

JULY-

Summer's heat is upon us! Mulch, water, harvest!



General/Maintenance-

- Spread a layer of “Gromulch” around and under your plants. This will keep water in, weeds and pests out. After the season is over, you can shovel it into your soil for added nutrients.
- Tomatoes and other large plants in loamy clay soil use about one inch of water in three days of hot dry weather. Rinse the undersides of leaves with water to discourage spider mites. Tomatoes and eggplants especially like this refreshment!
- Get the most from your garden space by installing/maintaining trellises and stakes for your plants to grow up on-and harvesting is easier too! Keep cucumbers off the ground to avoid rot.
- Water and fertilize melons deeply once a week for juicy, fleshy fruits. Hold off watering melons about a week before they will ripen so their sugars will concentrate. This makes much sweeter melons!
- Harvest beans, cucumbers, squash, and tomatoes at least every other day to encourage further production.
- Pinch back herbs to encourage branching, and use the clippings either fresh or dried. Their flavor is at its peak just before they flower—harvest them early in the morning after the dew has dried but before the day becomes warm and the fragrant oils dissipate. If you can smell them, it’s too late; wait until the next day.
- Continue watering and feeding the entire garden with a balanced fertilizer and manure tea or fish emulsion every other week or so for steady growth and food production. Foliar sprays of liquid seaweed help trees, vegetables, fruits, and ornamentals withstand

heat stress. Pay special attention to shallow-rooted plants, which wilt and dry out quickly in hot, dry weather. Remember to not overhead water late in the day during warm weather, when leaves can't dry off by sunset, as this encourages diseases.

- Keep vegetables picked often, even if you don't plan to use that day's harvest immediately. Vegetables that aren't harvested soon enough will produce a chemical that inhibits further blossoming. Check plants at least every other day during summer. This is especially true for beans, cucumbers, eggplants, squashes, and tomatoes.

Helpful Hints-

- Do you have a plastic container that is permeated with the smell of onion or garlic? Wash the container thoroughly with soap and air dry. Crumple a piece of paper towel in it, and tightly close the cover. The odor will disappear in a few days. Discard the paper towel. Wash the container again with soap. Repeat if necessary.
- Pin a facecloth or hand towel to your waistband to wipe the sweat off your forehead and out of your eyes while working in the garden on hot summer days.
- Clean hummingbird feeders weekly to prevent mold and bacteria growth.
- And, don't forget to **weed, weed, weed!!**



Happy Summer Gardening!

Contact us at Communitygardensofsc@gmail.com with any gardening questions!