# The GardenShed

## Fall 2021

## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE APPLE COUNTRY GARDEN CLUB





## the **GardenShed**

Fall 2021

## ~ from the Editor

I can't believe that summer is over already. I haven't had nearly enough of it yet! It seems like it just got started.

However, Fall is a wonderful time of year. With so many

reasons to enjoy the fresh air and sunny days wearing warm sweaters and thick socks on cool nights. The bugs are gone and the colours are fabulous.



The root vegetables are sooo tasty right now as are the homemade soups and stews and the fresh fruits and hot drinks. Thanksgiving is here and Halloween is around the corner. Yum! Chocolate.

As I've said before, Fall is a very busy time for all of us. Readying the house for winter, harvesting our variety of vegetables, prepping the lawns to over-winter and of course, putting the gardens to bed. Whew! There's a lot of things to do.

My veggies weren't as good as they are most years. My yellow string beans failed to produce; my beets generally did the same. But the tomatoes! They made up for everything else by producing an overabundance. Happy neighbours on my street.

The roses did very well this year, I am happy to say, as did my dahlia's....since I moved them to the sunny side. They will continue through October probably.

We've had a rough couple of years as of late and we can only look forward to better times next year.

So, my good friends, enjoy your season to close the year, enjoy your Thanksgiving, Halloween and of course, Christmas festivities and hopefully and expectantly we'll all be meeting together in the new year.

~ Shannon

## ~from the President

Where have all the flowers gone!! Sounds like a song doesn't it? ... but it is true for most of our flowers right now. Summer has officially ended and Fall has swept in with lots of wind and rain. We could have used the rain in the summer, but I suppose it is just as good now. Trees need lots of water to get through the winter and if you are

planting bulbs, the extra water would be good. As I drive around, I see that there are still some lovely flowers in people's yards and of course, there are lots of Mums around at this time of the year. Most of you, I am sure, are in the midst of getting your gardens ready for the winter and are busy planting bulbs, cleaning up flower and vegetable beds and taking up those plants that produced such wonderful blooms during the late



summer and into the Fall. I enjoy this time of year, with the cooler temperatures during the day and night. This past summer was just too hot and humid for me and I am afraid my garden suffered for it! This is such a colourful time of year, with all of the trees already turning their bright reds and golds. It seems early, but it is mid October, so I guess it is to be expected.

The club has been busy ... I know that sounds strange since we aren't getting together, but we did manage to get the hanging baskets done, the chairs were put out on the streets and we even got to do some planting at the town Gazebo. We were also asked to do the gardens at the Art Gallery. Unfortunately, the tree we planted some years ago at the town hall in Castleton died this summer and has to be replaced. The township is going put in a Gazebo where the tree was and when they are finished, they are going to replace and plant the new tree for us. The Ecology Garden flourished this year, with not only lovely flowers, but vegetables as well. The vegetables were enjoyed by one and all and lots of people in the community availed themselves of some produce and were very appreciative. There have been some changes in the Parks and Recreation department and perhaps in the future we will be able to undertake some other projects around town.

As I have said in a previous email, we will not be meeting in person until January 2022. Things are still up in the air and we felt it was better to wait for a few more months before we resume meetings. I know everyone is anxious to get going, as am I, but we are working with an abundance of caution so we can keep us all safe. I am busy working on the speakers list and the Year Book. I am hoping to have one or two workshops this year as well as speakers. It is fun to be working with our hands and creating something at the same time. If you have any thoughts about any workshops, please email me and let me know.

As I write this, the smell of turkey cooking is wafting

through the house. This is the time of year that we give thanks for all of our blessings and for the friends and family that sustain us. This past 19 months has been hard on all of us, hopefully this Thanksgiving weekend you are able to have family in or perhaps you are spending it with

What's the ratio of a pumpkin's circumference to its diameter? Pumpkin Pi.

family elsewhere. Whatever and wherever you are, please take the time to reflect on what we have been through and give thanks that we are all still here and still healthy. Give thanks for the abundance in our lives as many are not as fortunate. From our house to yours, Happy Thanksgiving. ~ Sharron



Our congratulations go out to Carolyn Megill, the winner of the Hope Garden contest this summer. Carolyn's gardens were spectacular, garnished with the yellow colour of Hope!



