

Patty's garden notes....

Summer 2014

Almost as soon as the garden starts to dry and become usable, we have another inch of rain. This year has been a challenge for the Community Gardens. There are many plants that had to be replanted in the wet areas. Even though we mulch to keep even moisture in the soil, I recommend using mulch in a wet garden to soak up the extra water between the rows. Hilling and mounding are also good practices in this situation.

I have received information that 2 tillers left on the garden site over the July 4th holiday weekend were stolen. In this type of situation, I would appreciate that anyone who saw anything suspicious, please

contact me at the UW-Extension office at 929-3172. Theft in the gardens is everyone's responsibility to watch out for your neighbor. It has been reported to the police, but the gardens belong to everyone who has a plot.

My suggestion is to take care and do not leave expensive garden equipment on your site. I will not be responsible if anyone else has their tiller or other garden equipment stolen.

Stuffed Sea Shells

This recipe can be used with any fresh garden vegetables.

Ingredients:

- 8 to 10 large shell macaroni
- 1 (16 oz.) package mock crab legs (you can also use tuna or cooked chicken)
- ¼ cup salad dressing
- ¼ cup celery diced
- 1/3 cup onion
- ¼ cup cheddar cheese grated or diced
- ¼ cup frozen peas, thawed
- Other vegetables as desired (Cucumber, tomato etc.)

Directions:

1. Cook shell macaroni according to package directions.
2. Mix remaining ingredients together.
3. Stuff mixture into cooked shells.



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Excessive Water

Question: What can be done for waterlogged or flooded gardens?

We have less control over our plants during prolonged periods of rain or flooding, than during drought. Unless they are in moveable containers, there is little we can do except wait for the weather to change. Then it is time to take stock of how your garden held up.

If your soil is waterlogged, chances are good your plants are showing signs of stress - or soon will be. Waterlogged and flooded soil has insufficient amounts of oxygen in it, for the plant roots to take up and release water or release excess carbon dioxide. Plants may paradoxically look like they are wilting, but it is not because of too little water, it is because they can no longer access the available water. This leads to root rot and death. While we may not be able to prevent flooding, we should at least be on the alert for signs our plants are struggling. Start by watching for these signals.

Symptoms of Water Damaged Plants

Symptoms of water damage can look just like many other plant problems. Symptoms are generally first apparent on the leaves, although trees and shrubs may not exhibit symptoms for a year or more. Signs your plants have been damaged by waterlogged soil include:

- Stunting
- Yellowing leaves
- Twisting leaves
- Dropping leaves
- Soft, spongy areas at the base of the leaf
- Wilting despite plenty of water
- Roots turning dark, often with a rotting odor.
- Lack of flowers or fruits
- Shoot dieback

Several factors determine how much damage is done to plants by flooding, including how long the soil is waterlogged, whether it is fresh or salt water, the time of year and the type and age of the plant. Flooding during warm weather is more damaging to plants, because they are actively respiring and need more oxygen than during cold weather.

A short-term period of soggy soil probably won't cause much damage. It is prolonged periods of flooded soil that cause problems.

Overwatering

SIGNS OF OVERWATERING

- While it's important for vegetable plants to receive enough water for proper growth and to produce a good crop, too much water can weaken and even kill them. Some of the signs of an over-watered garden can look deceptively like the signs of one that hasn't received enough water. If you monitor your garden closely, and are aware of the symptoms of over-watering, you'll be able to avoid problems.



Wilting

- Wilting is typically associated with not enough water, or extreme temperature changes, but is also a sign of a plant whose roots are struggling in wet soil. You might notice that the leaves are wilted, but in severe situations, the entire plant may look wilted and withered. Wilt from over-watering results from plant roots that are unable to receive oxygen from the soil. This causes plant suffocation, according to Washington State University Extension.

Mold

- An over-watered vegetable might turn moldy. If you see mold or moss growing on the surface of the soil, or mold growing on your plants, chances are that you are giving your vegetable garden too much water.

Yellowing or Spotted Leaves

- The Oregon State University Extension Service notes that when a vegetable garden is over-watered, plant leaves may fall off after turning light green or yellow, or they may become yellow or mottled. Weak, spindly growth also can occur.

Rotting Stems or Roots

- If you notice stems or roots that are soft and rotten, this is a good sign that a vegetable garden has too much water in the soil.

Wet Soil

- A very clear sign that your vegetable garden is getting too much water is wet or soggy soil. Many vegetables--tomatoes for example--like to have their roots in soil that is consistently moist. But your vegetable garden should never be wet or soggy.

It is not necessary to be watering as we have received quite a lot of rain. There is plenty of moisture in the soil.

Avoid these three common watering problems

- Frequent, shallow watering promotes root development in the surface layers of the soil. Plants with shallow roots are very susceptible to drought
- Overwatering can drown plants by filling up soil pores with water, leaving little or no oxygen for plant roots. Also, excessive watering leaches away nutrients and can contribute to groundwater contamination.
Postponing irrigation after plants show signs of needing water can damage plants very quickly in hot weather. Observe your plants every day or two and respond to their needs promptly.

Succession Planting

Get the most out of your garden! It's not too late to plant.

Succession Planting

Some vegetables take up their space in the garden all summer while others need only a short time to ripen. Careful planning can allow you to plant a succession of crops in the same space. If your garden space is small, you will want to take advantage of this technique. (Or if your garden space has not dried out until July.)

First plant crops that mature early. As soon as these have been harvested, pull them up and have a second crop ready to go in the ground. It helps to start as many plants as you can in peat pots to give them a head start. After your second crop is harvested, you can often have another planting of cool weather crops. Choose early-maturing varieties so they can be harvested before winter sets in.

Crops to be planted in July or later for fall harvest

- Bush Beans
- Beets
- Broccoli
- Chinese Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Endive
- Kale
- Kohlrabi
- Radishes
- Spinach
- Turnips
- Collards
- Lettuce



BORDER PATROL:

Please keep the area around your garden neat. Cut any grass or weeds down that are within 2 feet of your garden plot area. This will keep rabbits under control.

