deciphered that food comes from plants, we’re also realizing how important the farmers are who cultivate those plants. The SYGW crew knows this firsthand. They have learned to work hard in order to grow the food we sell at farmers’ markets and donate to food banks.

It is through this work that Seattle Youth Garden Works primes young adults for success in the job market. As productive members of the workforce, the youth are engaged in the community. They are learning that every bunch of kale or pound of peas can be tied back to the people that have worked to bring those items to the market and store shelves. Preparing beds, amending soil, seeding, watering, weeding, harvesting, washing, bunching, chopping and cooking. In the eyes of these young farmers, real food is important and comes from hard work.

GALLUS GALLUS DOMESTICUS AKA CHICKEN
Continued from page 1

We have loved all participants in years past, but decided to try something different this year. This year’s Chicken Coop and Urban Farm Tour will feature the “Top 25” urban farms, selected by a team of community experts. Prizes will be awarded—be sure to track your favorites for the People’s Choice award! There are discounted rates for Seattle Tilth members, kids and bicyclists.

Consider joining the growing army of chicken keepers and urban farmers in our area! Gain all the information you need by taking a Seattle Tilth class and get ongoing support by contacting the Garden Hotline (206) 633-0224 or help@gardenhotline.org or getting our book Your Farm in the City.
Getting Your Goat

Jennie Grant

If you are of the gardening and chicken keeping persuasion and happen to meet a baby goat, you will probably say to yourself, “Goats are for me!” But you might be wrong. While goats are curious, affectionate and produce milk, they are also a tremendous amount of work and responsibility.

A goat in milk must be milked at least once a day, preferably twice. This makes leaving home for a few days difficult since few people have the necessary milking skills to cover for you while you are gone. Acquiring the skills to milk well takes a week of milking at least once daily, and, like many new skills, is extremely discouraging at first.

On the upside, goats are very lovable and can produce upwards of a gallon of rich creamy milk a day. If you have never tasted fresh goat milk and turn up your nose at the gamey flavored goat milk at the grocery store, you will be pleasantly surprised to try fresh goat milk. It is smooth enough tasting to work well in coffee or on cereal by even the fussiest of eaters. Grocery store goat milk takes about five days to get from the goat’s udder to the grocery store shelves. This is about the same time it begins to take on a goat-like flavor.

Keeping dairy goats costs approximately $75 a month not including the costs of preparing your goat yard and goat shed. Also, contrary to popular opinion, goats are terrible lawn mowers. They do, however, excel in defoliating and debarking trees and bushes. For this reason, and the safety of your goats, it’s important to build a goat-proof fence.

What does a goat proof fence look like? If you’d like to find out and are interested in learning more about life with goats, sign up for Seattle Tilth’s Chicken Coop and Urban Farm Tour. Goat keepers and goats will be there to answer your questions. You can even visit the Goat Justice League’s state-of the-art-goat-shed.

Jennie Grant is the president of the Goat Justice League and author of “City Goats, the Goat Justice League’s Guide to Backyard Goat Keeping.”

Spring Into Bed!

Wendi Jiang, Just Garden Project
AmeriCorps Volunteer

Both of the Just Garden Project’s Spring Into Bed garden builds were a beautiful success thanks to our dedicated volunteers, enthusiastic gardeners and benevolent sponsors. Over 100 volunteers came together in the West Seattle and Redmond communities. They donated 600+ hours of their time and built 25 gardens for low-income families and at-risk communities. These gardens have the potential to help over 300 individuals grow nutrient-dense, organic, local food in the coming seasons.

A very special thank you to the Spring Into Bed sponsors: Whole Foods, Lowe’s, Cedar Grove and Mithun, whose contributions are essential to building gardens and also helping to increase education for new gardeners and produce community food celebrations throughout the year. Another big thank you to our community partners, Enactus at CityU, Lettuce Link, the Washington Association of Landscapers, Seattle Parks and Recreation, and Mountains to Sound Greenway, without whom Spring Into Bed would not be possible.

This food movement is real, it is subtle, and it is one of most powerful and important things we can do for ourselves and future generations. Thank you to everyone who had a role in Spring Into Bed and for being a part of supporting and growing the Just Garden Project!

Garden Educator Workshop
Summer Intensive

If you have ever been interested in using a garden to make your teaching come alive, take Seattle Tilth’s Garden Educator Intensive this summer! This five day workshop, July 22–26, will teach you everything you need to know to grow an effective schoolyard garden program and have fun while doing it. Taught by veteran garden educators Lisa Taylor and Mike Gervais, this week long intensive will allow you to immerse yourself in the organic garden classroom experience.

Educators receive clock hours for participation. And it’s FUN.
Think Winter in Summer

Bill Thorness

Put fresh vegetables on your holiday dinner table this year by getting your winter vegetables started now. It may seem counterintuitive, but you need to think two seasons ahead to keep growing in your garden year round.