### Garden Maintenance Before Winter

Like it or not, Fall brings a lot of maintenance and winter preparedness jobs that we have to do before hanging up our gloves for the growing season.

It's not the most exciting work, but end-of-season gardening chores represent an important phase in your garden. In fact, what you do in the fall will have a direct impact on how your garden bounces back in the spring!

#### 1. The Garden Clean Up

**Remove Annuals.** After the first frost, pull up your dead annuals and add them to the compost pile or trash them if there are signs of disease.

**Cut Back Perennials.** There are differing opinions on this but this is what I call the 'landscaping' version: After the first frost, cut back your perennials. Timing is particularly important here because you don't want to encourage new growth that will just end up getting killed by frost later on.

**Remove bulbs and tubers for winter.** When the plants begin to turn brown and die back and before a hard frost occurs, cut back the plant and remove the bulbs or tubers from the ground. Brush off all dirt and debris and let them thoroughly dry before storing in a cardboard box layered between newspaper or a covering of peat moss. Store in a cool, dry location.

Weed Your Beds. I know we've all had enough weeding for one year but it's important to do it one last time before the snow flies. One more round of weeding, and a little weed killer spray will make it harder for those weeds to grow back come springtime! Here's a non-toxic homemade weed killer to try:

Ingredients:	Directions:
2 cups distilled white vinegar (apple cider vinegar works too)	Add vinegar, salt, and dish soap to a 16 oz. spray bottle. Replace the sprayer top and shake gently to mix.
2 Tbsp table salt	Spray onto weeds as soon as you notice them. Be careful of
1 tsp liquid dish washing soap (like Dawn) thickens the formula, which helps it adhere to weeds.	overspray to avoid singeing any grass around the weed. For best results, spray the weeds on a warm, sunny day.

#### **Other Natural & Effective Weed killers**

Newspaper/Mulch	Weeds need sunshine and air to grow. Use a weed trimmer or mower to level them off, then use a ground cover like newspaper, landscape fabric, or organic mulch on top of them.	
Boiling Water	For weeds in the cracks of your sidewalks or driveway take boiling water and pour it directly onto weeds to kill them instantly.	
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**Prevent Pests.** If you've had problems with pests in your soil this season, tilling your soil can help expose and kill them. Add a layer of compost over the top of your soil and gently till it to expose insects preparing to overwinter.

**Plant For Overwintering.** Once you've cleared out annuals from your garden, plant anything you want to overwinter! Bulbs, onions, and garlic are all great candidates for overwintering.

#### 2. Store Things Away

**Put Away Pots.** Empty and clean all your pots, containers, cages, and garden ornaments. Store them in your garage or shed upside-down to keep them safe throughout the winter months.

**Empty Fuel Tanks.** Before putting away your lawnmower, string trimmer, and other power tools, be sure to empty any fuel out of the tanks.

**Drain Hoses.** Drag garden hoses over a railing to make sure all the water comes out, then wrap them up and store them away.

Ben



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**Care for Garden Tools.** This is a biggie! We've used and reused our gardening tools all spring and summer and now they deserve to have a bit of TLC before we get them out again next spring.

Regular cleaning and proper storage is essential to keep your tools in good working order. They need to be sharp (sharpening can be done DYI, however, there are many sharpening service companies in our area), clean and sterile to protect your garden beds from bacteria or insect infestations.

- Rinse digging tools thoroughly with a garden hose and use a brush or putty knife to rid them of caked-on dirt.
- Pruners, loppers and shears as well as small hand tools should be scrubbed with a brush and soapy water. and rinsed thoroughly
- Rust can be removed by soaking the tools in a 1:1 mixture of vinegar and water overnight then scrub in a circular motion with steel wool. Rinse in

soapy water, and then plain water. Dry thoroughly then rub lightly with linseed or mineral oil.

- To sterilize tools, wipe with a cotton pad soaked with rubbing alcohol or give them a quick soak in a diluted solution of 2 cups bleach mixed with 1 gallon of water and then rinse thoroughly.
- Dry the tools thoroughly with a towel or rag.
- Store the tools in a dry, well-ventilated shed or garage.
- To keep small hand tools clean and sharp, store plunged into a bucket of sand or small pebbles.

