



VERONA COMMUNITY GARDEN



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 4, 2025

Reminders



The water will not be turned on until April 7.

All refuse and plant waste must be taken away from the garden. The black municipal trash can is not for garden waste.

Most returning gardeners are in the same bed as last year, some have been moved. Check your bed assignment number.

The shed bulletin board has information regarding bed assignments, plot map and planting calendars. Be sure to check it often.

Tools and gloves in the shed are community property. Tomato cages, fertilizers and certain other items are for executive committee and school use only.

The metal beds in the public park area are maintained by committee members and students. The crops from these beds are donated to Hillwood Terrace apartment residents and others. You can use the back gate if it is easier for you to park in the gravel lot.

When purchasing plants, please patronize our partners Hillcrest Farms and Pleasantdale Nursery.

Just because it is on sale at the garden center does not mean it is time to plant outside. Check the planting calendars sent to you and posted on the shed bulletin board.

Each gardener should have a bucket or tote containing the following:

Gloves, a pruner, a snip (small pointed shears), a trowel, a claw rake, string, bags for harvest and bags for waste. A spray bottle of alcohol is very useful for cleaning tools.

Alternatively, something along these lines are useful. [Garden tools and Tote Set](#).

Many beginning gardeners find a soil moisture meter very helpful. You may also want to consider a soil NPK test kit (less than \$20). [Rutgers Soil Testing Lab](#) offers a service for \$20 that is very useful. Please inform Carol, the garden manager, of any test results.

Activites



We appreciate everyone who attended the orientation and work day on March 22. We really did get a lot accomplished. Thank you!

April 12 - Make-up Orientation

Time: 9:00 a.m.

After the orientation we will offer a casual workshop on preparing your bed and planning your space.

If you could not make it to our work day, please feel free to use the wheelbarrows to bring soil from the large pile toward the right of the garden over to the metal beds. The metal park beds all need to be filled to three inches from the top.

Students will be in the garden at various times during the day. If you are there at the same time we ask that you NOT engage with those classes.

April 29 Workshop - Victory Gardens

Location: Verona Library

Time: 6:30 p.m..

Other workshops in the garden: TBA

- Trellising and Staking
- Prepping your bed for planting, Choosing plants
- Dealing with Pests and Diseases

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Hillcrest Farms and Orange Valley Tree Company for generously donating their time and materials to support the Verona Community Garden.. They helped arrange a delivery of 35 cubic yards of garden soil to fill out new beds.

Newsletter Committee:

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This week in the garden...

Five Tips for Choosing Vegetables:

Choose what you (and your family) like to eat. If no one likes Brussels sprouts, don't bother planting them! But if your kids love green beans, put more effort into growing a big crop of beans.

Be realistic about how many vegetables your family will eat. Be careful not to overplant, as you will only stretch yourself thin by trying to take care of tons of plants! (You could always give excess veggies away to friends, family, or the local soup kitchen.)

Consider the availability of veggies at your grocery store. Maybe you want to grow tomatillos instead of cabbage or carrots, which are readily available in your area. Also, certain veggies are so far superior when homegrown

that almost a shame not to consider them (we're thinking of garden lettuce and tomatoes). Also, homegrown herbs are far less expensive than grocery store herbs.

Be prepared to take care of your plants throughout the growing season. Going on a summer vacation? Remember that tomatoes and zucchinis grow strongest in the middle of summer. If you'll be gone for part of the summer, you need someone to look after the crops, or they will suffer. You could also just grow cool-season crops such as lettuce, kale, peas, and root veggies during the cooler months of late spring and early fall.

Use high-quality seeds. Seed packets are less expensive than individual plants, but if seeds don't germinate, your money—and time—are

wasted. A few extra cents spent in spring for that year's seeds will pay off in higher yields at harvest time.

This process is easy if you are simply growing two or three tomato plants. But if you plan to grow a full garden, you need to consider:

- Where will each plant go?
- When will each vegetable need to be planted?

Here are a few guidelines for arranging your vegetables:

- Not all vegetables are planted at the same time. Cool-season vegetables such as lettuce, broccoli, and peas grow in the cooler weather of early spring (and fall). Warm-season vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, and cucumbers aren't planted until the soil warms up in late spring and summer.

