



Volume 2, Issue 3
Fall 2008

The City of San Luis Obispo Parks and Recreation Department presents

The Green Thumb

An occasional publication to update Community Gardens Program participants about the current happenings in the San Luis Obispo gardening community.

SLO Seed Exchange

October 24: 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. San Luis Obispo Community Garden 2nd Annual Seed Exchange
This is a free seed sharing event at the SLO City/County Library located at 995 Palm Street in San Luis Obispo. For more information, please contact Elizabeth Johnson at 543-5364.

Winter Squash: More than just pumpkins

It's true, pumpkins are easy to grow and make harvest decoration complete. However, not only does all winter squash add nutritional value to your cozy winter meals, these fruits can also be locally grown. Here are just a few to start the winter crops:



Acorn Squash: Small fruit, dark green with ridges, turns bronze when sweet, yellow flesh. Hard flesh is difficult to cut into but great for baking, one squash serves two.



Buttercup Squash: A flattened, round fruit with deep orange and dark green skins with sweet orange flesh. The downfall, tends to be a bit dry.



Butternut Squash: Beige skinned fruit, bright orange flesh with a long neck and small base. The darker the skin the sweeter the fruit. Similar to a sweet potato in flavor and with a soft skin that can be peeled.



Delicata Squash: Beige skin with green stripes on this fruit with a sweet and mild, creamy pulp. Good baked.



Spaghetti Squash: Named for its long yellow strands inside. The "spaghetti" strands can be carved out and used as a spaghetti substitute or enjoyed along with the flesh.



Sweet Dumpling Squash: Fairly small fruit, excellent baked. No need to peel as the skin is soft enough to eat with the sweet, dry flesh.



Turban Squash: This squash is beautiful to look at but little in terms of flavor. Use in decoration or hollow out to use as soup tureen at the table.



Preparation and Serving:

Peeling winter squash can be challenging with the ribs and tough skins. Most recipes call for slicing the squash in half instead. Once cut open, scoop out the seeds and discard or roast for a separate treat. To bake squash place cut side down on baking dish, some recipes may call for a layer of water in the dish. Bake at 350° for approximately 30 minutes or longer. Squash are done when the flesh is tender like a potato. Other preparation methods include baking squash whole, steaming, or boiling.

The squash can be served in the skin as it was baked or the soft flesh can be spooned out from skin and mashed with a fork or whipped in food processor.

Online resources:

University of Illinois, Watch Your Garden Grow:

<http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/veggies/wsquash1.html>

The Cook's Thesaurus:

<http://www.foodsubs.com/Squash.html>



For more information contact the City of San Luis Obispo Parks and Recreation Department at (805) 781-7300 or visit the Web site, www.slocity.org/parksandrecreation.

SLO Community Gardens Update

Each garden is looking amazing! I hope you are all enjoying your harvests. I want to thank each of you for all the hard work and dedication to your plantings in the community gardens. The gardens have never received such accolade as they do in the community today, as a place to visit as well as participate. I have waiting lists for each garden location with new gardeners eager to join other local green thumbs.

More specific comments regarding each garden:

Broad Street Garden:

I have the City of SLO Tree crews on hold until this winter for tree trimming (less leaves make it easier to see tree structure). If there are any specific concerns for tree branches that will require trimming please contact me.

Emerson Park Garden:

Internal projects have been completed in the garden. Thank you for all the hard work that has improved the garden this season. Please remember that each project **MUST** be approved by Parks and Recreation staff prior to beginning the said project. It is still City property and should be respected as such.

The new compost bins are over flowing with material! I appreciate the desire to compost garden waste, however, new procedures will be posted soon regarding the use of the compost bins to make it more productive.

Laurel Lane Garden:

Two volunteers in need of community service hours were able to clear out the planting area between the sidewalk and the garden. I would like to replant this area with hardy shrubs and perennials. If you have any recommendations for planting this area please contact me. I hope to complete this project before the spring blooms.

Thank you again for all the hard work!

Amy Voorhies

Contact me via email, avoorhie@slocity.org, or phone 805.781.7069

Local Harvest Events

October 11: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. 3rd Annual North County Autumn Garden Tour: Celebrating Sustainable Landscapes, ticket purchase at Bay Laurel Nursery in Atascadero, \$10 per person. For more information call 461-7217 ext. 17.

October 19: 2 p.m. - 6 p.m. Windrose Farm Apple Festival and Tomato Gleaning, \$10 per person, call or email to make reservations, 239-3757 or bill@windrosefarm.org

October 24: 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. 2nd Annual Seed Exchange, free seed sharing event at the SLO City/ County Library, 995 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo, call Elizabeth Johnson for more information at 543-5364.

November 1: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. California Native Plant Society Native Plant Sale in the Heritage Oaks Bank parking lot in the Madonna Plaza. Contact Eleanor 528-7202 or Linda 528-0914.

