



Save The Date

The Annual Riverbend Community Garden Barbecue is scheduled for Saturday, September 16, 2017, or, if it's raining, Sunday, September 17, 2017. We will provide you with more information as it becomes available.

Volunteers Need

The Garden Girls (Joni, Sue and Peggy) regret to inform you that, for unforeseen circumstances, they cannot coordinate the Annual Riverbend Community Garden Barbecue this year. Therefore, we are asking for volunteers from the garden membership.

As a volunteer, you will be given a budget and you will be required to plan a menu, purchase the food, soft drinks, water, paper & plastic products and various sundries. Garden Members usually bring a side dish and/or dessert to complete the meal. Please send an email to us at riverbendcommunitygarden2003@gmail.com if you'd like to volunteer.

We look forward to seeing everyone in September.

Scheduled Work Days

There are only three (3), possibly four (4), work days remaining in our 2017 Garden Season:

Saturday August 5, 2017
Saturday September 9, 2017
Saturday, October 14, 2017

We may be adding a Sunday or another Monday work day to this schedule for those who missed the Monday, July 10th work day. We will send out an email to everyone, if we decide to add another work day to the schedule.

If you've missed a work day (or two), please email your alternate choice(s) from the above remaining dates to riverbendcommunitygarden2003@gmail.com and we will update the Work Day Schedule.

And, in case you forget, we will send you a reminder when it's time for you to complete your workday(s).

You've Got Weeds - Continued



Last month, we asked you to do your best to remove the weeds from your garden plot. In the past two weeks, we've not only noticed that most garden plots are becoming abundant with produce, but we've also noticed that everyone is making a determined effort to keep the weeds in their garden plot to a minimum. Thank you for maintaining your plot in a neat and orderly fashion.

Please email: riverbendcommunitygarden2003@gmail.com, if there is something that you'd like to see, or if you have information that you'd like to share, in the Riverbend Community Garden Newsletter.

Is it Time to Harvest Garlic Yet?

It's almost garlic harvesting time. How can you tell? The leaves are your best clue. The base of the leaves form the papery layers that wrap around the garlic head. As the season progresses, these leaves will gradually dry and fall over.

Different zones, weather conditions and varieties will change the harvesting dates. As a rule of thumb harvest when about half of the leaves are green and half are turning brown.

NOTE: if you are growing a hard neck variety (and sometimes Elephant Garlic) then you may have seen a flower stalk sprouting from the leaves (this is called a *'scape'*). Allowing your garlic to flower will reduce your bulb size, so it is best to snip these at 6-8". They are edible and tasty – ferment, sauté or roast with veggies!

Harvesting

On a sunny day when the leaves look right, pull out one or two plants and see if the heads have reached full size. If they are still small and wrapped in many layers then they probably need more time. Give them another week and look again.

If there are too few layers and the bulbs are beginning to split then you have probably left them too long and need to pick the rest quickly.

You can dig garlic out with a shovel, pitchfork or potato digging fork. A shovel seems to work best in heavy soils. Be sure to dig in far enough away from the bulb so that it won't be damaged when you lift it.

Once your garlic has been picked, don't leave it laying on the ground. Too much sun can "burn" the garlic and cause it to lose flavor. Instead, brush off the dirt and let it cure outside in a shady dry place for a week.

There is some debate on whether washing garlic bulbs may lead to storage diseases and problems or not. Some say rinsing makes it easier to use later and does no harm as long as it dries thoroughly afterward. Others say never wash them.

Storage

Cut the stalks off 6" or so above the bulb, unless you are going to braid them. Remove the outer layer of skin if it's torn but don't remove too many layers because it protects the bulb. It will last longer in storage with more layers.

You can put the cured heads in paper bags or hang them in a dark, cool, dry place. You can eat the bulbs anytime, fresh or dry. You might want to save a few of the best bulbs to use as seed for next fall's planting.

Sautee slivers of garlic in olive oil until lightly browned, then add handfuls of mixed greens – kale, chard, collards, dandelion; cover and cook until just tender. Yum, so easy and good for you!

Garlic Harvesting Guide

Hard Neck Garlic: Harvest the scape in spring by snapping off the tendril at the point where it comes out of the plant stalk. Do not let the plant flower or it will reduce the bulb size. Pull bulbs when there are only 5 or 6 green leaves left on the plant. Don't wait too long or the bulb will begin to split!

Soft Neck Garlic: Pull bulbs when there are 5 green leaves left. (Soft Neck garlic does not produce a scape.)

Elephant Garlic: Sometimes the plants make a flower stalk – snap that off if it appears. Pull bulbs when the edges of the leaves begin to brown but are still quite green.

