VERONA COMMUNITY GARDEN'S NEWSLETTER

July 24, 2020
Newsletter #34

Visit the Verona website sometimes for updated information

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REMINDERS & TIPS

Support Every Garden Bed - Please water your garden beds regularly. Significant amount of rain has fallen recently.

- Consider a soaker hose or drip system to water plants to prevent brown fungi entering the plants.
- If the drainage is between the base of the stems, carefully remove the soil and place it on the top of the soil. Do not bury the base of the stem. Burying the base of the stem will cause it to rot.

Tend at least one Garden Plot and pick at least **one** vegetable.

Squash Bugs Are Here - Squash bugs are attracted to plants in poor condition.

- Remove eggs with tape or scrape them off
- Remove all affected leaves in your household trash - **not** in the compost.

Early detection keeps your plants alive.

Garden Bed Supplies - Please remember to:

- Water your garden
- Be **spacious** and **flexible** when planting your garden
- Share your bounty
- Feed those Monarch butterfly caterpillars in the Butterfly Garden

Yard Waste Reminder - Please remember to place your yard waste in the yard waste bins located at the entrance to the Community Gardens and instead **not** in the community bins.

Unattended beds may be harvested at the discretion of the Garden Committee and given away to a food bank if it appears to be in poor condition. Please contact **info@veronagardens.com** for different options if you are unable to care for your garden bed. Please remember to harvest and share those overrun in the garden.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Crime Watch & Block Watch - Please attend the Crime Watch and Block Watch meetings on the first Wednesday and Saturday respectively, August 5th and 8th.

- Crime Watch: 7:00 PM
- Block Watch: 10:00 AM

Please contact Jim Hoffman at jhoffman@verona-nj.org for more information.

Garden Tours (Tentative) - Garden Tours are tentatively **August 16 & 23 PM**.

Will be not-working-social guests to visit the Community Gardens.

Please contact **info@veronagardens.com** if you are interested in giving tours.

Food Canning & Cool Weather Crops Workshop - August 1, Date to be determined

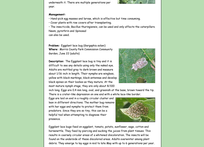
Learn how to can the bounty of your harvest! Summer and cool weather crops will be discussed, including production and canning.

Have an idea for a garden gathering? - Social events for gardeners to meet and share information and ideas. Please contact info@ to find out the schedule of upcoming events and participate and participate in the planning process. Please contact info@ if you are interested in hosting a social event.

Let Us Know! - Please let us know if you would like to join one of the events above! Please email all gardener guests and let us know if you would like to attend any of the upcoming events above and/or if you have other ideas for events you would like to see. Please contact info@ with your ideas.

Thank you, Dan and Carol for leading last night's Sealing, Trellising and Pruning Workshop!

Can You Identify this Plant in the Butterfly Garden?



Clue 1: It is an herb.

Clue 2: It is a member of the basil family and has a calming scent, which is a cook. (a member of the mint family)

Clue 3: Long hairy flower stalk (common gardens, my flowers are short and fuzzy) (a hyssop or lavender)

Clue 4: It is a member of a popular scented oil that I also use in my garden and tea.

Clue 5: It is a hyssop (Anise hyssop) (common gardens, my flowers are short and fuzzy)

Clue 6: It is a member of a popular scented oil that I also use in my garden and tea.

- Leaves Mint
- Lavender
- Anise hyssop

Clue 1: It is an herb.
Clue 2: It is a member of the basil family (potato family, eggplant family, tomatoes family)
Clue 3: Leaves are hairy and have a strong smell.
Clue 4: Flowers are in the shape of a bell.
Clue 5: Flowers are in the shape of a bell.
Clue 6: Flowers are in the shape of a bell.

- Leaves Mint
- Tomatillo
- Lavender

Tomato Spotlight: Cuestalta Hamentine

A Green Lance is perfect for the garden short-length tomato. **Cuestalta Hamentine** is a short-length tomato that is a Green Lance. Cuestalta Hamentine is a short-length variety with the ROUGH green leaves for the deeply lobed, pseudo-potato leaf.

