

# NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY GARDEN



# NEWS



OCTOBER 2003

## FALL CLEANUP

IT'S THAT TIME ALREADY... This season's date for Fall Cleanup is Sunday, October 19. Crews of fellow gardeners will be inspecting plots at 4:00 P.M. to make sure that the Garden is ready for winter. To get ready, you should:

▶ PULL OUT diseased plant material (for example, tomato plants affected by blight, or bean plants with beetles) as well as any ragweed that has escaped earlier efforts, and toss it in the dumpster. **Why?** *We don't want the diseased material to winter over in your plot or in our compost pile, as it could spread through your garden or the compost.*

▶ PULL OUT or cut down all clean dead plant material and compost it – either in your own plot or at the west end of the Garden. Mow the grasses and weeds at the edges of your plot(s) to no more than six inches. **Why?** *To prevent weed seeds from invading other plots.*

▶ REMOVE all trash – paper, plastic bags, old plant containers, etc. – to the dumpster. **Why?** *So it won't blow around the Garden and end up next spring in someone else's plot.*

▶ REMOVE all tools, buckets, watering cans, toys, etc. **Why?** *We've had reports of items missing after the winter, so it's best to store these things at home.*

▶ Secure all items that you must leave in the garden or have no room to store at home – benches, hoses, bird baths, tomato cages, etc. **Why?** *To make sure that they can't blow around the Garden in winter's winds.*

▶ Remove all plastic mulches and row covers. **Why?** *So they won't blow around the Garden. They will last longer if they are stored out of the weather, and you'll be able to use them again next season.*

▶ Take down tall structures and store them flat unless they are absolutely secure. You may leave secure fences to prevent dogs from running through your plot. **Why?** *You'll avoid winter storm damage and theft.*

If the inspection crew thinks you haven't accomplished what's necessary by the October 19 Cleanup, you'll receive a notice in the mail telling you what remains to be done and specifying a final deadline of Sunday, November 2. If we need to inspect your plot a second time, there is a \$5 fee.

If you know you're unable to meet the October 19 deadline, you may request an extension to a specific date – sending an e-mail to

[cmgoulet@valinet.com](mailto:cmgoulet@valinet.com) or drop a note to Community Garden, Recreation Department, 90 Locust St., Northampton, MA 01060, by Friday, October 17. Do NOT request an extension by phone. A requested extension is automatically granted, and there is no penalty so long as you meet your own deadline.

## FALL CLEANUP

Sunday, October 19

Inspection  
at 4 P.M.

REMEMBER: **Only gardeners whose plots pass inspection may register for the 2004 gardening season.** The Garden Committee wants everyone to pass inspection, and you should let us know (by e-mail or mail, as specified above) if there is something we can do to help. 🍀

—Sylvia Bonadio and Mimi Teghtsoonian

## GARDEN NEWS

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

✿ All Gardeners are reminded that Community Service requirements must be fulfilled before you may renew your Garden registration for next season. If you have a single plot, you owe 2 hours; add 1 hour for each additional plot. A list of tasks is posted on the bulletin board on the tool shed, and is also distributed by e-mail. Remember to fill out a slip (available on the bulletin board) and put it in the black mailbox (to the left of the bulletin board) so you will get credit for the work you do.

### SPECIAL THANKS TO

- ✿ Bill Griffiths for tending our faucets, checking hoses, changing washers, and generally keeping an eye on our water use
- ✿ Rick Bean for taking over the task of keeping lawn mowers in working order
- ✿ Jeff McCullough, once more, for cleaning and organizing the wood chip area

### BUTTERFLY BRIGADE

Some gardeners may have noticed groups of binocular-ed visitors touring the Garden in search of butterflies. They say that this has been a wonderful year for butterflies at the Garden – two rare species have been spotted and have drawn butterfly aficionados from as far as Rhode Island.

### ROAD REPAIR

Gardeners at the east end of the Garden (near the Hospital grounds) will have noticed the greatly improved state of the road that runs between the row of evergreens and Row 1 of Garden plots. Northampton DPW graded the road, then placed and rolled gravel to provide a uniform surface. They will grade the road once again this fall. The Garden paid only for the gravel. Thanks go to Rich Parisiliti and his crew for the fine job.

