



# SEEDLINGS

Sophia Garden and Learning Center



Volume 7, Issue 6

July 30–August 12, 2007

## Event Calendar

Harvest 7am	Jul 30
Harvest 7am	Aug 2
String Bean Picking 3-5 pm	Aug 3
Harvest 7 am	Aug 6
Harvest 7 am	Aug 9
Cooking with Nancy 9:30am-1:30pm	Aug 25
Potluck 6 pm	Aug 29

## What's coming up in the Garden...

- Cucumbers, string beans, potatoes, peppers, zucchini, beets, carrots, scallions, squash, chard and 17 varieties of tomatoes...
- Coming up later in August: eggplant
- All items subject to change dependent on the weather, the bugs and Mother Nature!

## AUGUST UPDATES

### *Harvest-Harvest-Harvest-Harvest-Harvest*

This is the season of abundance at Sophia Garden. Don't forget to come out and help harvest on Mondays and Thursdays at 7 am. Your Garden needs your hands to help it grow.

### *Beans-Beans-Beans-Beans-Beans-Beans-Beans*

Thanks to an abundance of beans, you will have another opportunity to get down and dirty at the Garden. Starting August 3, we invite members to come harvest string beans on Fridays from 3-5 pm. That's Fridays 3-5pm from August 3. It should be a lot of fun and a relaxing way to end the week.

### *Potluck-Potluck-Potluck-Potluck-Potluck*

Bring your favorite dish to share at our Potluck on August 29 at the Garden. This is a beautiful event with tasty treats, many based on our local, seasonal produce. It's a wonderful way to celebrate our bountiful harvest.

### *Now We're Cooking!*

Nancy Stolz is a graduate of the Natural Gourmet Institute for Health and Culinary Arts. She is offering two exciting Saturday-



cooking workshops for Sophia Garden that focus on healthy, delicious and easy to prepare alternatives to meat.

August 25 is *Tasty Tempeh*—an exploration of this delicious meat alternative that includes seasonal sides and dessert.

Next is *Beans and Grains* on September 15. Learn to put together the perfect protein in a yummy meal including side dishes and dessert.

Workshops are from 9:30am-1:30 pm and cost \$45 each. And you get to eat the results!

## SUGGESTION BOX

Do you have suggestions for improvements to the way things are done at Sophia Garden? Communicate your ideas through our suggestion box. Use this space and drop it off on the shelf in the shed.



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*Towards an  
interconnected  
community of life*

## **THE DIRT ON FRIENDSHIP: COMPANION PLANTS**

Even though 80 percent of our air is nitrogen, plants—which need nitrogen to grow—can't use nitrogen in that form. The solution might be chemical fertilizers, but we organic gardeners know that's not really a good solution for anyone except those who make and sell them!

The real solution is, as usual, found in Mother Nature. Companion plants work together to capture and share nutrients. For example, legumes and rye can "fix" nitrogen for plant use because of Rhizobium bacteria that attaches to their roots. The bacteria absorbs nitrogen and hydrogen (NH<sub>2</sub>) from the air, then borrows energy from the plants to convert NH<sub>2</sub> into ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) which the plant converts into ammonium nitrate (NH<sub>4</sub>) - plant fertilizer. So in exchange for energy, Rhizobium returns fertilizer to its host. Planting nitrogen-fixers like legumes (beans) near nitrogen-lovers like broccoli and kale and other members of the cabbage family makes

everyone happy without manufactured chemicals.

At Sophia Garden we use companion plants in yet another way. Have you noticed the marigolds by the tomato beds? "Marigolds release a scent that repels insects and draws pollinators," says Farmer Nora. These natural repellants are called allelochemicals. Tomatoes have allelochemicals of their own and repel diamondback moth caterpillars from the cabbage plants on which they would feed.

Companion planting has been an organic technique for thousands of years. One of the most famous plant friendships is the Three Sisters—corn, beans and pumpkin—brought together by pre-Columbian Americans. Corn provides shade for pumpkin. Beans crawl up the corn stalk. They all nourish the soil for each other. Good gardening means good partnerships!

For more info: [www.organicgardentips.com](http://www.organicgardentips.com)

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## **RECIPE FOR A BETTER PLANET**

*Don't know what to do with all these vegetables? Put them all together in this Summer Vegetable Soup from Mollie Katzen's The New Moosewood Cookbook.*

2 medium potatoes, peeled or not, diced

4 cups water

3-4 large cloves garlic

1 tsp salt, black pepper to taste

1/2 lb. green beans, trimmed and cut

1 cup small broccoli florets

1 cup chopped cauliflower

1 medium carrot, diced

1/2 lb snap or snow peas

2 small zuke or squash

1 med red pepper, in strips

Optional:

1 cup fresh corn

small bunch spinach

1 cup buttermilk, room temperature

fresh minced herbs

1. Boil potatoes and water in saucepan till tender. Add garlic at end
2. Puree potatoes and garlic in their water, add salt, pepper. Reserve
3. Steam vegetables till tender in this order: Green beans. Broccoli, cauliflower, carrot. Peas, zucchini, bell pepper, corn, spinach. Set aside.
4. Heat potato puree before serving. Stir in vegetables and optional buttermilk at last minute. Sprinkle fresh herbs to garnish (recommended—basil, dill, parsley/chives)

## **ALL HANDS ON DECK**

**Our next work-  
day will be:  
August 11  
10 am—2 pm  
Please come,  
bring the family  
and a snack.  
Gloves recom-  
mended. See you  
then!**