Despite its striking appearance, this tomato isn't just for show. Cuestalta Hamentine produces a large number of fruit. The fruit are small, round, and green. Cuestalta Hamentine performs well during hot, dry conditions. Its short-length, compact, dense, branching, trailing, and fluttering nature.

Fun Facts Here:

- **It's Unique** Hamentine Cuestalta, Tomato, Italy
- **Its Name** Cuestalta Hamentine, Cuestalta Hamentine
- **Size** Approx 6 in tall and 12 in wide, trailing and bushy
- **Fruit** Small, 1 in, red, orange, often speckled or striped
- **Growth Habit** Determinate, Indeterminate, Cuestalta Hamentine
- **Days to Maturity** 75 days from transplanting, 90 days from seed
- **Seed Source** Cuestalta Hamentine, Cuestalta Hamentine

Because of its heavily lobed, rough-to-the-touch leaves, many people mistake Cuestalta Hamentine for potato plants. Cuestalta Hamentine is a short-length tomato with a trailing, bushy, and compact habit. Cuestalta Hamentine produces a large number of small, round, green fruit. Cuestalta Hamentine is a hot, dry, and humid-tolerant tomato. Cuestalta Hamentine is a hot, dry, and humid-tolerant tomato. Cuestalta Hamentine is a short-length tomato with a trailing, bushy, and compact habit. Cuestalta Hamentine produces a large number of small, round, green fruit

BENEFICIAL SPOTLIGHT

Beneficial Insect: Bumble bees (Bombus spp.)

Description: Bumble bees are highly effective pollinators native to North America and are especially common in coolerclimates. Their long, dense hairs help them stay active in cold weather, allowing them to forage earlier in the spring and later in the fall than many other pollinators. They are important for pollinating crops such as pollen and nectar flowers.

They play a critical role because they are efficient pollinators of many varieties of flowers. Along with other bee species, they help pollinate nearly two-thirds of the crops we eat some of which, such as blueberries, tomatoes, peppers and eggplants, have improved fruit set with buzz pollination, a skill that honey bees lack.

Like honeybees, bumble bees are social insects that live in colonies. Their annual colony cycle begins when queens emerge from hibernation in spring and establish new nests. The queens produce worker bees, which help the colony grow throughout the summer. Later in the season, the colony produces new queens and males that mate before winter arrives. The original colony dies in autumn, while newly mated queens hibernate and emerge the following spring to begin the cycle again. Queens will not nesting in the same colony which helps ensure a healthy gene pool.

Unfortunately, many North American bumble bee populations are declining. Today, conservation efforts focus on protecting species at risk, habitat loss, pesticide use, pathogens and climate change are among the leading causes. Pesticides can not only kill bumble bees directly but can also impair their ability to navigate, forage and reproduce successfully.

Written by: BUTTERS BAXTER GARDENERS OF BOWES COUNTY COMMUNITY GARDEN (IN TEAM REPORT) By July 10, 2026

WHAT'S UP IN THE HERB GARDEN?

Planting and Growing Chives: Tips for a Fast-Delivering, Edible Flower Herb

Chives: the tiny green superhumans of the garden! Not only do they add a pop of flavor to your dishes, but they also fight off pests and attract beneficial insects with pretty edible flowers. Let's dig into how to grow these versatile herbs without letting them take over your backyard.

Chives are cool-season, cold-hardiest perennials best planted in early to mid-spring for an early summer harvest.

When to Plant Rosemary

Chives grow best in full sun, though they will tolerate light shade. Ideally, the soil should be moist, fertile, and well-draining. Before planting, incorporate 4 to 6 inches of well-composted organic matter. Work compost into the soil to a depth of 6 to 8 inches.

When to Plant Chives

Chives are considered a cool-season crop, meaning they grow best in the spring and fall. The harsher temperatures of summer usually cause them to go dormant until cool weather arrives again.

