

BROWN COUNTY

Seed Library



Newsletter June 2023

Seed Stock Update:

Our next seed packing day is June 13th from 5:30 - 7:30 pm at the Central library. No sign up necessary. We have lots of seeds that still can be packaged for this season. Hope to see you there!

Seed Steward Training



Our kale and chives at the Children's Edible Garden overwintered well and are already flowering! We are planning on participating in the Central Library's [How-to Fest](#) on July 25th and will be offering seed collection training there which will count as your in-person training event for your seed steward training. Remember, in order to complete your seed steward training, you will need to watch the three videos, attend one in-person training event and fill out the training completion survey. We will be announcing additional seed harvesting events on the [NEW Master Gardeners seed saving webpage](#) and [facebook](#) as they become available.

Calender of Local Garden Related Events

June 6, noon-1pm (free)
Gardening for Pollinators
Virtual- UW Madison
[Mini Webinars for Gardeners](#)

June 10, 10:00am - noon (free)
[Summer Reading Kickoff](#) at Brown Co Central Library
(Master Gardeners available to hand out
1S1C envelopes and answer questions)

June 13, 5:30pm - 7:30pm (free)
Seed Packing at Central Library

June 13, 6pm-7:30pm (free)
[Evenings in the Library's Edible Garden](#)
Central Library

June 16, 7:00 am-6 pm (\$)
[Horticulture Bus Tour](#)

June 19-25
[National Pollinator week!](#)

June 19, 12pm - 12:45pm (free)
[What Would We Eat Without Bees?](#)
Virtual- UW Madison

June 20, 12pm - 12:45pm (free)
[The Hidden World of Bees – Unveiling a New Discovery](#)
Virtual- UW Madison

June 20, 6pm - 7:30pm (free)
[Evenings in the Library's Edible Garden](#)
Central Library

June 21, 12pm - 12:45pm (free)
[Making Space for Pollinators](#)
Virtual- UW Madison

June 21, 5pm - 7pm
Celebrate Pollinator week at the Locktender garden
[NEW Master Gardener](#) Calender will be updated closer to the event

June 22, 12pm - 12:45pm
[A Mutual Attraction: Trees and Shrubs for Pollinators](#)
Virtual- UW Madison

June 23, 12pm - 12:45pm (free)

[Butterfly Garden Design](#)

Virtual- UW Madison

June 24, 10am - 11am (free)

[Community Science: Garden and Biodiversity Explorers](#)

Central Library

June 27, 6pm - 7:30pm (free)

[Evenings in the Library's Edible Garden](#)

Central Library

June 27, 6:30-7:45 pm (free)

[Aromatic Herbs: Growing, Cooking and Sachet-making](#)

Central Library

June 30, 10am - 11 am (free)

[Garden STEM and the Five Senses: An Edible Garden Exploration](#)

Central Library

July 11, 6pm - 7:30pm (free)

[Evenings in the Library's Edible Garden](#)

Central Library

July 18, 6pm - 7:30pm (free)

[Evenings in the Library's Edible Garden](#)

Central Library

July 21, 10am - 11am (free)

[Popcorn & Seed Celebration with Children's Author Cynthia Schumerth: An Edible Garden Exploration](#)

Central Library

July 22, 9am - 3pm (\$)

[The Gardeners Club of Green Bay Garden Walk](#)

5 gardens in Suamico, Seymour and Howard areas

July 25, 4:30pm - 7:45pm (free)

[How-To Fest: Summer Edition](#)

Central Library

July 25, 6pm - 7:30pm (free)

[Evenings in the Library's Edible Garden](#)

Central Library

One Seed, One Community

Have you watched [this video](#) about our program?

It's time! If you have not planted your Dragon Tongue Beans in the last few days, it is finally the right temperature for warm season crops, like beans. In the last article, you were reminded to soak the seeds the night before you plan on planting to soften the seed coat.

During June, you will get to see your beans emerge out of the ground and start growing into a small bush. Here are some ideas to help keep your plants thriving.

Fertilize: Add a layer of compost around your plants, as compost improves the soil structure while providing macronutrients. To help build a strong root system, add bone meal. To increase the growth of the plant, add blood meal or greensand. Wood ash can improve color and weight. Once a month is a good rule of thumb for lightly fertilizing beans. Too much might prevent the plant from producing pods, as the excess fertilizer will encourage the plant to keep growing and not set flowers.

Mulch: Adding mulch around your beans will help hold in moisture and suppress weeds. Setting straw around your plants, or even cutting a thin cardboard to fit around them can work as an easy mulch.

