



Loaves & Fishes  
Giving Garden  
2015

A cooperation  
between  
Mondelez  
Global,  
U of I Extension  
Master  
Gardeners  
and Prosek's  
Greenhouse.

Garden update,  
July 9, 2015

The last garden update was from June 8<sup>th</sup>. Four weeks later, I thought by now we would be done with cool season weather; reporting only on warm season progress, but not so much. There is still “cool” news!

The majority of the cool season crops were harvested over the past few weeks (thanks Maureen, Fritz, and Laurie who helped with the bulk of this) Be sure to check the harvest totals and pictures to see just how successful the addition of cool season plants to the garden were.

The sugar snap peas are still producing and new planting of spinach is off to a good start with cooler temps than normal.

There has been much more rain than average as well which means more weeds in the garden than in years past. With several teams canceling because of weather, help is needed! Especially in the carrot bed while they are very young.

Kale and collard greens are still thriving and harvest of outer leaves is ongoing. Garlic is ready to harvest. Warm season crops, tomatoes, summer squash, and peppers are doing well, cool temperatures and rain considered.

# Month in review....

- **Planting:** New crops that have been planted since the last update are carrots (thanks [Diane](#)...this is a great example of broadcast planting. She took her time and planted carefully which means very little thinning needed. Will include a picture once the bed is weeded. (see below) Spinach has germinated well. Green beans as well....but there are a few pest problems to report. Who says rabbits like carrots best...it is the tender beans as they emerge that they love. Beets have been planted in both the large bed and in containers in potting soil. Come check this out...along with potatoes and sweet potatoes growing in crates....it is fun. A new row of cucumbers has sprouted this past week in the large bed. They will be trained up the metal trellis which needs to be secured for windy days.
- **Help needed:** Always.... We have been so fortunate (to a point) to not need to spend as many hours watering this summer as normal. Only the bales and young plants have needed more frequent watering than our scheduled work days. Remember, if you can't come a day or cancel because of weather...the work in the garden still needs to be done. Please consider when you might be able to work extra time to help or find someone to work for you. Did I mention that help is needed? It is!
- **Pests:** This is the current challenge in the garden. Ideas for how to keep the little furry guys out of the garden are appreciated. Am considering adding fine meshed wire to the bottom of the entire enclosure. I have seen mice in our straw bales when I water and found a small brown furry guy...(vole/mink/weasel?)....hiding under a bag of potting soil. Oh...and rescued a large toad from a water bucket filled with rain water from the last storm. Keeping the garden area free of litter and cardboard etc is very important. It allows the maintenance crew to mow more easily and gives little guys less nesting opportunities.



## Today's garden lesson theme:

**Proper plant spacing yields bigger, healthier harvest.**

When **Ronalyn** first planted the red cabbage seedlings, she followed the directions on the donated cabbage starts to the letter. (which is, incidentally, why it is a good idea to post the crop info next to crop for plant and harvest date, etc) This variety was to be planted 18"-24 inches apart. The bed looked empty when she was done...but at harvest, the pictures tell you just how much space cabbage leaves require to thrive. Thriving means less disease, less competition for nutrients, and larger heads. Even drier soil at the plant root which we needed this rainy year! Need we mention more food? On average, the red cabbage yielded 4 lbs each and the green cabbage 3.5 each.

**Susan and Jerry** harvested the broccoflower and cauliflower on June 27, 2015. As you can see from the photo, the same rules apply to spacing!

## Harvest News.... ...little change... ...big result.

A simple, but effective improvement to our harvesting practices.

Some of what we harvest, we place in small quantities in bags provided by Loaves and Fishes. Other crops, such as cabbage, cauliflower, and broccoli we just put in crates.

Adding a note of when crop was harvested helps communicate to the volunteers at L&F from whom the donation is and when it was harvested. This helps ensure that our donation will get the proper handling once it leaves our hands. And most importantly.....

the respect our hard work and donated harvest deserves.

Please take a moment to attach the note to each crate we deliver. The slips of paper are in the notebook in a plastic baggie in the storage cupboard.



A quick note to harvesting practices,:  
If you are scheduled for a 2 hour shift,  
please perform garden work before  
harvesting . This means food will not  
have to sit in the sun longer than  
necessary.



**One of these things is not like the other.. so....Ask a Master Gardener!**

I'll buy anyone the drink of their choice if they know or can research just why this cauliflower grew this way. It tasted fine...but looked odd. It never made it to the food pantry.