Top 10 Easiest Vegetables to Grow

Lettuce
Green Beans
Radishes
Tomatoes (by transplant)
Zucchini
Peppers (by transplant)
Beets
Carrots
Chard, Spinach or Kale
Peas

Mix in flowers such as marigolds, asters, calendula, chrysanthemums, geraniums, lavender, nasturtiums, peunias and tansy—which discourage pests, attract pollinators, and add some color!



This week in the garden...

- Plant tall veggies (such as pole beans on a trellis or sweet corn) on the north side of the garden so they don't shade shorter plants. If you do get shade in a part of your garden, save that area for small, cool-season veggies. If shade is unavoidable in parts of your garden, save those areas for cool-season vegetables that appreciate shade as the weather heats up.
- Most veggies are annuals (planted each year). If you're planning on growing perennial crops such as asparagus, rhubarb, and some herbs, provide permanent locations or beds.
- Consider that some crops mature quickly and have a very short harvest period (radishes, bush beans). Other plants, such as

tomatoes, take longer to produce but also produce for longer.

- Stagger plantings. You don't want to plant all your lettuce seeds at the same time, or all that lettuce will need to be harvested at around the same time! Stagger plantings by a few weeks to keep 'em coming!

What gardening tools do you really need? Here's our short list!

What tools do you need for vegetable gardening? Even though we are longtime gardeners, we have a modest selection of tools. Here are what we consider to be the best basic gardening tools for beginners—and tips for taking care of them!

When starting a garden for the first time (or the second or third time), the right tools will

make a big difference. A sharp tool will make gardening easier and save you time. Don't get caught up in all the newfangled gardening tools that you'll see. Focus on basic, quality, durable tools that will last a lifetime.

Here are our top 10 indispensable garden tools.

- **Hand Trowel** - used for digging small holes for planting seed, measuring depths in the soil, and digging up tough weeds.
- **Hand Fork or Cultivator** - useful for scratching the soil to remove small weeds and rough up the soil.
- **Long-Handled Shovels and Spades** - good for digging straight-sided holes, cutting roots, removing plants and weeds, and making edges. Shovels are good for digging holes and moving

Verona Community Garden Walkway-

Building a Legacy One Brick at a Time

Verona Community Garden and That's My Brick!® have joined forces to raise money for our project! The Verona Community Garden is located near HBW 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 are in need of 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.

How to Order:

Just follow the simple step-by-step process below to place your order in the link below. Be sure you are happy with your brick design as it will look very similar to the image on your computer when completed.

<https://www.thatismybrick.com/veronagarden>



This week in the garden...

soil.

- **Garden Rake** - used for smoothing out the compost or for raking the soil level to create a beautifully crumbly seedbed.
- **Hand Pruners or Pruning Shears** - extremely versatile to cut or trim small branches from perennial plants, shrubs, and trees. Hand pruners can also be useful for harvesting ripe vegetables without damaging the plant. Look for razor-sharp blades and a comfortable grip. Choose a bypass-style pruner, meaning the top blade slices past the bottom blade, resulting in very quick, tear-free cuts so plants can heal quickly. (With anvil pruners, the other common variety, the top blade chomps down onto the bottom blade.

This can damage the stem or branch that you're cutting.)

- **Wheelbarrow** - great for weeding, hauling soil or leaves, collecting debris, and countless other tasks.
- **Watering Can** - best suited for small watering jobs.
- **Garden Fork** - useful for turning over soil and compost, digging out root crops, and dividing perennials.
- **Garden Hoe** - used to remove shallow-rooted weeds effortlessly. It is also used to create furrows for planting seeds and to break up clumps of soil.
- **Leaf Rakes** - raking up leaves and lawn clippings and for spreading mulch.

More Useful Gardening Tools and Supplies

- **Gardening Gloves** - a good pair of gloves can help to prevent blisters and cuts

and will keep your hands clean.

