

Children's Vegetable Garden Program - Fall 2015 Session August 29, 2015

Agenda 2: Gardening Session #2 for Fall 2015

Instructors: *Please review with all children together in each section.*

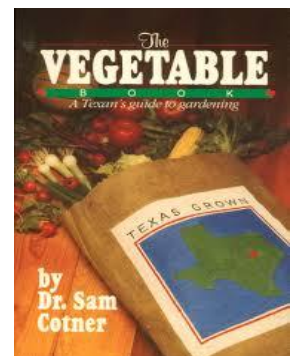
Special Reminders for Instructors Today:

Last Saturday went very well. The first wave of tomatoes that were planted looked real nice on Sunday morning. Great start everyone!

- Stress the necessity of proper clothing, sunscreen, water, etc.
- Emphasize the importance of being on time and ready to garden. Parents and children are encouraged to be here at 8 am through at least mid-September.
- Explain the importance of reading the agenda and keeping a well-organized binder and journal.

Every Day Reminders for Children, Parents and Volunteers:

- ❖ **All** volunteers, children and parents please sign-in and out every week and check with Ms. **Mary** before you leave.
- ❖ Take care not to walk in or on any of the beds. It's very hard to replace irrigation lines and broken boards, plus we do not want to compact the soil. This includes the perimeter and center research beds. If there are any concerns, please notify your Section Leader(s).
- ❖ Pick up debris in-and-around your section and walkways. This includes any weeds, rocks or trash. Throw material away in assigned trashcans. **Do not put anything in the compost bins unless instructed. Please make every effort to stay on top of weeding during the entire session.**
- ❖ **Coffee Campaign:** Everyone is encouraged to bring coffee grounds, disposable coffee filters and tea bags from their homes or from their local coffee shop. This compostable material will be added to the backside of our compost pile until further notice. The compost pile is located behind the brown-fenced area marked with a red pylon closest to the gate entrance.
- ❖ Please visit and like us on Facebook and follow the Bexar Youth gardens blog for updates on the Children's Vegetable Garden Program (CVGP) and more.
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Bexar-County-Youth-Gardens-Program/1447247425548890> AND <https://bexaryouthgardens.wordpress.com/>
- ❖ The best person in your garden is your shadow. This means you are out there often and observing everything closely. If you are really serious about vegetable gardening, please consider adding to your home library, Dr. Sam Cotner's: The Texas Vegetable Book.
- ❖ **Please: don't return any dirty tools to the tool shed. It is everyone's responsibility to keep that area clean.**



Pre-plant Chores this Morning

- Apply four cups of *Lady Bug natural derived Feather meal based Organic Fertilizer* throughout your plot. Make sure that the fertilizer is evenly distributed and kept within the irrigation lines.
- Scratch the fertilizer into the entire plot with a gardening rake or grubbing hoe. Remember, ***we are not tilling or digging deep into the soil.*** Discard any rocks or large debris and break up any large soil clods. Plots should look nice and leveled with no craters. All the irrigation lines, including the lines coming off the on/off valve should be clear of any soil.
- **Why are we using so much fertilizer?** Each plot measures about 100 square feet. For that amount of space each plot will use a total of 9 to 10 pounds of granulated fertilizer during the season. Last week, everyone should have applied 7 pounds of fertilizer. When applying a natural based organic granulated fertilizer, you need to use larger quantities early because the nutritional content is low. It takes about three weeks to start breaking down and become available to the plants. That is why we supplement with a water soluble fertilizer (Hasta-Gro) once a week for about three weeks because it is readily available to the plants at the time it is applied. In comparison, a conventional fertilizer such as a 19-5-9 Premium slow-release granule formulation would be applied at a rate of 3 to 5 pounds per 100 square feet.

Fertilizer: please refer to the table for amounts of fertilizer mentioned in the agenda.

Fertilizer	Amount	Where	When
<i>Lady Bug natural derived Feather meal based Organic Fertilizer</i>	4 cups per plot	<i>Throughout entire plot.</i>	<i>Before planting begins</i>
<i>Hasta-Gro 2 ounces per gallon</i>	1 gallon per plot	<i>All of today's and last week's plantings</i>	<i>After watering with the irrigation</i>

Each section should use one bag of fertilizer at a time so we don't have so many bags open. When you return a bag of fertilizer to the shed, please close the bag tightly.