Can't wait to hear what you all find! I don't think it could have been prevented...but interesting.

## **Eat your greens**

Master Gardeners, **Diane and Ellen**, harvesting collard greens and broccoli on June 9, 2015. That day's harvest was 44 lbs of cool season crops.





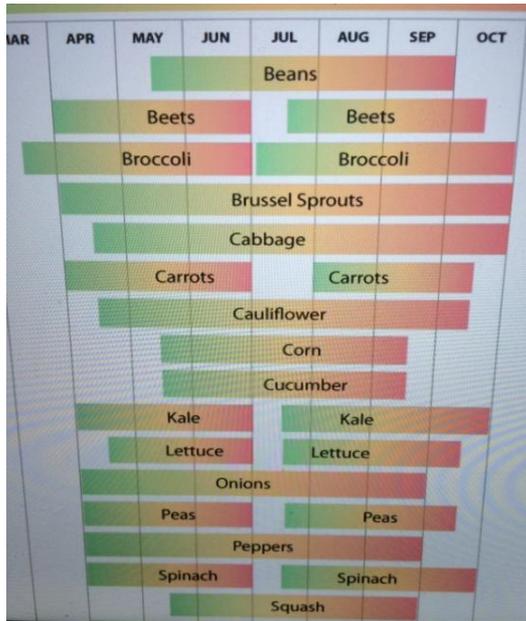
## To compost or not to compost? That is the question.....

Fritz and Ronalyn on June 30<sup>th</sup> harvesting green and red cabbage.

We have a compost bin and have been adding healthy compostables and straw throughout the season. Note to team: we should start taking out some compost!

Ronalyn is using Fritz's heavy hammer to smash the stalks which helps them break down more quickly. We have a small compost heap hiding behind the straw bales for the slower compostables.

Nice gardening tip, thanks team!



FYI....

| DATE   | POUNDS | CROP   |
|--------|--------|--|
| 16-May | 11.0   | radish, red&green kale, collard greens, early broccoli   |
| 23-May | 2.0    | radishes, early broccoli   |
| 30-May | 38.0   | broccoli, kohlrabi(1), collard greens, red&green kale, radish                                      |
| 2-Jun  | 10.0   | radish, broccoli, lettuce, pak choy, kohlrabi(3-4)   |
| 4-Jun  | 9.5    | radish, kohlrabi (2) - 3 pounds radish unusable; woody, tough                                      |
| 6-Jun  | 18.0   | 10.5 PakChoy, 7.5 lbs lettuce  |
| 9-Jun  | 44.0   | 16 broccoli, 7 lb cabbage(2), 10lb pak choy, 4.25 Kale, 5.5 collard greens, lettuce, parsley, spin |
| 13-Jun | 3.0    | 1.5 lb cabbage (1) collard greens and kale .5 each, radish   |
| 16-Jun | 9.5    | 9.5 kale, lettuce, peas, radish, and parsley   |
| 20-Jun | 55.0   | cabbage, broccoli, kale, lettuce, sugar snap peas, mustard greens                                  |
| 23-Jun | 0.0    | no harvesting done   |
| 27-Jun | 36.0   | 17 brocco/cauliflower, 10cabbage(3), 2lb mustgreens, 7sugar snap peas, rest radish lettuce         |
| 30-Jun | 37.0   | 11lb green cabbage, 3.5 green/red kale, 21.5 lb red cabbage  |
| 7-Jul  | 0.0    | no harvesting done record rainfalls in Naperville Monday night!                                    |
| 11-Jul | 0.0    |  |
| 14-Jul | 0.0    |  |



**Maureen** started new crops of beans and beets in containers from Loaves and Fishes. They are thriving here next to sweet regular potatoes.

Since she sent me this picture from June 13<sup>th</sup>, the tops of some of the beans have been chewed off...we are making “some bunny” very happy.

Usually once the plants get a little bigger this should not be a problem....we just need to get some warm weather so they will start climbing out of reach.

Ideas / help appreciated.



## Food for thought....

This is a photo from my front stoop. The cucumbers love the radiant heat from the brick wall and stone pavers and bugs don't. I have limited space at home for veggies and am always looking for creative ways to sneak them into the landscape. They hide themselves well! Just had to share. Thank you all and hope too see you all soon!