### GARDEN COMMITTEE

We are pleased to welcome Justine Bertram, Carol Goulet, and Muriel Goulet to the Garden Committee.

The Committee is responsible for managing the Garden's budget, handling registration and inspections, publishing the Newsletter, overseeing the Garden Neighbor and Community Service programs, maintaining the tool shed and mowers, supervising the Survival Center plot and Survival Center deliveries, and initiating special projects to improve the Garden. If you think you might be interested in joining, come to one of our monthly meetings (2nd Monday of each month, 7:00 P.M., at the Recreation Department – call first, 587-1040, to be sure the time has not been changed). ✿

## PLANT GARLIC IN OCTOBER

—by Tom Bassett

After growing garlic (*allium sativum*) for only three years, I realize what an ideal crop it is. Garlic is planted near the end of the traditional growing season, so you feel like you're starting something for next year. It requires very little care. It can be harvested and shared with many people because it is used in so many recipes. It can be a self-propagating crop once a seed stock is purchased. I hope you'll be tempted to plant garlic this year – October is the time to buy your garlic cloves, find some space in your garden, and plant. You'll enjoy the harvest next summer.

### SEED STOCK SOURCES:

Visit the Garlic Festival in New Salem, MA, in early September.

The Northampton and Amherst Farmers' Markets offer locally grown garlic from late July through October. (Don't use garlic from the supermarket – the cloves are usually too small.)

### PLANTING GARLIC

After the first frost, or about two weeks before the permanent frost, plant individual cloves about 3 to 5 inches deep. I usually mulch the garlic with straw and then remove the mulch during the spring to help the ground warm more quickly. When the garlic begins to mature there will be seed pods or scapes that grow up from the center of the plant. Cut off the scapes after

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they curl and begin to form the seedpod. This will help increase the size of the bulb. I have sautéed these scapes as part of a stirfry. They are much milder than garlic cloves but do add a bit of garlic flavor.

Harvest your garlic in mid-July, or when about two thirds of the leaves turn yellow. Use a spade fork to loosen the bulbs from the soil, remove excess soil or wash, and let garlic hang (not in the sun) to dry for a couple of days. After your harvest, select the largest bulbs as seed stock for your next crop. For example, I save about 30 bulbs, each with about 6 cloves, for 180 plantings; they use about a third of the space in my Garden plot.

After drying, you can braid the garlic stalks or store them in a cool (50° F), dry place. Garlic can be used raw, cooked, roasted, or pickled. The Silverskin variety tends to last longest when dried. Storing in oil is not recommended unless it is refrigerated and used within three weeks. Oil flavored or seasoned with garlic is safe, as long as the garlic is removed.

### NUTRITIONAL COMPOSITION OF GARLIC

3 to 6 grams in an average clove. 1 g carbohydrate, 0.2 g protein, 0.01 g fat, vitamins A, B1, B2, B3, C and trace elements including selenium. Selenium is what gives garlic its claim as a preventive measure for prostate and other cancers of the digestive tract. Other claimed health benefits of garlic include lower blood pressure, and lower LDL cholesterol. (from *Garlic: Nature's Original Remedy* by Stephen Fulder; Inner Traditions Intl Ltd; revised edition, January 2000)

### RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- The University of Minnesota's comprehensive website has answers to basic and advanced questions: [WWW.EXTENSION.UMN.EDU/DISTRIBUTION/CROPSYSTEMS/DC7317.HTML](http://WWW.EXTENSION.UMN.EDU/DISTRIBUTION/CROPSYSTEMS/DC7317.HTML)
- [WWW.NATURALHUB.COM](http://WWW.NATURALHUB.COM)
- [WWW.GOURMETGARLICGARDENS.COM/](http://WWW.GOURMETGARLICGARDENS.COM/)
- [WWW.VIRTUALSEEDS.COM](http://WWW.VIRTUALSEEDS.COM) has good photos
- The book *Growing Great Garlic: The Definitive Guide* by Ron L. Engeland is highly recommended by many websites. 🍀

*continued from the May newsletter...*

## ORGANIC GARDENING AND HOUSE RABBITS

**DIET.** Part of the fun of having a rabbit is feeding him, especially with various harvests from our garden. Rabbits are soft and moody like cats, but they eat with the zeal of a crazed vegetarian dog.