For a head start in colder regions, start chive seeds indoors 6 to 8 weeks before the last spring frost. Transplants need good growth before being set in the garden.

Outdoors, sow seeds as soon as the soil is workable in the spring. They can take a few weeks to germinate, so don't panic! For the best germination and growth, the temperature of the soil should be between 60° and 70°F (20° and 27°C).

Plant transplants outdoors once the threat of frost has passed.

How to Plant Rosemary

Sow seeds about 2 inches apart and no more than 1 inch deep. Cover with a thin layer of soil.

Once seedlings emerge, thin them so that plants are spaced between 4 and 6 inches apart in all directions.

Growing

Minimal care is needed for fully grown, established plants.

Although chives are drought tolerant, it's important to give them consistent watering throughout the growing season for high yields. Moisten the soil thoroughly when watering.

Chives small bulbs grow near the soil surface, so use mulch to conserve moisture and keep the weeds down.

For great production, top-dress with a nitrogen-heavy fertilizer in late spring or early summer if your soil is not already nutrient-rich.

After the flowers bloom, remove them so that the seeds aren't spread throughout your garden.

Remember to divide the plants every 3 to 4 years in the spring. Chives are much more productive if divided regularly. Divide them into clumps of at least 10 small bulbs and allow divided plants to grow for several weeks before harvesting.

Harvesting

Begin harvesting chive leaves about 30 days after you transplant or 60 days after seeding.

Be sure to cut the leaves down to the base when harvesting (within 1 to 2 inches of the soil).

Harvest 3 to 4 times during the first season. In subsequent years, cut plants back monthly.

How to Store Chives

Use chives when they're fresh or frozen (freeze the leaves in an airtight bag). Dried chives lose their flavor.

Store chives in a cool place in a resealable container.

Pests and Problems

Bulb mite (caused by wolberme fungi)
White rot
Mildew
Rust
Smut
Fungal leaf spots (such as purple blotch and gray mold)
Onion Fly
Thrips

Types

The two species of chives commonly grown in home gardens are common chives (Allium schoenoprasum) and garlic chives (A. tuberosum).

Common chives *consist of a dense clump of small, slender bulbs that produce thin, tubular, blue-green leaves reaching 10-15 inches in height. The edible, flavorful flowers may be white, pink, purple, or red, depending on the variety. They can be grown in Zones 3 to 9.*

Garlic chives *(also called Chinese chives) look similar to common chives, but their leaves are flatter, greener, and get to be about 20 inches in height. As their name suggests, their leaves have a mild garlic flavor (bulbs are more intense). Flowers are white and are larger and less densely clustered than those of common chives. Garlic chives are hardier in cold climates and, like common chives, are also recommended for Zones 4 to 9.*

Wit and Wisdom

In the garden, plant chives next to carrots, pear, beets, and most other crops to deter pests.

Chives are said to repel aphids and Japanese beetles. Plant them near susceptible plants.

Bunches of chives hung in the home were used to drive away diseases and evil.

Chives are said to symbolize usefulness.

Arianna, By Catherine Backlinson

RECIPES

Baba Ghanoush

Bert Good Foodie
https://bertgoodfoodie.net/recipe/baba-ghanoush/

Baba ghanoush or baba ganoug, is a smokey, creamy eggplant dip that is easy to make and so delicious with pita bread, pita chips.

The ingredients are eggplant, tahini, lemon juice, garlic, and salt.

- **Eggplant**: To pick the right eggplant, look for one that is firm, heavy for its size, and has smooth, shiny skin. Avoid those with wrinkled or blemished skin, since they may be overripe or damaged.
- **Tahini**: Just like with hummus, tahini adds a nutty flavor and makes the baba ghanoush creamy. Make sure to look for tahini that only has one ingredient – hulled sesame seeds.
- **Lemon juice**: Use fresh for the best flavor. Add the zest for a more prominent flavor.
- **Garlic cloves**: Just like with the lemon juice, use fresh garlic.
- **Salt**: Table salt, sea salt or kosher salt for flavor

Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 45 minutes
Total Time: 1 hour and 5 minutes
Yield: 6 servings

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 1 large eggplant
- ☐ ¼ cup tahini
- ☐ 3-4 tablespoons lemon juice
- ☐ 2 garlic cloves
- ☐ ½ teaspoon salt
- ☐ *olive oil for serving*
- ☐ *pita chips for serving*

INSTRUCTIONS
1. Preheat oven to 400° F degrees.