- **Garden Scissors** - used for deadheading (the removal of dead flowers), snipping herbs and flower stems, and pruning delicate plants.
- **Hori-Hori Gardening Knife** - a mix between a knife and a trowel, which makes them great for digging small planting holes, harvesting, and cutting down weeds.
- **Garden Hose** - helps carry water long distances.
- **Soaker Hose** - low-pressure porous hoses that deliver droplets of water to your garden beds.
- **Watering Wands** - delivers a soft, soaking shower.
- **Padded Kneelers** - lessen the pressure on your knees. Kneeling is actually easier on your back than squatting.

What I Would Like to Grow in My Garden

Mary Oliver

Peonies, heavy and pink as '80s bridesmaid dresses
and scented just the same. Sweet pea,
because I like clashing smells and the car
I drove in college was named that: a pea-green
Datsun with a tendency to backfire.
Sugar snap peas, which I might as well
call memory bites for how they taste like
being fourteen and still mourning the horse farm
I had been uprooted from at ten.
Also: sage, mint, and thyme—the clocks
of summer—and watermelon and blue lobelia.



Lavender for the bees and because I hate
all fake lavender smells. Tomatoes to cut
and place on toasted bread for BLTs, with or without
the b and the L I'd like, too, to plant
the sweet alyssum that smells like honey and peace,
and for it to bloom even when it's hot,
and also lilies, so I have something left
to look at when the rabbits come.
They always come. They are
always hungry. And I think I am done
protecting one sweet thing from another.

This week in the garden...

Flowers that Deter Pest Insects from Your Vegetable Garden

If you're looking for a natural way to keep insects away from your vegetable garden, try planting flowers! Studies have shown that planting certain kinds of plants near other plants – or companion planting – can help keep unwanted pests away from your garden without the need for chemicals. In fact, some of our favorite flowers repel insects through fragrance, oils, or even colors.

The **aster** is a pretty perennial that works well as a border for vegetable gardens. That's because asters repel almost all insects. You can plant asters with sunflowers for a colorful effect, or on their own as an effective insect repellent.



If you want pretty flowers that deter garden pests, you can't do better than **calendula**. Calendula flowers may resemble the marigold, but this flower is actually an herb

known for its antifungal and antimicrobial properties. Calendula is especially helpful at repelling asparagus beetles and tomato hornworms, and is a good companion plant for cucumber, tomatoes, peas, carrots, asparagus, beans, potatoes, pumpkin, broccoli or herbs.



If your garden has an issue with spider mites or nematodes, consider planting **chrysanthemums** to drive them away. Chrysanthemums are a top choice among flowers that deter pests because they are both colorful and easy to grow. They work best when planted near tomato plants, but avoid planting chrysanthemums near lettuce.



One of the best flowers to protect your cabbage or other leafy greens is geraniums.

Geraniums are a favorite

flower for their attractive blooms, but they also repel cabbageworms, corn earworms, Japanese beetles, and more. You can plant geraniums among your vegetables or cabbage patch for maximum insect-repelling results.



To humans, **lavender** gives off a pleasant aroma that is a favorite for many of us, but most animals and insects won't come near it. This is good news for gardeners, who can plant lavender to help keep mosquitos and other insects at bay. Lavender can be planted with roses and herbs like rosemary, but does not get along well with mint or impatiens.



Marigolds are more pretty flowers that help a vegetable garden avoid insects. Marigolds are a great all-around insect-repelling flower that works near

This week in the garden...

a variety of different vegetables. These flowers are especially helpful at repelling Mexican bean beetles and nematodes, making them a great companion to tomato, pepper, potato, and eggplant.



If aphids are chewing up your garden, it's time to plant some **nasturtiums**. Easy to grow and pretty in bloom, nasturtiums repel aphids, squash bugs, striped pumpkin beetles, and whiteflies. Plant nasturtiums near beans, cabbages, and cucumbers to ensure an insect-free growing season.



For gardens that feature beans, squash, or potatoes, another great insect-repelling flower you should consider is petunias.

Petunias naturally repel a range of insects that target bean plants, squash, and

potato plants. They also attract hummingbirds! Plant petunias near tomato plants for optimum results.



Tansy is an herbaceous perennial that can keep ants, flying insects, and several kinds of beetles away from your vegetable garden. Tansy works well when planted near potato and squash plants, but avoid planting it near collard greens.



