

THE WISCONSIN VEGETABLE GARDENER

QUARTERLY DIGITAL MAGAZINE

AUGUST 2015

Cool
Weather
Crops

5 Common
Canning
Mistakes

Kids In The
Garden

Pick Your Own
CSA's & Farmer's Markets

Interview:
Kate Payne
of "The Hip Girls Guide"

ABOUT US



Joey & Holly Baird are the founders of The Wisconsin Vegetable Gardener. They are a married couple living in southeastern Wisconsin (just outside of Milwaukee). Joey & Holly make videos on youtube about how to grow your own food organically,

reusing found items (or items you may just throw away), what to do with the food you grow, home canning and simple home living.

Along with traditional ground gardening they also grow indoors year-round using up and coming methods along with winter growing in cold frames and low tunnels.

Their goal through their videos and social media pages is to show the average person how easy it is to grow food, store food, and reuse everyday items. Their motto is "for the average gardener, simple home living, and using what you already have".

Joey and Holly enjoy speaking at garden expo's throughout the midwest. Holly is also an award winning home canner with a handful of ribbons from the Wisconsin State Fair including a Best of Show award for her home canning talents.

Joey and Holly have also launched a podcast which is available through their website TheWisconsinVegetableGardener.com

If you find this interesting and have any questions or would like to talk further we can be emailed at thewiveggardener@gmail.com.



FALL 2015

6 KEEPING ANIMALS OUT

8 KIDS IN THE GARDEN

10 INTERVIEW: KATE PAYNE

13 PICK YOUR OWN CSAs

15 FIVE CANNING MISTAKES

20 WORMS

22 COOL WEATHER CROPS



THEWISCONSINVEGETABLEGARDENER.COM

JOEY BAIRD - HOST, CO-FOUNDER

HOLLY BAIRD- MARKETING DIRECTOR, CO-FOUNDER

MULTIMEDIA SUPPORT- NORMAN GAULIN

FOR QUESTIONS, SUBMISSIONS, OR ADVERTISING SALES

CONTACT: THEWIVEGGARDENER@GMAIL.COM



“A girl and her zucchini”

