

Community Garden News



Dear Gardeners,

In the next few weeks, we will be wrapping up the garden for the season. From my perspective, we've had a good year. The garden plots were fully utilized, we've had no reported theft or vandalism (except for the raccoons). From what I've heard, there were not too many problems with disease or insect damage (excluding flea beetles of course) and the weeds seemed to be under control thanks to everyone taking care of their isles and yes, the jail crew has been fantastic.

We have had the chance to welcome a few new gardeners this year. It was fun getting to know you all, and you make a great addition to our long timers. It is always so interesting to see how everyone's garden is unique and how different practices are utilized.

We had many hail events this summer. Physical damage to plants and crops in the area were extensive, and subsequently, fire blight was rampant in Boulder County. Many apple trees were lost including the young trees in our trial plots. What started out as a hot June, turned into surprisingly cool July and August. This cool part of the summer coincided with actual moisture as well. Summer seemed to return with a vengeance in September with many consistently hot days over 90 degrees. And now, it is supposed to be 19 degrees in the next few days.

As we wind down to fall, please let me know what observations you have had throughout the season. This information is very useful to me and helps garden health and maintenance in general.

Do you recognize any of these images from our garden?



Happy Autumn,

Allison Appelhans

Garden Coordinator



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Strawberries

Last year, we started three varieties of strawberries in the early spring. The flowers and runners were snipped as soon as possible to ensure strong plant development. This year, the berries were delicious, prolific and grew like wild. Some varieties tasted better than others, some were larger than others and all of them expanded and produced more than I thought they would. I decided to transplant a row to give them all more space to spread. I will be thinning the plants even more (next spring) and will be sharing. We made excellent strawberry and rhubarb jam and gave plenty of fresh berries away.

From my observations, the Cavendish were the best formed and tasting, and most prolific berries of the three we are trialing. The AC Wendy were rather watery tasting, but produced a large crop. The Malwina, a late season crop, were lovely in every way and I am looking forward to next year!!



Grapes

Grape production was particularly abundant this year. We had plenty of green and purple grapes to make lots of jelly. There are some interesting varieties with very good flavor that I am hoping to utilize in the coming years. White grapes make a beautiful champaign colored jelly that is excellent for glazing fruit tarts.

Hops

The hops, as usual were vigorous and grew massively on the trellis on the west edge of the garden. They were so weighty that when they were hit with the multiple hail events, that they came down. This forced us to harvest early. Because harvesting the hops flowers off of a 20-30 foot vine is difficult, it is typical to cut the entire vine down all at once in the late summer and gather the flowers while they are in a better position. Trellising hops requires a good heavy duty, biodegradable twine or cordage. Next year we will try again, implementing our lessons from 2018.



Raspberries

Some of our older raspberry plants have been in the garden for more than 12 years. We have eleven varieties, 5 of which were new last year. Raspberry plants can live a long time because they grow from rhizomatous root systems. However, they need space to spread, and they don't have that opportunity in the demo plot. What does happen is that the different varieties grow under the weed barrier and into each other's rows. This generates inaccurate weight measurement recordings of the fruit production which has been documented for years. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish the particular varieties even during fruit production.

Differences between mature plants and newly planted varieties are evident when doing a side by side comparison in the garden. Old plants are short, pale in leaf color and produce crumbly, dry berries that seem to ripen and rot quickly.

The new varieties that were started last year are doing very well. There is a consensus that the Double Gold and the Joan J varieties are the most flavorful primo-cane varieties. Interestingly, the black varieties we have been trialing in the garden are generally seedy and not very sweet (in my opinion).



In general, late fruiting berries are plagued by the Spotted Wing Drosophila fruit fly that is prevalent over the entire country. The fruit fly's numbers increase over the summer months and cause more and more damage over the course of the summer. If you ever wonder why there are peanut butter jars that hanging in the berry rows, you are not alone. These are traps filled with a yeast mixture that attracts the insect for monitoring purposes only. Each week, the insects are counted, sexed and recorded and we have been doing this for a number of years. For more information, go to

<http://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/insects/5-596-spotted-wing-drosophila-management-home-planting/>

Apples

The apples trees were particularly hard hit in the Boulder area and ours were no exception. Because our trees were so young and repeatedly hit with damaging hail, the fire blight was devastating. We opted to remove the young trees as more than half of each individual tree showed disease. Fire blight is a common problem and it is imperative that fire blight resistance varieties are selected when possible and good cultural practices are implemented in the management of apple and pear orchards.



Cutting garden

Because of interest in pollinator health and habitat, and the evident interest in flowers of our community gardeners, we have created a pollinator seed mix garden (#30, far east side) and a cutting garden (#32, front plot). The pollinator seed mix bed was started last year and reseeded prolifically to create an amazing little buffet for bees, butterflies, moths, dragonflies. I water it once a week and try to keep the weeds away.