Basil is one of the world's most popular and widely used culinary herbs. Sweet Basil is the quintessential Italian culinary herb, most famous for its use in pesto. Basil naturally repels asparagus beetle, carrot fly, tomato hornworm, mosquitoes, flies, and whiteflies. It also attracts bees, butterflies, and other beneficial insects to the garden. Basil is a companion plant for asparagus, tomatoes, peppers, parsley, lettuce, beans, beets,

cabbage, eggplant, marigolds, potatoes and oregano, Avoid planting Basil near Rue and Sage.



Borage is native to the Mediterranean region and is spreading annual boasting a profusion open racemes of beautiful, star-shaped, bright blue flowers from early summer to the first frost. The flowers are also edible with a fresh cucumber flavor. Borage deters cabbagework and tomato hornworm. It also acts as a slug and snail trap, deterring these garden pest from your vegetables. It is a magnet for bees, honeybees, hummingbirds, and butterflies. It is an excellent companion by adding trace minerals to the soil and aiding any plants it is interplanted with by increasing their resistance to pests and disease. It does well with cabbage, strawberries, summer squash or winter squash and tomatoes.



Quick Guides



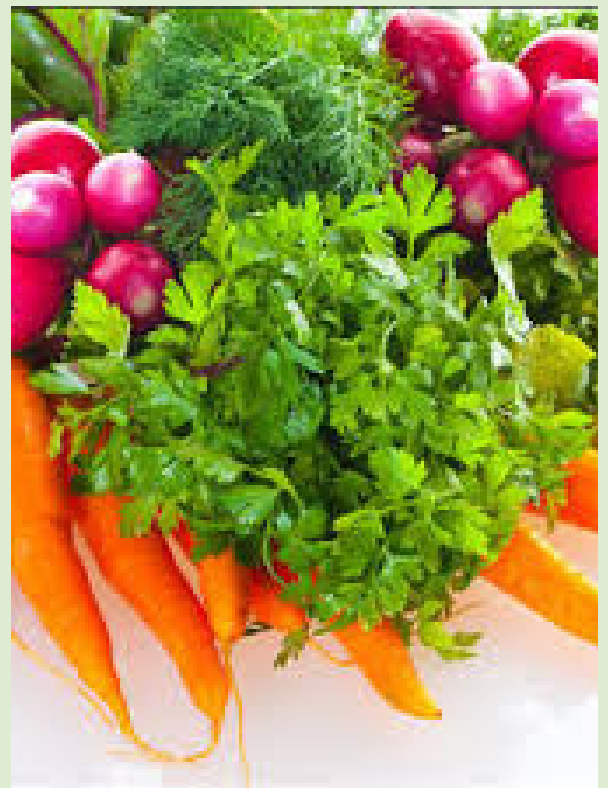
Quick Guide to Growing Lettuce

- Plant lettuce during the mild weather of early spring and fall. This nutritious, leafy green is a great option for in-ground gardening, raised garden beds, and containers.
- Space lettuce plants 6 to 18 inches apart (depending on the variety) in an area that gets an abundance of sun and has fertile, well-drained soil with a pH between 6.0 and 7.0.
- Improve native soil by mixing in several inches of aged compost or other rich organic matter.
- Well-hydrated lettuce will bear tender leaves, so keep moisture levels consistent by watering whenever the top inch of soil becomes dry.
- Prevent weeds and make your watering efforts last longer by applying a thick layer of mulch made from finely ground leaves or bark.
- Promote excellent leaf production by regularly feeding with a water-soluble plant food.
- Harvest leaf lettuce starting with the outermost leaves once they are large enough to eat.

Vegetables to Grow in the Spring

Here are some great vegetables to consider for your spring garden.

Peas
Spinach
Lettuce
Radishes
Broccoli
Cauliflower
Beets
Swiss Chard
Kohlrabi
Cucumbers
Carrots
Potatoes
Raspberries
Rhubarb
Herbs



This week in the garden...



Asparagus and Prosciutto Crustless Quiche

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 40 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour 10 minutes

Servings: 8 slices

This keeps well in the refrigerator and can be served the next day, re-heated or at room temperature.

I err on the side of less salt to begin with. The prosciutto and cheeses have some salt in them, so you don't want to over-salt. You can always sprinkle a bit on afterwards.