TheWisconsinVegetableGardener.com





Hsu
Growing made easy



Organic



SEED STARTER KIT

MOISTEN AND PLANT • NO MESS • NO HASSLE

**NO
ADDITIONAL
MATERIALS
NEEDED!**



24 CELL INSERT & WATERING TRAY



Hsu
Growing made easy

Hsu Growing Supply
P: 715-675-5856
F: 715-675-5301
www.HsuCompost.com





Keeping Animals Out

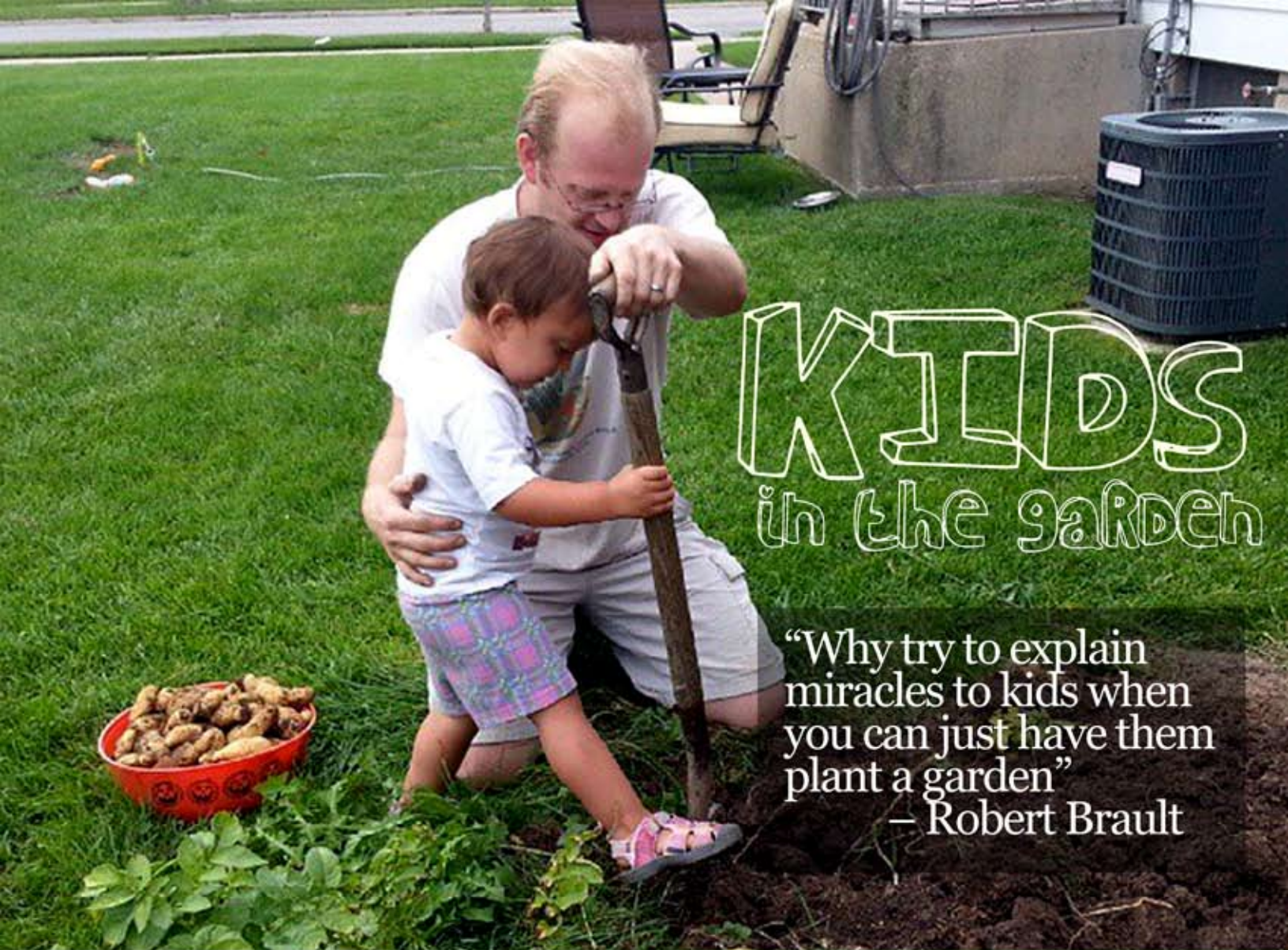
Wild animals can cause a lot of damage to your garden and quickly. They can eat whole crops, seedlings, and not to mention possibly attract more of their animal friends. It is best to deal with them before they arrive. This means early in the spring. However, you can still deal with them throughout the season. Rabbits, raccoons and possums, neighborhood cats, squirrels, and sometimes even chipmunks can be stopped easily with 2 feet tall chicken wire or poultry netting. We keep ours up all year around the perimeter of our garden. Occasionally you may only deal with problems from these animals when you have seedlings. You can protect those specific areas until the seedlings are larger. You can use anything from old fan grates, garden trim fencing, even small parts of PVC pipe work. This way you don't have to invest in fencing for around your entire garden, but if you are unsure that they may get to any and all of your plants, it's best to fence them out completely. Another option you can look into is a product you spray or sprinkle around the grow area. You can find these at your local garden center. Once it rains, you do need to reapply it, which is best to keep in mind because those products can be costly, if it rains frequently so you may be money ahead by just buying fencing. A home remedy is sprinkling hot chili powder around the perimeter of the garden, and even right on the plants. This is another solution you do need to reapply after the rain. Some gardens find great success in planting marigolds around their garden. We have found the rabbits just eat those and continue on to our crops.

Deer can be a hassle in many areas, rural or urban. There are solutions such as hanging bars of soap, or even aluminum pie plates to spook them. This only works until they realize there is nothing to be scared about. You can find success with a double fence. This way deer will jump over one fence, then another, and that will spook them enough to not come back. If you have a low fence around your garden for small animals, you can set it in with tall fence posts, then take fishing line and string it around your garden. The deer hit their noses on it and run off. It is more sightly than some solutions. Another solution for deer that some people have had success with is planting Mexican sunflowers around the perimeter of your garden. They generally will repel deer while providing you with nice looking border.

