

APS School Garden Network Monthly Meeting

April 20, 2022

Exploring Garden Synergies

PLOT
AGAINST
HUNGER





Growing Together with Synergy - Let's Dig in!

Opening. Where are we in the growing season? (David)

Planning for the Season (Kirsten)

- **April Action Items**
- **Garden Layout for Maximum Yield and Minimal Work**
- **Scheduling May Garden Visits: Abingdon and Wakefield, Doodle Poll (Anne)**

Garden Synergies (David)

- **Building School Community - Working together**
- **School Community Engagement - Scheduling Regular Work Days (to help manage volunteers)**
- **Synergies with Plot Against Hunger community gardens**

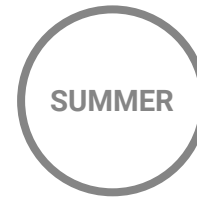
Internal and External Community Resources (Anne, Elizabeth)

- **Master Gardener engagement**
- **Engaging the community: Parents vs. Community & Business members?**

Announcements, Sharing Ideas, Up-Coming Events, Questions?



Milestones for the year ahead



Getting Started

- PTA presentation
- Staff engagement
- Team building
- Workdays
- Soil test / Fertility
- Spring Planting
- First Harvest

Building Community

- Regular workdays
- Harvest donations
- Classroom activities
- Garden visits
- Summer planting
- End of school year

Keeping It Going

- Summer workdays
- Watering schedule
- Harvest donations
- Community visits
- Summer Camps
- Team planning
- Fall planting

Back to School

- PTA Presentations
- Garden Coordinator Recruitment
- School Projects
- Fall Harvest Festival
- Urban Ag Month
- New infrastructure



Planning for the Season (Kirsten)

(Aspirational) April Actions:

In your garden

- Garden layout
- Infrastructure repair
- Trellis building
- Woodchip(!) pathways
- Soil tests / Build soil
- Fertilization?
- Acquiring/planting seedlings
- Direct sowing

With your team

- Garden Team meeting
- Faculty engagement
- PTA presentation
- Finalize budget
- Identify goals
- Workday schedules
- Fundraiser planning
- Community outreach

Garden Preparation

- Wait to clean up until just before planting.
- Cut and turn or till in cover crops.
- Starting a new garden? It's not too late.
- Look to VA Co-Op Extension, Plot Against Hunger, FOUA, and others for free/low cost seeds.
- Take advantage of FREE technical assistance.
 - Garden layout and planning
 - Pest management
 - Soil building
 - Nutrient management
 - On-site troubleshooting

Extension Master Gardener Help Desk

mgarlalex@gmail.com

703 228 6414

Fairlington Community Center 3308 S. Stafford St.



Annual Vegetable Gardening Calendar Arlington County

Activity	Month ->	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Order seed catalogues / decide what to grow														
Map the garden: crops, companions, succession, rotation														
Build a planning calendar (See Reverse)														
Check viability and test germination of seeds on hand														
Order / buy seeds														
Till or pull cover crops 2 weeks before planting next crop					x	x	x							
Start hardy vegetables indoors														
Transplant into the garden														
Start tender summer annuals indoors														
Plant (direct sow or transplant) tender summer annuals														
Plant summer catch crop (e.g. buckwheat) as needed														
Plant (direct sow or transplant) fall vegetables														
Plant winter cover crops (e.g., rye, wheat, hairy vetch, fava beans, Austrian winter peas)														
Extend seasons: floating row covers, cold frames, cloches														
Save seeds from open-pollinated annuals at harvest														
Plant garlic for harvest the following June														
Harvest all tender annuals before first frost														
Compost, incorporate, till or remove residue														
Remove and discard any diseased material														
Mulch (8") overwintering vegetables (e.g., carrot, parsnip)														
All beds should be planted, composted or mulched														
Cleanup, maintain and store garden tools and equipment														
Rest, write your wish list for garden gifts														

Notes on starting plants indoors

See individual instructions with seeds

Cabbage, Cauliflower, Brussels Sprouts, Broccoli

Start in flats 4 to 6 weeks before planting out

Tomato, Eggplant, Pepper

Start in flats 6 to 8 weeks before planting out and transplant into deeper flats (6 in) or pots midway

Many other plants can be started in flats to save space in the garden, such as corn, wheat, melon, herbs, etc.