How Are Last Week's Tomato Plant's Growing?

'Tycoon' and BHN 968 Cherry Tomatoes:

- Are your plants straight and contained inside their cages? Are they growing nice and green? Any tomatoes have to be replaced today and if so, why? Trim any leaves off the plant that are touching the soil. Be careful not to remove the entire stem or pull hard on the plant.
- Please check both of your cages to see if are set correctly. The rebar stakes should be hooked in place at the lowest ring section/connector of the cage and not in the middle of a ring. These are very expensive cages that we want to use for many years to come. **The cage should not shake at all when you are finished.**

Today's Plantings

Follow the Planting Guide and the Example Plot located in Section 3, Plot 14

We will be planting 2 cabbage transplants and 2 broccoli transplants. Planting instructions are the same for the cabbage and the broccoli. We will also plant 2 rows of multiplying onions with 4 clumps of two (ideally twins) in each row.

□ Don't remove the transplants from their 6-packs until they have been thoroughly soaked. All 6-pack transplants (tray and all) should be carefully pre-soaked in a bucket of water just above the soil line of the plants/cell pack, until all the air bubbles stop coming out from the soil line. With this heat, it's best to re-implement this 'old technique'. Handle plants with care to avoid damage or bruised leaves.



'Cheers' Head Cabbage:

□ Use the irrigation on/off valve as a guideline. Proceed 24" away from the inside center from the very front of your plot. This is where your cabbage plants will be planted.

'Green Magic' Broccoli:

□ Your 2 broccoli plants will be planted 18 inches away from middle of the outer lip of the 'Tycoon' tomato cage toward the front of the plot.

For each transplant:

□ Space your plants out 14 inches away from the top and bottom of the inside part of the plot as well as 12 -14 inches from each other. Again, handle your plants with much care.

DO NOT remove the peat pot.

□ Plant your plants a little bit below the soil line or as deep as the first set of leaves, if the plants are too top heavy. **Firm the plants in very well**, but take caution not to break the main stem or damage any leaves.

None of the peat pot should be visible after planting and watering.

□ Finish this process by hand watering the plants in a couple of times. Remember your plant tag.

Multiplying Onions:

□ Locate the middle of your plot. Then, go 8 inches into the plot towards the end. This is where the first of two rows of twin onion bulblets spaced 8 inches apart will be planted.

□ Evenly space each onion bulblets (ideally attached twins) 8 inches away from one another and leave 8 inches away from the edge of the plot. Proceed by planting with the nose/tip off each bulb barely showing above the soil line and then firmly tamp the bulblets/clumps in. The second row will be spaced 8 inches from the first.



Water Management

- Become familiar with the irrigation system. Without getting anyone wet, water the planting area with low pressure for 10 to 15 minutes. **Make sure that every orifice in the irrigation line is unclogged with a paper clip. Due to the water pressure in the garden, no more than two sections should be watering during any given time frame.**
- **Be observant not to flood plots or walk-ways. If the plots start flooding, let them drain a little, then proceed in watering again. DO NOT RELY ON THE SYSTEM TO WATER NEWLY PLANTED TRANSPLANTS.** If your irrigation system cannot be fixed (Instructors, try first), flag it and then provide **Miss Mary** with the section number and problem.
- Fertilize all of today's and last week's plantings with a gallon of *Hasta-Gro* starter mix. Due to the weight of the water cans (two gals); instructors will mix two oz. of *Hasta-Gro* with half a water can (about one gallon, not a full water can, of water). Do not get any of this fertilizer on the leaves, just on the soil around the plants.

Special Projects for Garden

Everyone needs to participate to maintain the beauty of the garden.

- Before leaving today, ***please check with Miss Mary*** for your ***Section assignments***.
- Are you completely finished? Make sure your Instructor walked your plot and section, everything looks neat and clean (no weeds, trash, rocks, etc.), all plants are watered and all your tools are cleaned and placed neatly in the tool shed.
- Remember: your ending time at the Children's Vegetable Garden is around 12 noon.

Thanks Everyone!
It's going to be a great fall.

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