Birds can also be a problem. Most birds will eat insects off of plants, but some will eat your tomatoes. Once you start to see the first growth of tomatoes you want to take old red Christmas tree ornaments and place them by your tomatoes. Birds will peck at them, see they're not edible and move on.



OurDailySalt.com



KIDS in the garden

“Why try to explain miracles to kids when you can just have them plant a garden”
– Robert Brault

There are many reasons to teach kids about gardening and to get them involved with the garden. There are also many ways to do so. You will teach a child a skill they can use for the rest of their lives, they will learn a sustainable practice, it connects children to nature, they can understand where food comes from, they can develop a healthy hobby, learn to contribute and help the family. One of my favorite ways to get kids involved in the garden is get them involved early. The earlier in life that child sees you working in the garden the more it will become natural to them. They will also associate it with a positive memory and experience. Even if it means you just showing them at age 1 how you plant seeds, season after season they will grow and help more and more. My niece has seen us garden since she was an infant, and it is very familiar to her. She looks forward to helping every spring. Her brother who is just over a year old is getting involved the same way. He likes to watch Joey work in the garden and mimic what is being done. There are vegetables you can grow with children that they will find fun and fascinating. One of them is radishes. Most radishes only take 30 days or so to grow. This is quick for children and within a few weeks they have an actual tangible vegetable they are able to grow. Any root crop is exciting for children as it produces something that is a bit of a mystery. This past fall my niece loved digging up potatoes. Digging up potatoes is a bit of a garden treasure hunt. You never know exactly how many you may get, but it is always exciting to see the results. Another vegetable children love to grow are cherry tomatoes. We plant one extra plant just for the kids and they love to be able to just go outside and pick them off the vine.



It is also ideal to grow plants that you know children will love. If you have a child that loves any sort of vegetable it is ideal to grow it when possible. It will provide a harvest for you, but it will also make them feel good knowing you are growing one of their favorites.

Kids will learn plant care. Caring for something other than themselves. They may not have a pet, but having a backyard with some plants is something they can learn from. My sister will find her daughter reminding her not to forget to water the plants. She knows what plants need to live and grow and water is an important part.

When getting kids involved it is not good to force it, but get them involved the best way you can while making it fun.



For more information about kids in the garden and more great gardening information visit

TheWisconsinVegetableGardener.com





Interview Kate Payne

What does homemaking mean to you?

Homemaking, to me, means making any space a home regardless of whether you're renting, just getting started on a home that needs a lot of love, or have found your dream house.

Every author has a moment that inspired them to write a book, what was yours?

I was living in New York and struggling with making our ground floor Brooklyn brownstone apartment into a home with little money. The resources I found to help me with this task seemed unattainable, unrealistic in my current situation. I set out to write a book for people in similar situations who wanted a comfortable, enjoyable and non-toxic space and didn't want to feel judged in the process of making this work on their terms.

Whats the coolest project you've done for the home? I created a pegboard for our daily use pots and pans in our old house in East Austin. That kitchen was not designed with the cook or preserver in mind and there was a lack of space to stash cookware, so I came up with a solution that was both functional and great to look at.

Kate Payne is a blogger, author, writer and half-arsed domestic goddess . She has 2 books out and on her blog, *The Hip Girl's Guide to Homemaking*, she has everything from recipes to decorating to cleaning. She also teaches classes on green cleaning and canning. Holly got to talk with Kate about all things home.

As a home canner myself, I am always curious, how did you get into canning? I became curious about canning when we lived in Brooklyn and I began shopping regularly at farmers' markets. Tasting the difference between local, in-season fruits and veggies inspired me to try to capture some of that goodness. As I began writing about beginner canning basics for my Hip Girl's Guide to Homemaking book, I studied under mentors Eugenia Bone and Linda Ziedrich, learning so much from these wise women.

Which homemaking skills are you proudest of having mastered? I'm most proud of establishing my kitchen know-how to be able to feed myself and others. My laundry skills keep clothes in rotation longer (and out of the giveaway pile due to stains). I'm also happy to have developed my sense of general home organization and for the 180 degree change in my aptitude for keeping the houseplants alive.

