

2017-Vegetable Gardening in September

WEATHER-The weather has been really nice this August with the days warm but the nights are cool with temperatures in the high 50's which slows down the tomatoes from ripening. I think we've had a really good monsoon season with quite a bit of rain and no hail out where I live. I use to get to the Farmers market here mid-August but I still don't have enough tomatoes yet and next week is Sept.

TOMATOES-So fall is in the air but the tomatoes are not ripe yet. Why? Because we had a hot June, which resulted in tomato blossoms drop. That put us back about a month-so the tomatoes will be mostly late again this year. I'm not even at the market yet. I'm getting a few tomatoes but not many yet. Don't worry- they should be ripe sometime in Sept. Let's hope for a long warm fall again like last year. Will we get to harvest them before the first frost? Let's hope so.

FALL HARVEST-full blast (except tomatoes)

Harvesting chard, beets, carrots, beans, eggplants, peppers and tons of cucumbers. Make pickles. Peppers have especially been good this year. My corn has tassels right now but the corn man is back at the Farmers Market with some great sweet corn right now.

HERBS-most are ready for harvest: These herbs are great dried for the winter. I just tie them in bundles and hang them somewhere inside till they are completely dried.

oregano

thyme

rosemary

lemon thyme

marjoram

fennel

lavender flowers

tarragon

parsley

basil makes great pesto

-And you can start cilantro again as the weather cools

-Make mixes like Herbs d' Provence-popular in the southeastern part of France.

great on grilled meats, fish, vegetable stews, eggs. 2 TLB of each:

thyme, savory, rosemary, marjoram, then add:

1 TLB lavender flowers (some people add fennel seeds and tarragon as well)

keep in an airtight container.

WEEDS

-I have lots of weeds with all the rain. Pull before they flower and go to seed

PLANT PROBLEMS

-**Tomato hornworms** have arrived! I've gotten about 12 so far

-**Aphids** are big on cabbages, broccoli, some kales right now

-**Leaf miners** are in chard

-Some kind of **caterpillar** is about my garden and eating holes in many plants. I sprayed with Bt (which is an organic insecticide for caterpillars and it will get rid of them. Bt only affects caterpillars and is harmless to people, bees, birds and other animals.

-**Powdery Mildew**- with the rains and high humidity, powdery mildew has hit squash. It can also hit pumpkins, cucumber and beans. Spray with Green Cure-potassium bicarbonate NOT sodium bicarbonate (baking soda). WORKS GREAT. Also Copper fungicide or Serenade can help with Powdery Mildew.

-**Early Blight**-leaves start to turn yellow from bottom of tomato plant and goes up through plant- to help control it cut off all affected leaves. Be sure to disinfect your cutters and hands in 10% bleach solution with water between plants. Spray with Serenade (a biological fungicide)

STILL TIME TO START FALL GARDENING!

There is still time to start a fall garden. Many cool season crops can be started now-but you'll need to start in EARLY Sept.

COOL SEASON CROPS-the secret is to get them in early enough so you can harvest them before daylight gets to 10 hours each day. The date is around Thanksgiving.

Lettuce, mesclun, endive-many cool season varieties can go in now

Arugula-new variety-Wasabi arugula. Actually tastes like Japanese wasabi. I

love the bite it gives

Carrots-plant early Sept.-new variety-Napoli

Beets-plant early Sept.

Bok Choy-new variety-Violetta-is purple and green leaf and likes cooler weather

Bunching onions

Spinach-fairly new variety-Carmel. So far it has survived the last 2 winters in a raised bed with only winter weight row cover over it. All the other varieties I've tried died when Dec rolled around.

Peas-peas like cooler weather so you can plant them and get a second crop

Radishes-plant varieties that you can harvest in 30 days

Chard-I like Argentata for going into the cold months

Kale-Curly kale is more cold tolerant than the other varieties

Garlic-2 types-soft neck and hard neck -hard neck varieties do better in our colder climate. ORDER NOW or buy at Farmers Market. Do not plant now but wait till Oct. before first frost

Shallots- Order now and plant in Oct. before first frost