Recommended Sustainable Gardening Practices

- Periodically test and amend the soil with minerals, nutrients
- Build & maintain soil organic matter with compost and cover crops.
200 lbs/100sq ft for development -- 50 -100 lbs/sq ft to maintain
- Use French intensive method – deeply dig with hand tools (24 in)
- Rotate crops; companion plant; interplant; “right plant, right place”
- Irrigate as needed to maintain moisture
- Keep the garden covered: succession, mulches, cover crops
- Till and aerate properly; use permanent paths; avoid compression

Too late?

Horticulture Help Desk: 703 228 6414
mqarlalex@gmail.com

Month	March				April			May			June			July			August			September			October		
Date	1	11	21	31	10	20	30	10	20	30	9	19	29	9	19	29	8	18	28	7	17	27	7	17	27
Crop																									
Collards	P								H								P							H	→
Onion, set	P				P&H					H															→
Peas, garden	P						H																		
Radish	P		P&H				H										P		P&H						→
Spinach	P				H															P				H	→
Turnips	P				H												P				P&H		H		→
Potatoes		P									H														
Beets			P						H									P						H	→
Cabbage*			P						H							P						H			→
Carrots			P						H				P&H			P			H						→
Lettuce, bibb			P							H						P					H				→
Lettuce, leaf			P					H								P				H					→
Broccoli*				P							H					P&H	P						H		→
Brussels sprouts*				P								H				P							H		→
Cauliflower*				P					H							P					H				→
Beans, bush					P						P&H						H								
Beans, pole					P								P&H			H									
Corn, sweet					P								P&H				H								
Cucumbers						P						P&H								H					
Eggplant*						P									H										
Muskmelons						P								H											
Cantaloupe						P								H											
Peppers*						P							P&H	H											
Pumpkins						P									H										
Squash, summer						P					P&H								H						
Squash, winter						P									H										
Sweet Potato						P									H										
Tomatoes*						P							P&H		H										
Watermelon						P									H										
Key																									
Plant																									
Plant & Harvest																									
Harvest																									
* Transplants - See notes on reverse					Start																				

Still
wondering
what to
plant?

Most Valuable Crop?

In Virginia, the top 15 annual vegetable crops in terms of economic value are:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tomatoes | <input type="checkbox"/> Beans (pole and bush) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beets | <input type="checkbox"/> Broccoli |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carrots | <input type="checkbox"/> Chard |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cucumbers | <input type="checkbox"/> Green onions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lettuce (head and leaf) | <input type="checkbox"/> Onions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peas (edible pods) | <input type="checkbox"/> Peppers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Summer squash | <input type="checkbox"/> Turnips |

Least value for us? Corn, melons, pumpkins and winter squash Grow vertically on some form of trellis to increase the value per square foot?

Site Selection: Light

Low light needs vs High light needs

Got trees?

Do a
sun-study

Got room
for trees?

Tolerates 4-6 hrs

- Spinach
- Kale
- Peas
- Arugula
- Endive
- Radicchio
- Broccoli
- Kohlrabi
- Mustard

Thrives on 6-8 hrs

- Potatoes
- Beets
- Carrots
- Turnips
- Lettuce
- Chard
- Collards
- Beans
- Cabbage

Needs 8+ hours

- Tomatoes
- Pepper
- Eggplant
- Squash
- Corn
- Cucumbers
- Melons



Need to get up to speed quickly? *See recorded VCE Public Education classes at: <https://mgnv.org/mg-virtual-classroom/> for recorded classes on composting, seed starting, winter vegetable gardening, edible landscaping, fruit trees in urban environments, and everything in between!