What was a homemaking skill that came easy and natural to you? I accidentally fell into bread baking and dessert making, which was the first type of project to make me love being in the kitchen. My mom honed my cleaning skills, so the necessities of cleaning house have always been second nature (whether or not I practice them as often as I could!)

What is your favorite homemaking skill? I love the science of baking and try not to take it so seriously. Everyone shies away from baking because of the scientific reactions necessary for creating your finished product, but once you understand some basic formulas for why things work, you actually have a lot of room for improvisation.

What are some simple tips for eco-friendly homemaking? Learn when and where to use the kitchen cabinet staples like vinegar, baking soda, hydrogen peroxide, castille soap and washing soda and be amazed at all they can tackle. (Applying them willy nilly without under-



Kate is the author of two books
The Hip Girl's Guide to the Kitchen &
The Hip Girl's Guide to Homemaking
available from HarperCollins



photo courtesy of Scott David Gordon



standing of the chemical compound you're working with will result in frustration though.)

Save your scraps! We keep most of our veggie scraps to distribute them amongst the saved bone scraps we keep in our freezer for making stock once a month. We have 3 bins in the freezer, one for chicken, one for beef/pork and the other for fish. When one is full, it's time to make a stock. I also pressure can our stock to save freezer space. A homemade bone broth is nourishing and allows you to get more from the food you've bought.

Do you feel homemaking is timeless? Do you feel its more relevant now than ever? I think we all want a place to call home and making that space for yourself is essential. Whether you want to call it homemaking or not is up to you, but I feel the spirit is what matters. Our modern lives involve more travel, more moving around and establishing our careers and lives wherever we go, and I think the ability to keep house and home in that mix is relevant and important in keeping sane during the rest of our busy lives.

photo courtesy of Scott David Gordon

For more from Kate visit her website
katepayne.net

She also writes a highly informative blog
hipgirlshome.com



photo courtesy of Jo Ann Santangelo

Pick Your Own, CSAs and Farmer's Markets

A lot of the time we can't always grow or raise what we want. This can be frustrating, but it doesn't mean we have to settle for what they have at the grocery store all of the time. There is a local option. A few of them. This includes pick-your-own farms, CSAs and farmers markets. The best part about choosing any of these options is the money is going back into the community. Fresh produce, meat and other goods also hold better nutritional value. A great resource for all of these is localharvest.org.

Pick your own farms are a great resource for a lot of different crops. One thing we do is pick our own strawberries. While we grow strawberries, we just don't have to space to plant as much as we need for freezing and canning. Pick your own farms come in handy for this. But it's not just berries. There's anything from peas, to pumpkins- and apples in the fall. These farms usually charge less than what you would find at your supermarket, and then you know they are fresh. This also gives you an opportunity to interact with the people of your community, get outside, and get the children in your life involved. You can simply go to your favorite web search, type in pick your own, and your zip code, and you will easily find if you have something within your area to get and get picking.

CSA stands for community supported agriculture. This allows people who cannot grow food to have direct access to fresh grown, local produce. You become a member and buy a subscription. Then, throughout the growing season, based on what you ordered, you get a certain amount of vegetables on a regular basis. This can be anything from microgreens in the spring to root crops in the fall. In some areas, there are CSAs for meat, dairy and eggs. This is also ideal if you don't feel you can make it to the farmer's market on a regular basis, or don't have time to go pick your own.

Farmer's markets are a gold mine of local goods. You can always find fresh, local and seasonal produce, but it goes much beyond that. There's anything from local meat, eggs, dairy, bakery, and even some have fresh food you can eat there for lunch or dinner. Some will even have tea, coffee, jams and all sorts of great things to fill up your cupboards. In addition to the edibles, a lot of them will have homemade goods such as soap, art, wooden spoons or other cooking related items. When visiting a farmers market it is best to bring cash. You always want to shop around if you are looking for the best deal — some farmers charge more than others for the same item. If you have reusable bags, bring those as well. The farmers or vendors may have bags, but they are a premium to them and it's helpful to have your own.