Water: Moist is the key word for beans. Think of Baby Bear in 'The Three Little Bears' story; not too much and not too little. Happy bean plants like continuously moist soil, so check often by sticking your finger in the soil. If your finger comes out with no soil on it, it means the soil is dry and time to water. If your finger comes out with soil sticking to it, watering is not necessary. Keep in mind that on sunny hot days, especially if you are container growing, you may need to water more than once a day. The best time to water is morning, followed by evening. Try to avoid watering in the middle of the day.

Problems: If you are having problems or questions about your Dragon Tongue Beans, please contact us. Our email is seedsaver@newmastergardeners.org, or use our contact page on our website, <https://newmastergardeners.org/>

Photos: We would love to share how things are going. Please feel free to send your photos to the above mentioned email or website.

Submitted by
Peggy, NEW Master Gardener

Three Sisters Planting

Haudenosaunee Three Sisters

Tuscarora White Corn - 4 seeds
Wild Pigeon short pole beans - 2 seeds
Early Summer Yellow Crookneck Squash - 4 seeds

These seeds have a long history among the Haudenosaunee people and have a connection to this land. We are so thankful to Becky Webster at Ukwakhwa Inc. for sharing them with us!

To the Haudenosaunee people, corn, beans and squash are the Three Sisters: The physical and spiritual sustainers of life. These life-supporting plants were given to the people when all three miraculously sprouted from the body of Sky Woman's daughter, granting the gift of agriculture to the Haudenosaunee nations.

Historically the Haudenosaunee people planted the three sisters: corn, beans and squash in mounds together. The three sisters grow together and help each other out. The corn grows tall and strong and serves as a pole for the beans to climb. The beans put nitrogen back in the soil and help to stabilize the corn. The squash spreads on the ground like a living mulch to prevent weeds from growing and to keep moisture in the soil. They also keep animals out of the garden because the animals don't like to walk through their prickly stems and leaves. The large amount of crop residue from this planting combination can be incorporated back into the soil at the end of the season, to build up the organic matter and improve its structure. Mounds protect the seeds from getting too saturated in the spring and encourage drainage. The soil also warms up faster at the top of the mounds.

Shape the mounds about 3 ft x 2ft and 1/2-1 foot tall, with the center of each mound being about 5 ft apart. The mounds should receive full sunlight. Historically, fish were placed in each mound in either fall or spring before planting. Other organic fertilizer, such as fish emulsion, can be used as well. The top of the mound may be flattened slightly to create an easier surface area for planting. As you shape the mound you can compact the soil slightly so it does not wash away in the rain.

Prepare the corn seeds for planting by soaking them in a traditional medicinal tea. Becky at Ukwakhwa uses a tea made from the mayapple plant. Other medicines include milkweed, white pine, Marsh Reed, battle brush and hellebore root. Prepare the tea by heating a few cups of water to boiling, turning off the burner, and placing the plant material in the water. Allow to steep for several hours. Then discard the plant material from your tea into your compost pile or direct in your garden. Pour the tea into a mason jar and add your corn kernels. Some of the tea will be absorbed by the corn so leave some room at the top of your jar. After about 15 min, remove any corn that is still floating on top of the liquid, as this likely won't germinate. Allow to sit 8 hrs or overnight someplace warm (like the top of your fridge). Plant the corn kernels in the mounds about 10 inches apart, 1-2 inches deep, making a square.

After a few weeks or when the corn is about 6 inches tall, it is time to plant the beans and squash. Soak the bean seeds overnight in water. On the day of planting, rough up the soil on top of the mound a bit. Put one pole bean seed by each corn about an inch away on the outside of the corn. Plant each bean seed 1.5” deep. For the squash, plant the seeds 2 ft apart on the south-facing side of the mound, about 1/2-1” deep.

Harvest and use:

Tuscarora White Corn (also known as Iroquois White Corn) is harvested, dried and used for three different preparations. The first is Hulled Whole Hominy, a whole corn kernel also known as posole with wonderful corn flavor and consistency. The second is Tamal flour, which is made from hulled corn that is then stone-milled. Finally comes the Roasted Corn Flour, where the corn is lightly dry pan-roasted and then stone ground. The roasted corn meal has a sweet, nutty, true corn flavor.

Wild Pigeon’ Beans are harvested for dried beans. Good for soups, stews or stuffings. Its nutty flavor is reminiscent of hickory nuts; it can be ground for flour and added to grits or mush to impart an interesting background flavor. It also goes well with morels and other wild mushrooms.

Cornfield Pumpkins can be harvested and used like any other pumpkin.

YouTube videos by Becky at Ukwakhwa demonstrating the preparation and planting technique.