***Upcoming live Extension classes: 10 am Fridays**

4-22 Gardening for Wellness I
4-29 Gardening for Wellness II
5-6 The Dye Garden
5-13 Basil Love
5-20 Controlling Mosquitos
and Ticks without Pesticides

Pre-Register at
<https://mgnv.org/rsvp-for-public-education-classes/>



May 5 8-9:15pm **Do-Nothing Farming - Philosophy & Practices of the Masanobu Fukuoka Natural Farm**

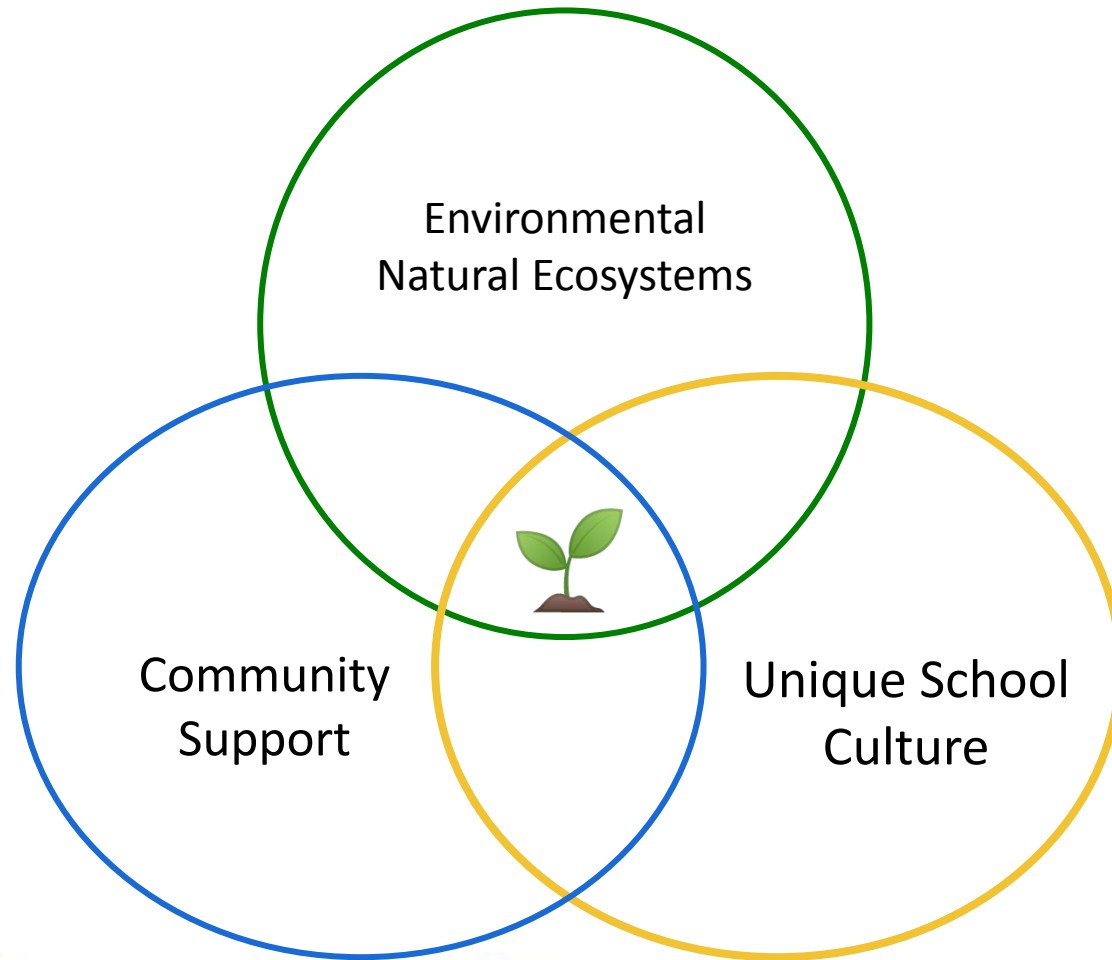
Interview with grandson of the author of the One-Straw Revolution. Register at <https://alexlibraryva.org/events?r=thismonth>