**Other Gardening Tools.** After gardening tools, gardening gloves deserve a bit of extra care in the fall too. Wash out lightweight gardening gloves with a hose and then run them through the washing machine before storing them away. Rub down heavy leather gloves with a rough towel to get rid of most of the dirt before tucking them away. Just remember, every gardener deserves a new pair of gloves every year.

#### 3. Prepare For Next Year

**Review & Take Notes.** Take a few minutes to jot down some notes about your garden performance over the past season. If something could have used more sun, or you wish you'd planted more of something, take note of it to reference before you plant next spring!

Make a soothing hot toddy and put your feet up.... you deserve it!



#### **Harvesting Seeds**

When we talk about harvesting, it is usually about vegetables....but how about planning next spring's vegetables and flowers this fall.

Harvesting seeds is an economical way to gather seeds as well as a good way to swap and share with other garden club members.

#### When to Harvest Garden Seeds

The general rule of thumb to determine when it is time to gather your seeds is when the flowers are fading at the end of season.

Seed harvesting should be done on a dry and sunny day. Once seedpods have changed from green to brown, are crispy dry and can be easily split, you can begin collecting. Cut the flower head with a knife or with scissors and collect the seeds to a clean, dry paper. For capsules and pods, when dry, pinch, roll or pry open to remove seeds, then screen to separate seeds from remnants of capsules. It is important to allow the seeds to thoroughly dry for about a week before placing and sealing in a paper bag or envelope.

Perennial seeds can be planted starting in fall. Start them in a protected spot in loose, well-drained soil. Water them well after planting, and give them a light covering of mulch. They'll wait out the winter and sprout in spring. Or, you can store the seeds and start them indoors in late winter or very early spring. Don't expect them to bloom their first year because the plants will use all their energy to grow roots and leaves; most will bloom the second year.

Some easy perennial flowers from which to collect your seeds:

ed Susai
plant
sweet I

Pea

Many Annual flower seeds can be harvested. Gather after the flowers bloom and follow the same instructions to collect the seeds.

Some easy annuals from which to collect your seeds:

Cleome	Marigold	Nasturtium
Snapdragon	Larkspur	Рорру
Morning glory		



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#### Saving Fruit and Vegetable Seeds

Some easy self pollinating vegetables from which to

collect your seeds:

cucumbers	beans	peas
peppers	tomatoes	
wate	ermelons and m	elons.

#### Cucumber and Tomato Seeds

The time to save cucumber and tomato seeds is when the fruit on the plant is ripe. Remove the pulp with seeds and place them in a container. Then add a small amount of water to the container, enough to cover the seeds and pulp. Let the mixture ferment for 2-4 days at room temperature, making sure to stir occasionally. After a couple of days, the dead seeds will float to the top. When the good seeds sink to the bottom, pour out the pulp. Rinse seeds off with water and place them on waxed paper. Leave to dry for a week then store dry seeds in an airtight container until ready to plant.

#### **Bean and Pea Seeds**

You'll know it's time to harvest the seeds from your bean and pea plants when the pods are dry, turning brow, and starting to open. Remove dry pods from your plants and allow the seeds to dry for two weeks on waxed paper before shelling. Store shelled seeds in an airtight container until you are ready to plant.

#### **Pepper Seeds**

Harvest pepper seeds when the fruit is completely ripe; most varieties will turn red and begin to shrivel. At that point, remove seeds from the fruit and let them dry on waxed paper for 2-4 days. Then, place dry seeds in an airtight container until ready to plant.

#### Watermelon and Melon Seeds

Harvest seeds when the fruit is ripe. When you remove seeds from the fruit, rinse them in a strainer to remove all pulp. Then, spread the seeds on waxed paper and dry for about a week. Turn them once a day until they become completely dry. Place dry seeds in an airtight container until ready to plant.

**Squash Seeds** 

Allow the squash to sit after-ripening for at least 3-6 weeks up to several months. Wash the seeds to remove any flesh and strings. Cure the seeds by laying them out in a single layer on a paper towel to dry. Store them this way in a place that is dry and out of direct sunlight.