What can you grow for fall and winter? Among many choices, how about peas, beets and spinach for fall, and kale, broccoli and Asian greens for winter.

Two tricks to getting started: 1) plan where to plant, and 2) count backwards on the calendar. You might look at your summer garden, bursting with warm-season crops, and wonder how you will fit in fall and winter veggies. Crop rotation will help. When those spring peas are waning, pull them out and reset the bed for a long-season winter crop like purple sprouting broccoli. As the rows of summer carrots are pulled, replace them with shade-covered lettuce starts that you’ve nursed to life in pots.

Use the calendar to figure out when these crops will be ready to eat. If you want to have salad at Thanksgiving, start counting the days backwards from Nov. 28. Along with the “days to maturity” listed on the seed packet, add two other numbers: a “fall factor” and a harvest period. To the 45 days stated on the packet, add 10 days to account for the fact that plant growth slows in the fall. Add another week to account for the fact that you can snip away at lettuce for a while after it’s become harvestable. That will bring you up to 62 days. Working backward, that means you’d want to plant your Thanksgiving salad on Sept. 28, or thereabouts. Garden planning is not an exact science.

One more factor for fall and winter growing success: some plants may require protection. Beautiful heads of Forellenschluss lettuce in November must be shielded from the rains that often start early in that month, so plan to erect a cloche over it. Summer-started seeds might need a floating row cover laid on the bed to keep the soil moist enough in a dry spell – and of course you need to pay much closer attention to consistent watering in that situation.

Fall and winter growing does not need to be complicated or difficult. It does require a bit of planning, and a spring-like zeal for sprouting during the summer high season. But the rewards are plentiful, including more use of your land year-round, and fresh, healthful produce in the cool, dark months when we can all use a little cheering up from the garden.

Former Seattle Tilth editor Bill Thorness is the author of the new book “Cool Season Gardener: Extend the Harvest, Plan Ahead, and Grow Vegetables Year Round.”

May Edible Plant Sale Dazzles

What could be better than a weekend full of bright sunshine and locally grown organic veggie plants? Not much! The May Edible Plant Sale was a dazzling success, thanks to everyone in this amazing community of organic gardeners. Thank you all for supporting Seattle Tilth – shoppers, vendors, musicians, presenters and especially our hard-working, dedicated, unflappable volunteers. Extra special thanks to our fantastic sponsors Greenwood Hardware, Clif Bar, Seattle Seed Company and Bastyr University.
The summer is rolling in and the plants are shooting up! What to do with all that food? Maybe you’ve already tried canning and freezing, but have you entered the world of fermentation and pickling? The bright flavors and incredible nutritional boost they add to your meals are worth exploring.

**Pickling**

**Benefit:** Pickles can be made from nearly any summer vegetable and paired with endless combinations of herbs.

**Nutritional highlight:** Pickles are often made with the addition of various herbs and spices like garlic, dill, thyme and peppers that are all adding an extra load of nutrients like iron, vitamin C and antioxidants.

**Tip:** Try quick pickling when you want to enjoy the flavor of pickles but don’t want to go through the canning process.

**Quick Fridge Pickles**

Use this as a template to use for pickling almost anything from your garden.

### Ingredients
- 2-3 tablespoons herbs and spices – garlic, dill, bay leaves or hot peppers
- 3 ½ cups bite size veggie pieces – radishes, cucumbers, onions or beans
- 2-3 teaspoons sea salt
- ½ - ¾ cup vinegar
- 1-1 ½ cups water

### Instructions
- In a quart size jar, add herbs and spices to the bottom
- Pack veggie pieces into the jar, up to one inch from the top.
- Add salt to the jar and fill it 1/3 with vinegar and 2/3 with water. Poke around to make sure the air bubbles come up.
- If you have a metal lidded jar, cut a piece of parchment paper to place on the jar before putting the lid on.
- Shake well and store in fridge. Pickles will be ready to eat within a few days and can store for a month or longer.

Note: these pickles must be stored in the refrigerator. Recipe by Carey Thornton.

**Food Preservation Certification Course**

*Carey Thornton, Adult Education Coordinator*

Curious about canning? Love to teach? Become a certified food preserver this summer! It’s on Saturdays, June 15–July 13.

Seattle Tilth’s hands-on Food Preservation Certification Course will provide you with an overview of food preservation history, a solid understanding of food safety, USDA guidelines for canning fruits, vegetables, meats and seafood, best practices for freezing, dehydrating, pickling and an introduction to fermentation.

Course graduates are certified by Seattle Tilth to teach food preservation for three years. Then unleash your canning imagination!