▶ Making mounds for three sisters gardens

<https://youtu.be/hWURhP9sZpw>

▶ Soaking Corn in Tea for Planting

<https://youtu.be/1Diy1qMnjo8>

▶ Three Sisters Gardening Planting Beans and Squash

<https://youtu.be/rWzFXZK05ZM>

Seed Saving

Growing plants with the intention of saving seeds takes planning from the start. Learn and understand the life cycle of the seeds you select. Self-pollinating plants are easy to start with seed saving, but be aware that even with easy crops like peppers and tomatoes, there is a chance these plants can cross-pollinate.

To prevent cross-pollination, you can isolate your plants by time, space or barriers. Time refers to the flowering time of two crops that could potentially pollinate one

another. Depending on the crop and your reference, space can be anywhere from half a mile to two miles. Barriers can be buildings, vegetation between garden areas, or it can be a covering over your flower or plant. Pollination bags work well for backyard gardening in the city. If you registered for seed saving in Brown County, you will be offered a sample of bags to use in your seed saving efforts.

Pollination naturally occurs through wind and insects. To ensure that your harvest has not been cross pollinated, you need to prevent wind or insects from pollinating the flowers you intend to harvest seeds. Let's all work hard at producing true-to-type seeds for the library.

[Click here](#) if you are interested in becoming a Seed Steward for Brown County. Go to [our website](#) for more information on how to save seeds.

Living Soil and Planning Your No-Till Garden

Last month we talked about mulch; its benefits, the different options available to us and the advantages and disadvantages they offer. This month I would like to focus on methods for turning over beds as discussed in Jesse Frost's book "The Living Soil Handbook. Turning over beds is essentially completing the harvest of one crop and preparing to plant another in that space. For most of us, we grew up with tilling the soil being an essential step in that process. In order to change how we prepare the soil to plant, we also may need to modify how we harvest.

If possible, it is best to leave the roots in the ground after harvesting. Of course, this does not work for every crop, such as garlic, carrots or radishes, where the crop we are harvesting is below ground. In those situations, you would indeed pull up the entire plant for harvest. However, for many things we grow, our harvested parts are above ground only and the roots can be left intact. By leaving the roots you allow the community of microbial life that you worked hard to establish continue to thrive. That being said, the plant needs to be killed in order for it to not compete with your next crop.

There are several ways to accomplish this. It can be done by cutting the stem at or slightly below the soil line with a hand tool (snippers, lettuce knife, stirrup hoe). It can be done using the process of occultation (using an opaque covering over the ground to kill any remaining plant life.) Occultation can be done using a silage tarp, plastic sheet, landscape fabric or cardboard. In some instances, the occultation material can be left in place and small holes can be cut into it to place your new crop transplants. Crops can also be terminated using the bush blade on a string trimmer, which will allow you to trim large numbers of plants at the soil surface (the bush blade is preferred so you don't leave plastic bits from the string in your soil.) Market gardeners might find it worthwhile to invest in a flail mower (a mower that spins on a vertical plane as it cuts, as opposed to the horizontal spin of traditional mowers.)

Another option is solarization, which involves laying clear plastic down over the plant residue to kill the plants using the sun's radiation. Depending on the time of year, this method can work within a day to a week, vs several weeks using occultation.

These methods can be more time consuming than just running everything over with a tiller, but for soil health the important thing to remember is that you terminate the current crop while disturbing the soil as little as possible. Next is the opportunity to add any organic fertilizers or mulch on top of the soil and lightly rake in if needed. Then replant as quickly as possible. Depending on what you have remaining in the soil and what you are planting next, you may choose to maintain your plantings in the same rows as before and just plant in the spaces between the old plant roots. Or, you may choose to make new rows in the spaces between the old ones. For root crops, this becomes more important as the presence of old plant roots can interfere with the growth of the new crop. Consider this when planning your planting rotation. Plant carrots and other root crops after shallow rooted, tender crops such as lettuce for better results.

Submitted by Melissa, NEW Master Gardener

Featured Local Organization

This month, our featured local organization is actually a program supported by UW Extension Brown County. It is called [Planting for a Purpose](#). The program is to encourage local gardeners to donate excess produce grown, or a percentage of their harvest, to local food pantries. You do not have to be a part of a community garden to participate; anyone can donate to the program.

Did you know that according to a [2022 USDA survey](#), 77% of households surveyed in Brown County were considered food insecure? This means that they were “Unable at some time during the year, to provide adequate food for one or more household members because of a lack of resources.” That is a shocking number! As gardeners, sometimes we are fortunate enough to have more in the gardens than our families can utilize. Planting for a Purpose is a great way to use your extra produce to help provide healthy, locally grown food to those less fortunate in our communities. According to Annie Schmitz, our local Community Garden Coordinator, last year over 4,500 pounds of produce were donated through the Planting for a Purpose program! In addition to the direct benefits of helping feed our communities, utilization of this program helps justify community garden space, obtain grants for future community garden projects, and procure seed donations for our local community.