Ingredients

- 2 cups of peeled asparagus
You will need about 12 oz or 350 grams of young asparagus to begin with
- 1 1/2 cups of shredded cheddar cheese I also used some Swiss cheese to make up the amount
- 1 tbsp AP flour for dusting the cheese

- 2 scallions trimmed and sliced thinly crosswise
- 2 oz (50 grams) prosciutto trim away any excess fat and chop into smaller bite size pieces
- 4 large eggs
- 3/4 cup 2% milk
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme leaves
- 1/4-1/2 tsp kosher salt the prosciutto will be adding some salt to the final flavour, so err on the side of less salt to begin with
- 1 tsp cracked black pepper
- good pinch of grated nutmeg
- chilli flakes , optional
- 1 tbsp fresh dill coarsely chopped
- 3-5 slices of prosciutto
- 6-10 fresh basil leaves

Instructions

- Preheat the oven to 375F.
- Use a veggie peeler to trim away the outer skin of the asparagus spears (if they are very thin to begin with, you may omit this step). Trim away the bottom two inches of each spear. Slice on the diagonal into 1 inch pieces, leaving the tips intact. Set the tips aside.
- Grate the cheese and toss in a bowl with 1 tbsp of AP flour- make sure it is evenly coated with the flour (this will help suspend it in the

custard, as opposed to having it all settle to the bottom.

- Whisk the eggs, milk and cream together till frothy in a medium bowl. Season with the thyme, salt, pepper and nutmeg.

Assemble

Rub butter all over the interior of a 9-10" pie plate or ceramic quiche pan. Alternatively you can use veggie spray. Place onto a baking sheet.

Spoon 1/2 of the sliced asparagus spears (excluding the tips) all over the bottom of the plate.

Scatter 1/2 of the scallion slices over the asparagus.

Scatter 1/3 of the cheese all over the veggies. Sprinkle 1/2 tsp chilli flakes (if using) over this.

Scatter 1/3 of the prosciutto slices over the cheese.

Repeat with the remaining veggies and another 1/3 of the cheese, and prosciutto.

Pour the egg mixture gently over the veggies and cheese. Top with the remaining cheese and the dill.

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Add remaining prosciutto pieces and the asparagus tips over the cheese at this point as well, so that they will be slightly elevated, for presentation.

Place the baking sheet on the centre rack and bake the quiche for 35-40 minutes, or until golden brown and set. The centre can still be ever so slightly jiggly, but it shouldn't be soggy soft.

Remove and let it set for a good 20 minutes to let the residual heat continue cooking the eggs.

You can garnish with prosciutto roses (by taking prosciutto slices, folding them in half lengthwise and rolling them up like cinnamon rolls. Gently fold the edges out and down, to create the look of a flower. Place strategically on the quiche just before serving,

placing two basil leaves per flower under them.

Serve with a salad and hunk of crusty bread!

The Lemon Apron
May 13, 2019



Pineapple Sunrise Mimosas

Prep Time: 15 minutes
Additional Time: 2 hours
Total Time: 2 hour 15 minutes
Servings: 12

Ingredients

- 4 ½ cups pineapple juice
- 1 ⅛ cups orange juice
- ⅓ cup lime juice
- ¼ fresh pineapple, sliced
- ½ blood orange, sliced
- ½ lime, sliced
- 1 (750 milliliter) bottle Prosecco (Italian sparkling wine)
- ¼ cup Campari
- 4 slices pineapple and orange slices, for garnish

Directions

1. Stir pineapple juice, orange juice, and lime juice together in a large pitcher or punch bowl. Add pineapple, blood orange, and lime slices. Cover and refrigerate for 2 to 24 hours.
2. To serve, pour 1/2 cup juice mixture into each glass or champagne flute. Add 1/4 cup Prosecco per serving. Slowly drizzle in 1 teaspoon Campari. Garnish each mimosa with a fresh pineapple or orange slice.

Tips

For a non-alcoholic version, substitute club soda or citrus-flavored sparkling water for the Prosecco, and use grenadine instead of Campari.

Allrecipes Test Kitched
March 23, 2023