For The HealthConscious
Organic Gardener
Worldwide

TheWisconsinVegetableGardener.com



"It's all about the soil."



MANURETEA.COM

5 canning mistakes

and how to avoid them

When it comes to home canning it is important to remember many people make mistakes. It is also important to remember canning is a science and safety in canning is very important.

1 *Not planning ahead.* If you've ever baked bread you know that there are key ingredients and many steps to take correctly in order to be successful. Canning is a lot like baking as it is a science. Not all canning recipes take a long time, but it is always good to read the recipe ahead of time in the event it will take some time. It is also important to make sure you have all of the ingredients on hand and they are not expired. Planning ahead can make your time in the kitchen canning a lot easier.

2 *Wrong canning process.* There are 2 types of ways to can - water bath canning and pressure canning. Water bath canning is for high acid foods, fruits, pickling, jams, jellies, preserves and tomato sauces or condiments. Pressure canning is for low acid foods. This includes many vegetables, meats, certain soups and other items. A lot of people will can low acid items in a water bath, which is not safe, or can high acid items in a pressure canner, which isn't too terrible but it's not as efficient. When canning using the correct tool for the job is best. .

3 *Not willing to accept failure.* Sometimes in canning you may not have something come out right, or you may end up opening a jar with a terrible smell or something seems questionable about it. Our saying is, when in doubt, throw it out. Food poisoning and canning is real. Yes, it took time to do it, but if you are unsure it's better to be safe than sorry.

4

Wrong headspace. Headspace is the space between the top of the jar and the top of where the food is. Not allowing for the proper headspace could allow jars to boil over in the canning process, not allow for a proper seal, or even cause a jar to break in the canner. For best results, measure and use the correct headspace.

5

Using the right recipe. A lot in regards to canning has changed within the recent years. This has been for food safety reasons. It is best to use a recipe that has been created or published after 1995. It is also to use a recipe from a well-known source. You may love your great grandma's pasta sauce recipe, but it may not be suitable for canning. You can also contact the UW extension and they will get you into contact with your local master food preserver and they can review your recipe for safety. Some good sources are the National Center for Home Food Preservation, Ball Blue Book and the Ball canning website.



For more information on safe canning and more visit
TheWisconsinVegetableGardener.com

The Filter of Eden Garden Hose Filter Healthy Soil = Healthy Food

Removes up to 98% of water-soluble metals like lead, mercury, copper, nickel, chromium, and other dissolved metals. Reduces Chlorine by 98%



Free shipping exclusively through
TheWisconsinVegetableGardener.com



storing your harvest without canning

When it comes to long term food storage, many times you will hear about canning. This is a great way to extend the harvest and make your food shelf stable. However, many people may not want to can everything, or are not interested in canning, especially when it comes to the investment of a pressure canner for low acid foods. There are many options of storing your food to extend the harvest without canning.

The most popular way of storing food without canning would be freezing. You can freeze a lot of fruits and vegetables simply. It is best to use freezer bags so that the likeliness of freezer burn is less. Many vegetables and fruits you have to blanch or parboil them before freezing. This process simply gives them a quick shot of slight cooking and then immediate cooling to make them store better in the freezer and tastes better when reheating for later use. To blanch or parboil, you simply add the fruit or vegetable to boiling water for anywhere from a minute to a few minutes. After you take it out of the boiling water you immediately plunge the fruit or veg-

-etable into an ice water bath. This stops the cooking process immediately. Then you portion it out in freezer bags. Some people use freezer paper instead, if you have access to it. The amount of time you leave it in the boiling water varies based on the type of fruit or vegetable you are freezing. Some things, like garlic and leeks don't require blanching. You can use your favorite search engine to find the blanching time, if needed, for what you are freezing. Freezing is also a good option for most meat, dairy, and even flours.

Dehydrating is another good idea for fruits and vegetables. This is an easy process and a lot of times you can find a dehydrator at yard sales or second hand in thrift stores or resale shops. The best way to store dehydrated food is in air tight containers, such as zip top bags. Most food dehydrators come with a manual to tell how long to dehydrate most things and at what temperature. You can also dehydrate meats and make different meat jerkies for long storage.