**WEEKLY DIET.** HAY – We will use less than three bails of hay this year to feed Mississippi and line his box. He eats a fistful a day. GREENS – During the winter we purchase dandelion greens, parsley, carrots with tops, celery and cilantro. During gardening season he eats all cover crop clippings, herbs, mint, berry clippings, basil, clover, radish tops, broccoli, lettuce including centers and other green waste. We occasionally buy him greens during the season to supplement the harvest. He eats a few cups of fresh greens each day. PELLETS – Blue Label Bunny, available at Amherst Farmers Supply and Dave's. He eats about 1/2 to 3/4 cup a day. FRUIT – Household fruit waste: apple and pear cores less the seeds, banana peel, peach, grapes (stems and all), and strawberry tops. He eats 1/4 cup a day. APPLE BRANCHES – For healthy teeth he chews the bark off 4-5 small (6" long) apple branches a week. These are easy to come by from normal pruning and broken branches. LEAVES – Foliage from fruit and other deciduous trees make a good free treat during all seasons but winter.

### PLEASURES:

A house rabbit is affectionate and smart; he loves to be petted and (sometimes) held by kids and adults. Can run and jump very fast and high; great fun to have around when they tear around the house spreading exuberant energy – when they get totally airborne, it's called a "bunny dance"

Likes to do bunny flops – sudden sideways narcoleptic flops

Purrs when petted

Does zany things like run circles around you while you brush your teeth

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Is absolutely quiet and never bites  
 Is good with cats and some dogs  
 Can be adopted in pairs  
 Will eat from your hands or lap; will even share a carrot with you

**CHALLENGES:**

A house rabbit has deliciously soft fur, softer than most cats; but during shedding season, long hair and short rabbit fur can be abundant  
 Like cats, rabbits can be moody; sometimes a bun will dismount from your arms and leave a few scratches behind on your belly  
 If left unattended will chew through electrical wires and leather shoelaces (with pillows, a baby gate, and creative room arrangement, we have little problem keeping Mississippi away from where we don't want him)  
 Will eat house plants (especially geraniums) if left

unattended – rabbits are clever and will try to cop an innocent posture despite damning evidence  
 Males will sometimes have a urination accident outside the box, but this is rare  
 Will sometimes chew on cardboard or wood furniture, nibble on paper, and locate apples left on the ground or in an unattended grocery bag – an apple branch deters him from these sins  
 Sometimes will chew on shoes or other garments to get your attention  
 Mississippi is really great therapeutic company and having him in our family makes organic gardening even more fun and efficient. If you want to learn more about house rabbits, check out [www.hopline.com](http://www.hopline.com), call 413-525-9222, or email [info@hopline.com](mailto:info@hopline.com). Feel free to drop by to chat with Heather and me at plots L23-24 and K24-25. 🌸

— Michael Filas

**FALL RECIPE**

**SCRUMPTIOUS BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP**

4 T butter  
 2 C chopped onion  
 1 butternut squash, peeled and chopped  
 2 apples, peeled and chopped  
 3 C vegetable stock  
 1 C apple juice or water  
 1 cinnamon stick  
 salt and pepper

Sauté onions in melted butter until translucent.  
 Add squash and apples to onions, and sauté for 5 minutes.  
 Add stock and cinnamon stick, bring to a boil, and simmer for about 25 minutes or until squash is soft.  
 Remove cinnamon stick and puree soup in small batches in a blender.  
 Add juice or water and season with salt and pepper to taste. 🌸 —contributed by Alicia Chana Rabins

**NEW SIGN FOR THE GARDEN**

*Dear Garden Community,*  
 We are about to begin redoing the Community Garden sign using mosaic tiles made from broken pottery and dishes (ceramic or glass). We are asking gardeners to make contributions of any broken ceramic pieces, old plates, mugs, etc. that they might have sitting around the house. We are especially looking for ceramic pieces that are white, but all colors will be greatly appreciated. There will be a box next to the tool shed for any contributions. *Thank you in advance!*  
 Margaret Herpich  
 Kendra Rosenblatt