**Did you know?**

- There are around 2,000 different plant types that humans have used to cultivate food.

- The U.S. is the largest producer of genetically modified crops.

- The bulk of US genetically modified crops are commodity crops: 95% of all sugar beets, 94% of our soybeans, 90% of cotton and 88% of the feed corn supply.

- Processed foods account for roughly 70% of our nation’s calories.

- 60% to 70% of processed foods on U.S. grocery shelves have genetically modified ingredients.

- Americans buy an average of 787 pounds of processed food a year compared to 602 lbs. of fresh food.

- The average apple contains around 130 calories.

- Since 1980, U.S. obesity rates have doubled for adults and tripled for children.

- Kids 2-11 years old watch 24 hours/week of television and spend an average of 21 minutes/week having unstructured play outside.

- The average person burns about 300 calories/hour gardening and 70 calories/hour watching television.

See our sources and more fun facts at seattletilthblog.org
Q. Why should I choose heirloom veggies for my garden?

A. Heirloom veggies hold the secret to taste nirvana! Over the years we have lost many heirloom varieties due to the industry-promoted push for “high yield,” or “travels well” varieties. Unfortunately, this often translates to less tasty and also less nutritious.

Heirlooms also tend to be more resilient to diseases, pest and neglect. Another important consideration is that every time you bite into an heirloom, you are biting into history—a connection to gardeners and farmers around the world from a bio-tech, industry-free time. Adding a collection of heirlooms to your garden will perpetuate them for the future. Grow a few this year and save those seeds to share and grow again!

Q. How do I save seeds from my vegetable garden?

A. Saving seeds can be very rewarding! Not only is it easy, it is the ultimate nod to recycling. As long as the plants you grow are open-pollinated (not hybrids), which is the case with heirloom varieties, then you have a chance of successfully harvesting seeds. Some patience is required as you allow some of your plants to fully flower and “go to seed.” You will know the seeds are ready when flower heads turn brown and the seeds fall willingly from the flower head.

Not all seed saving is alike. When starting, it is easier to choose plants that flower and offer seeds from dry seed heads rather than harvesting seed from fruit. Examples of the former are kale, lettuce and carrots. If you choose to harvest from fruit, you must wait for the fruit, tomato, squash or cucumber, for example, to fully ripen. Remove the seeds and possibly the outer layer of slimy material and let them dry thoroughly. Store your seeds in a cool, dry location and they will keep for a couple years.

Happy planting!
Take Classes & Sign-up for Summer Garden Camps

Two or three prices are listed for each class; the second price is discounted for Seattle Tilth members and the third is a special price for a second member of your 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. 101.

Class venues:
GSC: Good Shepherd Center, 4649 Sunnyside Ave. N., Seattle
BGP: Bradner Gardens Park, 1730 Bradner Place S., Seattle
PBI: Pickering Barn, 1730 10th Ave. N.W., Issaquah

Veggie Gardening
Organic Gardening 101, $45/$35/$68
Saturday, June 15; 10 a.m.-2 p.m., GSC
Saturday, July 20; 10 a.m.-2 p.m., BGP
Go Vertical, $36/$25/$54
Saturday, June 1, 10 a.m.-noon, BGP
Wednesday, June 12, 6-8 p.m., GSC
Start Your Fall and Winter Garden, $36/$25/$54
Wednesday, July 10; 6-8 p.m.GSC
Saturday, July 27; 10 a.m.-noon, BGP

Kitchen Classes
Seattle Tilth’s Food Preservation Certification Course, $350
Saturdays, June 15-July 13; 9 a.m.-4 p.m., GSC
Basic Canning 101, $45/$35/$68
Thursday, July 18; 6-8 p.m., GSC
Pickles and Fermentation, $45/$35/$68
Thursday, July 25; 6-8 p.m., GSC

Permaculture and Sustainable Landscapes
Harvest Wild Sea Vegetables, $36/$25/$54
Saturday, June 22; noon-2 p.m., TBA
Wildlife Gardening, $36/$25/$54
Saturday, June 22, 1-3 p.m., PBI
Edibles in the Landscape, $36/$25/$54
Saturday, July 27; 1-3 p.m., BGP

Urban Livestock
City Chickens 101, $40/$30/$60
Saturday, June 22; 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., GSC
Saturday, July 20; 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., GSC
Beekeeping 301: Harvest Honey and Winterize Your Hive, $36/$25/$54
Saturday, July 27; 10 a.m.-noon, GSC

Chicken Coop & Urban Farm Tour
Saturday, July 13
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
See Seattle's TOP 25 urban farms!
seattletilth.org/events

Summer Garden Camps for Kids
Kids ages 1-14 will love summer garden adventures with Seattle Tilth, June-August in Wallingford, Rainier Beach, Issaquah and in Woodinville.