You can [sign up](#) for Planting for a Purpose at any time. There is a list of local food pantries in our area on the [extension](#) website, and also on [Brown County Food and Hunger Network](#), which has a map to show you which food pantries are closest to you.

Some general donation guidelines:

- Donate food that is ripe and ready to be harvested.
- Wash your hands before handling produce.
- Brush off as much mud and soil as possible, but do not wash.
- Store different types of produce separately in clean, food-safe containers.
- Plastic bags such as ziplock or clean grocery bags are affordable options.
- If not donating produce right after harvest, follow [recommendations](#) about refrigerating produce. Once your produce donation is dropped off, it will be sorted and refrigerated if appropriate by the pantry staff.
- Keep animals and pets out of the garden.
- Choose a spot with uncontaminated soil for your garden.
- If you wouldn't eat it, don't donate it.

Let's challenge ourselves to beat last year's total!

Submitted by Melissa, NEW Master Gardener

Plant Profile

Plant Profile: Echinacea



Echinacea purpurea (purple coneflower) is an herbaceous perennial that is native to Eastern and Central North America. It belongs to the Asteraceae family. It thrives in zones 3 to 8 and can tolerate deer, drought, clay soil, dry soil and shallow or rocky soil. It is attractive planted en masse and is great as a cut flower or dried.

Echinacea has many varieties but *echinacea purpurea* is one of the most popular. Other varieties are white, yellow, orange, pink. *Echinacea purpurea*, commonly called purple coneflower, is a coarse, rough-hairy, herbaceous perennial that is native to moist prairies, meadows, and open woods of the central and southeastern United States. It typically grows to 2-4' tall. Showy daisy-like purple coneflowers, up to 5''

diameter, bloom throughout summer atop stiff stems clad with coarse, ovate to broad-lanceolate, dark green leaves. The genus name of *Echinacea* comes from the Greek word *echinos* meaning hedgehog or sea-urchin in reference to the spiny center of the flower. The dead flower stems will remain erect well into the winter, and if flower heads are not removed, the blackened cones may be visited by goldfinches or other birds that feed on the seeds. It is relatively easy to harvest seeds from such a sturdy center, as well. Echinacea will also reseed quite well and is therefore popular in home gardens and landscapes.

Echinacea has been used as a popular herbal remedy for centuries and is used among Native American populations. There are 9 varieties of echinacea, but only 3 are known for medicinal use: *Echinacea purpurea*, *Echinacea pallida*, and *Echinacea augustifolia*. Most published information about the medicinal use of echinacea is from Germany, although there are no rigorous clinical studies. There is no consistent preparation of echinacea—some people use the stem, some the flower, some the seeds for medicinal use. Today, it is often used to prevent or treat viruses that cause colds, sore throats, or the flu. You can find echinacea products in most drug stores or health food stores. Because it is an herbal medicine and not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration, one should be careful with its use, especially if other prescription medicines are taken. It is generally accepted as safe for short term use in healthy adults to help prevent upper respiratory viral infections and colds.

Information obtained from:

Missouri Botanical Garden

National Institutes of Health, National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health

Submitted by Terri, NEW Master Gardener

Featured Recipe

RHUBARB BLUEBERRY CREAM CHEESE BARS

GRAND CHAMPION FAIR RECIPE

INGREDIENTS

CRUST:

1 1/2 Cups flour

1/2 cup sugar

3/4 cup melted butter

RHUBARB LAYER:

4 cups chopped rhubarb

1 cup fresh blueberries

1 cup sugar

4 tablespoons flour

CREAM CHEESE FILLING:

1 1/2 (12-ounce) packages cream cheese (softened)

3/4 cup sugar

3 eggs

GLAZE:

3/4 cup sour cream
2 teaspoon vanilla

PREPARATION

1. Combine crust ingredients. Spread into a 9x13-inch pan and bake at 375°F for 10 minutes.
2. Toss together ingredients for the rhubarb layer and pour over the crust. Bake for 15 minutes at 375°F.
3. Mix together cream cheese and sugar. Beat eggs in one at a time. Pour mixture over rhubarb and blueberries and bake 25 minutes 375°F.
4. Mix glaze ingredients together and spread over bars as soon as they come out of the oven.

Recipe notes: I have used a combination of different fruits with rhubarb. I have also used frozen rhubarb.

Submitted by Eileen Rueden, N.E.W. Master Gardener

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