#### The Shelf Life of Seeds

Most seeds have a shelf life of approximately one year. After that, the viability rate begins to drop though some older seeds may still germinate. Most perennial flowers are good for about 5 years, and most annual flower seeds will last up to 3 years

One method to check for seed viability is the water test. Take the seeds and place them in a container of water. Let the seeds sit for 15 minutes. If the seeds sink, they are still viable; if they float, discard them because they probably will not sprout.

#### **Seed Storage**

One of the best ways to store seed is in a refrigerator or cold room at cool, but not freezing, temperatures. For the absolute best results, you will need to make sure they are dry when you put them into storage, and that they remain dry until you are ready to put them in the ground.

Humidity and temperature are critical factors in why seeds go bad. Seeds have one thing in common: They all deteriorate over time, but some do it more quickly than others. Seeds stored in a warm, humid environment will decline faster than those stored in the darkness where humidity is low, about 10 percent, and the air temperature is between 32 and 41 degrees Fahrenheit.

Be very sure, when you are saving seeds from your garden to affix a label with the seed type and the date harvested. It's best to store seeds in air-tight containers, like baby food and mason jars, or anything with a rubber gasket that locks out moisture.

There is no one-size-fits-all when it comes to estimating seed longevity. And the truth is, no matter how diligent you've been about seeing to their every need, seeds eventually peter out. Every seed packet includes a "packaged on date," which is a good gauge for determining their lifespan. For example, most annual flowers like zinnias or cosmos have a one-year lifespan. The same is true for vegetable seeds like onions and parsnips. A quick guide to seed storage follows;

<b>т т</b> .	Vegetables	Herbs	
Beans	2 to 4 years	Basil	3 to 5 years
Carrots	3 to 4 years	Chives	1 to 3 years
Squash	6 years	Cilantro, Dill	1 to 4 years
Cucumber	3 to 6 years	Oregano	4 years
Lettuce	1 to 6 years	Parsley, Rosemary, Thyme	1 to 4 years
Melon	3 to 6 years		
Peas	2 to 4 years	Perennial Flowers	Up to 5 years
Peppers	2 to 5 year	Annual Flowers	Up to 3 years
Pumpkins	4 to 6 years	and the	Ø
Tomato	3 to 7 years		

How do you fix a broken pumpkin? With a pumpkin patch

## ~~ Fall Recipes

#### Eggs Poached in Tomato & Fennel Sauce

Known as 'eggs in purgatory', tomato-poached eggs make a delicious meal any time of the day. Serve with crusty baguette slices and top with a little shredded Parmesan cheese.

#### Ingredients:

#### Makes 4 servings

- ➢ 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 small bulb fennel, trimmed, cored and thinly sliced
- 2 green onions, sliced (white and light green parts separated)
- ➢ 2 cups tomato sauce
- > 1 tsp sherry vinegar or red wine vinegar
- $\blacktriangleright$   $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp granulated sugar
- ➤ 4 eggs
- > pinch each of salt & pepper

#### Method:

In large skillet, heat oil over medium heat; cook fennel and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water, stirring occasionally until fennel is softened and water has evaporated, about 15 minutes. Add white parts of green onions; cook, stirring, until fragrant about 1 minute.

Stir in tomato sauce, vinegar and sugar. Bring to a boil; reduce heat to simmer.

Using back of spoon, make 4 wells in sauce, gently break 1 egg into each. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Simmer, partially covered, until egg whites are set yet yolks are still slightly runny, about 9 minutes. Sprinkle with green parts of green onions.

#### Tomato-Coconut Shrimp Curry

This is a Thai-inspired shrimp dish. If desired, serve with a wedge of lime.

#### Ingredients: Makes 4 servings

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- ➢ 1 sweet onion, sliced
- ▶ 1 sweet yellow pepper, sliced
- > 2 tbsp grated fresh ginger
- ➢ 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ➢ 2 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp each, yellow mustard seeds, garam masala and chili powder
- 2 cups tomato sauce
- ➢ 1 can coconut milk
- $\blacktriangleright$  1/2 tsp granulated sugar
- $\blacktriangleright$  <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> tsp salt
- 1 lb jumbo shrimp (21-24 count), peeled and deveined
- $\blacktriangleright$   $\frac{1}{2}$  cup frozen peas
- $\rightarrow$  <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup chopped fresh cilantro

#### Method:

In saucepan, heat oil over medium heat; cook onion, stirring occasionally until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in ginger, garlic, turmeric, mustard seeds, garam masala and chili powder; cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 2 minutes.