Some vegetables store well on their own when placed in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight with good air circulation. This includes things like onions, potatoes and winter squash. Things like hard shell beans can be stored in air tight containers or jars once dried and shelled.

Root vegetables such as carrots, turnips, and rutabaga can be layered in a 5 gallon bucket with sand for winter storage. Attic or base

ment stairs is the best place to store this as it keeps it cooler throughout the winter. When harvesting any root vegetables it is best not to clean them until they are ready to eat as the dirt will help store them better. It acts as a natural barrier against the air.

For more information on long term food storage and more visit TheWisconsinVegetableGardener.com

DollarSeed

Non-GMO, Organic and Heirloom Seeds

For all of your flowers, vegetables and herbs – visit Dollarseed.com

Just \$1.00/pkg Low to free S&H

Where every pack is just \$1!

New episode every Tuesday! Watch!



The Wisconsin Vegetable Gardener

Dedicated to the average
gardener, simple home living
and using what you already have

The Wisconsin Vegetable Gardener

Joey and Holly will take you through the steps of organic gardening in their multi-segment, professionally edited episodes. Showing from the basics to sometimes advance levels of gardening. Including ground gardening, raised bed gardening, container gardener, and even out of the box thinking gardening. Holly will take you into her kitchen showing simple ways to cook and preserve what you grow. All while being aware of your budget and the earth.

New episodes every Tuesday at 7pm

Straight to the Point

This series is for the home gardener on the go. Joey and Holly share quick tips, and cover a wide range of topics. Recommended for every gardener interested in growing organic and using what they already have.

New episodes every Sundays at 12pm

available free at

TheWisconsinVegetableGardener.com



WORMS IN THE GARDEN

Worms are as important in your garden soil as bees are to the plants in your garden. Worms do many great things for your garden. They help aerate the soil. Just like humans plants need air at their roots. Worms create tunnels that allow air to get to the roots and water. Worms bring all kinds of nutrients up from as far down as eight feet deep. One worm alone can create 1/3 of a pound of castings a year. Worm castings are the feces of the worm. This has a great level of nutrients for you garden soil and the plants that grow in it. You can buy worm castings from the store that can help your plants grow. There is nothing wrong with that- as gardeners we want to get as many worms in our garden and raised beds as possible.

The number one way to get worms to come to your garden soil is to add organic materials such as compost, kitchen scraps, coffee grounds, grass clippings, or leaves. Worms will feed off of these things and they will naturally migrate to you garden. Do not go and buy worms and add them to you garden. Bringing in worms from other areas can cause new disease to your garden soil or a new species of worms that can kill off the ones you have. Tilling will kill hundreds of worms. We avoid as much soil disturbances as possible. If you do till and want to avoid killing your worm population before tilling turn on your tiller and let it sit idling for a few minutes before you go till. Worms sense danger by vibrations and will go deeper in the soil and you will kill fewer. Avoid chemicals in your garden to increase the worm population keep it organic- chemicals kill not only worms but all life in your garden good and bad bugs. Worms are great and a natural part of your garden soil whether in raised beds or traditional ground gardens but worms are not good for containers. Worms travel



through the soil if the soil is too dry the worms go to a more moist area if too wet the move to a dryer area and if the soil becomes too warm or cold they will move. Most containers do not offer enough room for worms to live happy and healthy.

Worms in small containers and pop up raised beds will die before the garden season is over if you have a container that is large- several dozen square feet or if you are growing in half a wine barrel then you may want to do some research and see if adding worms may be something that would help your plants.

For more information on worms, organic gardening, and canning visit our website at

TheWisconsinVegetableGardener.com



For Organic and NON-GMO Seed Potatoes
Visit woodprairie.com or call 1-800-829-9765



cool weather crops

For many with gardens, tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and green beans are the summer go-to plants. They start planting these crops when the ground has warmed and this is gardening to them. There is nothing wrong with this type or mind set of gardening. Gardening can be so much more and have so much more taste and color from your garden and understanding what you can grow outside of those summer staple plants. Spring and fall is the time to get more produce out of your garden raised beds and containers. Growing in early spring and into late fall does have its risks. Cool weather crops can tolerate some frost but not long periods of hard freeze as we do get from time to time. Small plants are more susceptible to frost than more mature plants. There is also a risk of having very hot periods in the weather were the plants can react differently as well.