2. Wrap eggplant in aluminum foil and roast for 45-60 minutes until the eggplant is soft when poked with a fork or knife. Unwrap the eggplant and allow it to cool for 10 minutes.

3. When the eggplant is cool to the touch, cut off the top and peel off the skin. Discard the skin, keeping only the flesh of the eggplant.

4. Place the flesh of the eggplant in a food processor or blender. Add the lemon juice, tahini, garlic cloves and salt. Pulse a few times until the ingredients are incorporated but the mixture still looks chunky. Optional: When serving, drizzle a little olive oil on top.

RECIPE TIPS

1. Use **high-quality ingredients**. There are only 4 ingredients in this homemade baba ghanoush recipe. Because of the minimal items, it's important that each of those ingredients is high quality. That means fresh garlic, fresh lemon juice, and tahini made with only sesame seed paste.
2. **Strain the eggplant to remove excess liquid**. You can strain the whole eggplant or chop it into smaller pieces and strain it that way. I usually just let it sit for 10 minutes in a colander to cool and release excess liquid. This step is not mandatory but it will ensure the dip is not too watery.
3. **Adjust the ingredients to your taste**. Where it comes to baba ghanoush, and actually most Lebanese dips, you can really tinker with the proportions to make it your own. Just adjust the tahini, make it more lemony or more garlicky to your taste. My ratios through are approved by my dad – just saying!
4. **Let the dip to set in the fridge**. You'll notice that the dip will get thicker as it cools and sets in the fridge. That's because any liquid released from the roasted eggplant in addition to the natural fats from the tahini, will solidify.

The Original Aperol Spritz

Aperol

The Aperol Spritz is a simple, slightly bitter-sweet cocktail that has become a symbol of Italian aperitivo culture. Known for its vibrant orange color and bubbly culture texture, it's made with Prosecco, Aperol and a splash of soda water. What makes it truly unique is its perfect balance of herbal and citrus flavors, making it light, aromatic and incredibly easy to sip. If you're searching for the authentic Venetian Spritz recipe, this is the one you'll want to master.

Ingredients
3 Oz Prosecco D.O.C.
2 Oz Aperol
1 Oz Soda water
1 SLICE Orange

Instructions
Fill a large wine glass generously with ice.

Pour in 3 oz of Prosecco D.O.C.

Add 2 oz of Aperol.

Top up with 1 oz of soda water.

Garnish with a slice of orange.

Enjoy responsibly.

COLORING CORNER

Take a Coloring Break!

THAT'S MY BRICK®

Verona Community Garden and That's My Brick® have joined forces to raise money for our project The Verona Community Garden is located near HIBI Middle School.

The goal of this space has been to create a multi-use community centerpiece. The garden has given community members an opportunity to learn, connect and grow together.

This cherished spot has grown over the last 4 years and is fully funded by grants and donations. As the demand for the garden has grown we need a walkway in our public section of the garden. We are asking for your support through an engraved brick fundraiser.

Help us create a legacy for the community by showing your support with this fundraiser.

Order Here

Stay Connected with VCG!
Join our vibrant community online! Follow us on **Facebook** *(Verona NJ Community Garden)* and **Instagram** *(veronacommunitygarden)* for updates, photos, and event highlights. You can also stay in the loop by joining the VCG **WhatsApp Group!**

VCG WhatsApp Group

VCG Manager:
Carol Thomas – veronacommunitygardens@gmail.com

Newsletter Committee:
Brianna Aguirre – briannaaguirre1@gmail.com
Tara Brandt – tara.brandt@gmail.com
Nina James – ninagjames14@gmail.com

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veronacommunitygardens@gmail.com

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