Stir in tomato sauce, coconut milk, sugar and salt; simmer, stirring occasionally until slightly thickened, about 5 minutes. Stir in shrimp and peas; simmer until shrimp is pink and opaque throughout, about 4 minutes. Sprinkle with cilantro.

## ~~~ Garden Gallery ~~~

In July, we had a robin build a nest in the right rear corner of a very very small planter with a geranium blooming

in it. The robin was very friendly it seemed, often coming and sitting on the white railing before going to the planter. Seemed this bird was joining my husband and I as we sat on the fairly small back deck.

Pieces of grass, etc., were collected constantly and added to the nest. The nest was soon finished and one day when no one was home in the nest, I quietly and carefully peaked over the edge and saw three beautiful aqua-coloured eggs sitting in the bottom of that nest.

Soon they hatched and the baby birds grew as one or the other of the parents fed their seemingly insatiable appetites. Soon the nest began to look a little crowded. Three little mouths, most often open, forever stretched up to be filled.



Then one day, all were gone leaving only an empty nest with what appeared to be a finely woven grass "mattress"



in the bottom.

The photos show two parts of this unusual experience; you can see how small the planter is. Like human housing, bird housing must be in high demand.

~~ Clare P

## ~~~ From One Gardener to Another ~~~

Early in the spring this year, I pruned my raspberry bushes very heavily. I spread new manure around them and then mulched. I believe I only watered them 2 or 3 times later in the summer. There seemed to be plenty of rain earlier in the year.

Well, they started producing fruit like crazy! I have never had, nor have I seen, such a heavy crop of raspberries. We have been eating them fresh....I've made 2 batches of jam... I have lots in the freezer... I've given some away and the birds and animals have taken their share. Many have fallen off as they were too ripe. Due to other things going on in life, we are not able to pick as often as we should. As of this writing, October 9, the bushes are still loaded and will be until a heavy frost kills them. That may not be until November this year! The variety I have is called 'Heritage' and I've always had a good crop. But this year, it's outstanding.

#### And Under the Category of Best Laid Plans gone Awry.....

- I had a nice crop of beets growing in the vegetable patch and planned to make pickled beets in September. One Saturday, I went out to pick them and discovered the leaves all wilted or dead. I hadn't seen them in a few days but I know we had a good rain on Wednesday that week – they should not have been wilted. I started pulling and found all of them had been eaten and hollowed out from below. Every one! I'm not sure who ate them but I did see a mouse or a vole scurry away as I approached the garden.
- Earlier in the year, on TV was a commercial where a woman watered and admired a lovely planter. I thought I would "steal" the idea for a large planter on my veranda. So I bought a clematis called 'Ramona' and planted it. And then I bought and planted seeds of the ageratum called 'Blue Mink'. Both these plants are a lovely shade of soft mauve. They are a close colour

match and I thought it would look gorgeous. The clematis began growing up the trellis I installed. The ageratum were growing nicely too and began blooming fairly quickly. The seed package said they got about 8" tall. A perfect base around the clematis. They had lots of sun, food and water. Well they grew to 36" in length and the clematis never did bloom! My planter did not look anything like the one on TV.

3. I've never grown muskmelons before so I thought I would try them this year. I know they need lots of sun, heat, very nutrious soil and sufficient water. I made a trellis to keep the vines off the ground and I placed it in front of my south facing barn. I emptied out one of my composters, added a bag of commercial manure and some peat moss to prepare the planting area. I started the seeds early indoors. At the appropriate time, I set out 3 nice plants. I put a length of hardware cloth around the base as protection from critters and watered faithfully. One day I went out and discovered a ribbon snake stuck in the fencing. I didn't know how I was going to get him out and I didn't want him injured. I like snakes very much and enjoy my encounters with them. Luckily he was smart enough to go backwards and extricate himself. Eventually 4 melons were forming. John kept checking on them every day or two but there was a four day period when I didn't check them. When I did, the first largest one had been growing into two sides of the trellis sections which are 4" squares. With my thumbs, I tried to release it but couldn't. It would not have matured properly so I cut it out and composted it. ... One down...Two others seemed to be growing bigger at the same rate. Then one of those had teeth marks or claw scrapes down one side. We left it hoping it would grow and ripen and not develop mould. But the next day, it was on the ground