Starting in the spring with good strong seedling is key and the same holds true in the fall. Both can be started indoors and then brought outside and some can be direct sowed in the garden. Knowing when your last and first average frost is important in knowing when to plant these cool weather crops. In the spring cool weather crops can be planted by seedling or seed a number of weeks before the last frost or winter have occurred. To find this information you can call your local extension office or got to a search engine online and put in first and last average frost dates for your zip code. You can also extend your growing season by growing in hoop tunnels.

There are many cool weather crops that you can grow from lettuces to greens to peas, carrots beets, kale and cabbage to name a few. One thing you want to keep in mind is in the spring you want to look at where you are planting these as many of these plants can handle partial shade. This is good in the spring as the days get longer and hotter but not in the fall as the days get shorter. You want to consider planting in an area where they will get more sun as the days get shorter. A little frost on these plants is not a bad thing. Some cooler weather will make the vegetables sweeter - this happens when the plant release more sugar into the plant to protect it from freezing.

Too much sugar when your make popsicles cause them not to freeze very well same thing applies here. Growing cool weather crops are no different than warm weather crops- good soil, water, time and a little TLC and you can open up you table to a whole new world of vegetable that you once only bought from the store. This can take time to master the tricks to get cool weather crops to grow yes you will have failures along the way never let that get you down.

What You Can Do for Your Tomatoes Right Now

There's a few easy tips you can follow to help increase the health and productivity if your tomato plants, that you can do right now, in your garden.

1

Around the base of your plant, to help with blossom end rot, sprinkle a handful of Epsom salt at the base of your plant. Epsom salt allows the plant to take up the necessary calcium from the soil to prevent blossom end rot. Blossom end rot is the blackening of the blossom end of your tomatoes. It also helps build the chlorophyll levels in the cell walls of the plant. This will not fix the blossom end rot on the current tomatoes you have on the plant, but it will prevent on the next set of fruit the plant will put on.

2

Remove limbs approximately 6-8 inches from ground level up the plant and or any limbs that are reaching, or touching the soil. This will allow more air circulation to the plant. This primarily prevents soil from splashing up on the leaves. That can introduce a variety of diseases to your tomato plant. You will not hurt the plant by trimming the limbs, but do use proper cutting devices, avoid pinching the limbs off.

3

Early blight is the yellowing of the leaves starting at the bottom of the tomato plant and moving its way up. Early blight is in all soil, do not be alarmed if you have it on your tomato plants. To prevent this, or greatly reduce the chances of getting early blight, take one handful of whole grain corn meal and sprinkle it around the base of your plant. There is a beneficial fungi in whole grain corn meal called trichoderma. After applying corn meal you can water it in, but one application per season is all that is needed in most cases. If at the time of application, there are discolored leaves on the plant, remove them before applying the whole grain corn meal.

4

We do recommend cutting suckers from your plant. Many gardeners encourage the removing of suckers which is additional growth between the stem and the branch in its joint (pictured below). Removing these does decrease the yield, but in some cases could increase the health of the plant. Leaving them on, these suckers will create additional growth to the plant which will in turn create more opportunities for tomatoes. Ultimately it is at the discretion of the gardener whether or not to remove them, but we see no need to.

5

Spray your tomatoes, organically of course. Ingredients; 2 tablespoons of liquid seaweed and 1 tablespoon of liquid molasses per 1 gallon (3.79 liters) of chlorine free water. You want to do this every 2 weeks through the growing season. The liquid seaweed increases the sugar levels in the tomato plant. The benefit is the plant will be more susceptible to colder weather as fall approaches, which may allow the tomato plants to withstand freezing temperature because the sugar levels in the stem are higher than they otherwise would be. The liquid molasses stimulates and increases the microbial bacteria on the plant.



NOT YOUR AVERAGE GARDENING PODCAST

Join Joey and Holly Baird for a gardening
podcast unlike any other. Every 1st & 3rd
Thursday, March-October 2015
TheWisconsinVegetableGardener.com