Annuals and perennials of different height, texture, shapes and colors are grown for the purposes of creating bouquets. I have been trying to do this for a couple of years and the office staff and volunteers have really enjoyed them.



Seeds I have collected for next season are from the various demonstration gardens on the grounds. We will use annuals like Poppies, Cleome, Cornflower, Chamomile, Larkspur, Snapdragons, Marigolds, Zinnias and Cosmos. Some perennials we will grow Gallardia, Engleman Daisy, Penstemon(s), Aster, Mexican hat, Flax and Liatris. Some seeds will need winter stratification, (needing a period of cold and wet in order to germinate) and I will put them out during the winter/early spring.

Demo Gardens

This spring, we started a native garden from young plants from CoNPS (Colorado Native Plant Society) on the east side of the Natural Resource Building. This garden is based on a design from our horticulture agent, Deryn Davidson. The new garden used to house a giant thicket of Pyracantha that was removed about four years ago. Black plastic cloth was laid down to kill weed seeds for three years. This method of weed suppression was somewhat successful except for Purslane. Before planting, the original soil was amended with "planters mix" and squeegee (small gravel) from Colorado Materials around the corner. Native plants promote native animal habitat and food sources with minimal maintenance and water.

Please feel free to explore. CSU Extension encourages the public to learn from these demonstration gardens for use in their own landscapes. The idea is to promote native or well acclimated plants for responsible gardening and environmental practices. Look for our Plant Select, Hell Strip and a Rock Garden demonstration as well. (We don't have signage yet) Most of these gardens are watered by hand and are maintained by myself and Master Gardeners every two weeks.



Community Service

Thank you all for pitching in and making the garden run smoothly this year and always. Please let the garden coordinator know how much volunteer time you have contributed to the garden this season. If you need projects, please let us know and we can brain storm together. We also accept \$40 donation as well and time or money is greatly appreciated.

Some garden projects that were completed by you all this season were: answering the gardening questionnaire for our newsletter, straightening leaning posts, trellising the hops, fixing tools, removing dead apple trees, maintaining the bulletin board, gathering dropped apples, picking berries while I was out of town, and last but by no means least weeding!!! If I left anything out I DO appreciate what you all do for our garden.

A huge thank you to those of you who donated food to Longmont Food Share. I know they appreciate everything they can get from the community.



thank
you!



Healthy Garden Tips

Prepping your garden for winter

Time to get started on the winterizing of your plots. Clean up is important to the health and maintenance of the entire garden. Thank you for your diligence in this matter.

This is a **CHECK LIST** of clean up duties that you are expected to perform before the **November 15th** deadline. Breaking up the chores into manageable portions of work is a good approach to getting things done without being overwhelmed - or getting back injuries.

1. Please clear your plots of weeds (especially those that have produced seeds) and diseased plant materials. **REMOVE ALL TOMATO, CRUCIFEROUS and SQUASH plants!!**

2. Wherever you may have had a problem with pests or disease, it is very important to remove all plant material. We have a healthy population of flea beetles that plague new plantings every spring. Please be a good garden neighbor and clean those areas up completely!!

3. Do not leave any tomatoes, squash or any other veggie in your plot over the winter; they attract rodents and raccoons.

4. Remove all items that have not been approved by the Garden Coordinator. Boulder County Extension is not responsible for anything left in your plot at any time. NOT getting permission to store items over the winter may result in the removal and disposal of items, the loss of your plot, and the loss of your deposit. Remove all trash, plastic pots, tools and furniture that can become a nuisance to other gardeners from winter winds.

5. Secure EVERYTHING so that it does not blow all over the garden. This includes all trellis materials, bags of leaves, large planters, compost bins, pots, tools etc.

6. Please let us know if you plan on *not* returning next season as soon as you can, we have a waiting list of folks who would love to utilize the space.

7. Make sure you have all of your volunteer hours approved and completed by November 15th. **2 hours/plot.**

Optional but useful chores

Have your soil tested so that you have plenty of time to adjust your plot. Amend your soil with manure now so that it has time to work its magic and "cure" over the winter.

Protect soil from harsh winter conditions by adding a layer of finished compost under a fresh layer of good degradable mulch.

Consider planting a cover crop of rye after a killing frost.

<http://planttalk.colostate.edu/topics/soils-amendments-composting/1607-cover-crops-winter-rye/>



Protect perennials with mulch over the winter, or consider leaving plant materials in place until the spring clean up.

Save seeds of plants you have enjoyed this year. Some perennial and annual seeds need to experience winter conditions in order to germinate in the spring. Plant them in the fall or winter.



Gather fall leaves that are conveniently bagged, free and available on the curb of many neighborhoods in the area. Old town is full of huge trees and many bags of leaves. Leaves are an excellent source of brown material for the compost pile, a quick break down soil amendment and an excellent mulch for the garden next year. - Especially if you can shred the leaves. (with a shredder or mower) If you do bring in bags of leaves, please secure them in some way or they will blow all over the garden.

***See you next Spring.
Cheers!***