Beginning in May: Wednesdays in the Library 7-8 pm

May 4	Plant it right! - Seeds, seedlings & more
May 11	Garden Structures - Grow vertical, harvest more
May 18	Container & Balcony Gardening
May 25	Water where it counts: rain barrels, drip irrigation and in-ground ollas
June 1	What Grows Where- Gardening in the Sun AND the Shade
June 8	Feed Your Soil NOT Your Plants for maximum production
June 15	Intercropping/Succession Planting)
June 22	Good bugs/bad bugs
June 29	Garden Tool Clinic - Repair and maintain
July 6	Herbs - Grow for health & flavor
July 13	Top 10 Weeds
July 20	Top 10 Vegetable Diseases

FREE THROUGH SEPTEMBER- All September classes starting at 6:30 pm

Garden Synergies





Community Resources, Schools

It takes a village to grow a school garden!

Building Team Spirit - How do you communicate with your team?

How can school garden coordinators involve the broader community with:

- watering schedules
- produce collection for food banks
- regularly scheduled work days
- planning for the summer?
- Plot Against Hunger coordination.

Discussion: School Garden Coordinators are the gatekeepers of garden coordination within & outside the school community.

- Engaging the community: Parents vs. Community members?



Community Resources, Arlington Partners

It takes a village, dedication, and lots of great ideas to grow a school garden!

- Friends of Urban Agriculture <https://arlingtonurbanag.org/school-gardens/>
- Arlington Living Schoolyards Initiative (ALSI) <https://arlingtonlivingschoolyard.org/>
- Out Teach (aka Real School Gardens DC) <https://www.out-teach.org/>
- Green Schoolyards America <https://www.greenschoolyards.org/>
- Internet resource with loads of details on starting school gardens:
<https://learn.eartheasy.com/guides/how-to-start-a-school-garden-your-complete-guide/>
- American Community Gardening Association <https://www.communitygarden.org/resources>
- Arlington Outdoor Education, Outdoor Lab <https://outdoorlab.org/>



A Peek at Next Month

Join the Monthly Garden Coordinator Call on May 18 @ 7:30PM

TOPIC: Planning for Summer - What happens when the kids are out of school?

Also: In-person garden visits in Early May.

- ❖ Spring Celebration and Plant Sale, Glen Carlyn Library, April 23, 10AM-3PM: [Spring Celebration and Plant Sale](#)
- ❖ Earth Day Event: Sunday, April 24, 12-5PM, Lee Heights Shopping Center with the Langston Blvd Alliance.
- ❖ April 30th, Wakefield High School Plant Sale.
- ❖ May 4, 7PM - Central Library Garden Talks begin
- ❖ May 21, 9AM-1 PM, Arlington Central Library - FOIA Summer Garden Kick-Off and Plant Give-Away
- ❖ May 21 - Rock Spring Church Produce Bagging Center for PLOT launches

See you next month! Questions? schoolgardens@arlingtonurbanag.org



April - Garden synergies and best practices

- Planning garden visits across APS?

May - Planning for summer.

- How do we manage the garden when children are out of school?
- Pest Control

June - Watering systems. Keeping the garden growing.

July - Volunteer engagement. Organizing a calendar of work days.

August - Fall planting. Arlington County Fair Aug 17-21.

September - Back to school, Cover crop planning for fall & winter.

October - Harvest Festivals / Urban Agriculture Month. Soil testing.

November - Prepping the garden for winter. Cover crop winter maintenance.

December - Annual FOIA meeting.



Tips of the Month

Don't work wet soil!!

Eager to plant warm season plants? WAIT!!

Planting carrots?

New way to eat carrot greens

Start your sweet potato starts

What's YOUR favorite tip for garden success?

“Life begins the day you start a garden.”

Chinese Proverb

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