AUTUMN LEAVES A SMILE ON MY FACE. and eaten. ...Two down....I covered the remaining two with more fencing – thought they were safe – Not! A couple of days later, the larger one was eaten. ...Three down... Raccoons we think. Number four was near full size and had the normal netting on the outside so I picked it early to ripen in the house. It was delicious. Many of the leaves on the vines died so we thought that was it for this year. Lo and behold... number five is growing. As soon as I discovered it, I wrapped the trellis in plastic to maximize the amount of heat it receives. I don't know if the sunlight level is still enough. A few more days and we may get one more melon. If I do them again, I will make an actual cage to grow them in. I'll also cover it in some sort of mesh that only insects can get through.

As for my other crops this year:

- Tomatoes, cucumbers and squash outstanding!
- Carrots, beans and spinach
- good – None

- Red PeppersFlowers
- Fabulous!!

I very much like the autumn time of the year but there is something I really miss when I'm outdoors. Birdsong. Oh, I know the blue jays still squawk when they arrive and the chickadees are always talking. The Canada geese of course are honking as they fly over my house practicing for their flight south. But it's the huge variety of mating songs of the various species that I miss.

All for now.....

~~ Peggy H.





	~~~ (	Over the Garden Fence ~~~
The Horticultural club	s have been closed to public meeting	<i>(Neighbouring Horticultural Societies)</i> gs due to COVID since March 2020.
Since July 2021 the g	groups have been attempting the reop	pening processes according to the province's guidelines.
Events s	hown here are planned for 2021 bu	ut due to COVID-19 are subject to change.
	<b>ure</b> meets at King Edward Comm pm. Proof of double vaccinations Photo Contest - submit by date shown	
(D'Arcy), 1 <sup>st</sup> W speakers will I	/ednesday of the month at 7:00pm	Community Centre, 232 Spencer Street East n. Due to the on-going pandemic, this year's nembers will receive an invitation via email Speaker: Jordan Rolph
Dec. 1	Healing Gardens: Plants & Spaces to k	
month at 7:00		Church, 137 Old Danforth Rd., 2nd Tuesday of the required to attend functions and are tentative. D-19.
Nov. 12 Dec. 10	"Creating Outdoor Wonder" Christmas Pot Luck & Awards	Speaker: Julie McCuaig, Quinn's Blooms & Greenery
	<b>ticulture</b> meets at the Lions' Cent f the month, 7:00 pm.	tre, 347 Burnham St., Peterborough, 4th
	line! Utilizing the Zoom platform for t all members a day or two prior to the	the foreseeable future. The meeting link will be meeting.
Oct. 27	"How to care for Indoor Plants"	Speaker: Denise Hogins, owner of
Nov. 24	"Trees for Small Spaces"	Diggen Dirt & Garden Consulting Speaker: Cathy Kavassalis Halton Master Gardeners
-	<b>Club</b> meets at the Ruth Clarke Co ) pm. All meetings are on-hold du	

## ~~ Please Join Us ...

*Apple Country Garden Club (Cramahe)* meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month, 7:00 pm. at the Keeler Centre, 80 Division Street, Colborne.

We are planning to resume regular meetings starting in January 2022. We are currently awaiting the go-ahead from the venue management. Proof of double vaccination will be required.

on Facebook or online at cramahehort.ca, email at cramahe.hort@gmail.com

## The Apple Country Garden Club

Go, sit upon the lofty hill. And turn your eyes around. Where waving woods and waters wild Do hymn an autumn sound. The summer sun is faint on them — The summer flowers depart — Sit still — as all transform'd to stone. Except your musing heart."

— Elizabeth Barrett Browning

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Growing our community ... One garden at a time.