

Summer

2021

The Wisconsin Vegetable Gardener

Digital Magazine for Spring and Summer

Watering

Planting
Garlic

Powdery
Mildew

Fall Planting

Canning
Safety

My first Garden
Update

*Joey and Holly Baird
are founder of The Wisconsin Vegetable Gardener*



They are a married couple living in southeastern Wisconsin (just outside of Milwaukee). In addition to their 5th season of their own garden talk radio show in 2021 listen and download past shows [here](#). Joey & Holly make videos on YouTube about how to grow your own food organically, reusing found items (or items you may just throw away), what to do with the food you grow, home canning and simple home living. They have over 1,950 videos on their YouTube Channel [Here](#) They grow in the ground, raised beds, straw bales, containers and indoor herbs. From seed starting to canning they cover it all. Their goal through their radio show, videos, and social media pages is to show the average person how easy it is to grow food, store food, and reuse everyday items. Their motto is "grow with us". Holly is also an award winning home canner with a handful of ribbons from the Wisconsin State Fair including a Best of Show award for her home canning talents. If you find this interesting and have any questions or would like to talk further we can be emailed at gardentalkradio@gmail.com.

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Underline words are clickable links





RCA Victor 811k radio

Radios sure have come a long way from this 1937 RCA Victor model. We pick this unit up local to us in working condition. We all have radios in our pockets now with cell phone but back in 1937 radios were the center of the home for news, sports and education. This radio in 1937 cost around \$150.00 in todays money that is \$2,759.14. And to think who sat in front of this radio and what they heard? New cast from WWII, The end of the war, We will go to the moon speak by JFK, I have a dream speak by Martin Luther King JR. or his assassination? The story this radio has told to those who owned it learn more about this radio click [here](#)

Plant Some Garlic

BY: JOEY BAIRD

Planting garlic is a very simple, easy, and almost no maintenance crop to grow in your garden. Garlic is planted in late fall and harvested in mid-to-late Spring. Garlic falls into two categories: hardneck meaning the stem goes completely through the bulb and soft neck which the stem simply grows to the bulb but not through it. Both can be grown in many parts of the country, however hardneck is more recommended for the northern climates as it is better suited for the cold winters. Many people have success growing softneck in the north as well. There are pros and cons to growing both. We have always grown hardneck varieties in our garden some are Georgia Crystal, German Hardy, Purple Blazer and Spanish Roja to name a few. You can purchase heirloom varieties of garlic online, at a farmers market, or a friend may give you some. You may also be able to find heirloom garlic at an all natural food store. It is not recommended to grow grocery store garlic as it is a very generic variety that is most times imported, and may have been sprayed with chemicals. It is very likely it will not produce to the magnitude that heirloom garlic will. Once you've made the decision about the garlic that you want to grow, leave the bulbs intact and do not break them apart until about 24 hours before you intend to put them in the ground.

The best location to plant is in full sun and fertile soil. Garlic can grow in somewhat poor soil. You can plant garlic in and around your flower beds too. 24 hours before you intend to plant, break the bulbs apart to separate the cloves leaving the skin on them. This adds a layer of protection. Look for the largest cloves, the larger the cloves the better opportunity you have for large bulbs at the time of harvest. Based on the variety of garlic this can mean that the number of cloves can range from 4 to 15 cloves in one head of garlic. If you're looking for very large cloves, elephant garlic is the way to go. But elephant garlic is not a garlic at all; it is part of the leek family, grown in the spring and harvested in the fall like onions.



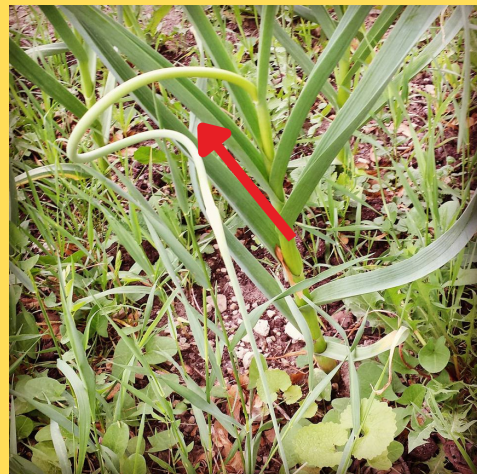
Once you have selected the largest cloves out of the bulbs you can pre-soak them for 24 hours. In a compost tea or simply in water this helps hydrate the clove and allows it to get a better jump start. We plant our garlic on the first Saturday in October each year rain or shine. It is best to plant garlic 30 days before your first hard freeze to allow the garlic to get established before going to dormancy. Don't worry if you miss this window and plant it 15 days before your first freeze or if the freezes occurred and then the ground has thawed you can still plant garlic. Some choose to grow the garlic in the spring and harvest it in the fall. We have done this however the bulbs in our experience suffer in size compared to the fall planting and spring harvesting method.

You want to plant the cloves 2 to 4 inches deep. 4 inches if you're in a raised bed or have loose soil. 2 inches if the ground is not as loose as you would like it to be. Plant each bulb 10 to 12 inches apart. Rows should be 12 to 18 inches apart giving the plants ample space to grow to their potential. Mulching is not necessary but if mulching is done a 2 inch layer is good. Removing mulch in the spring is key to preventing any restriction of growth the garlic may receive because of having mulch on it. We have never mulched our garlic and have had some of the coldest winters on record and they have thrived and we have had phenomenal harvests of our garlic over the years. Following planting prior to that first freeze you may see growth of the garlic above ground this is normal. Do not worry about it, the cold will not damage the plant.

As spring arrives and the soil warms, the garlic will shoot out of the ground, this is a good time to sidedress the garlic and keep it hydrated. Sidedress your garlic means you can use a liquid fertilizer, compost tea, or just compost around the base of each plant to give it a little nutrient boost as it grows.

As harvest nears the hardneck garlic will have an extra growth come from the top of the plant and will curl, if left alone this growth will straighten and produce seeds. This is a garlic scape once the garlic scape is about 12 to 14 inches then you will want to cut it off of the top of the plant this will put more energy into bulb development then if we would have left the scape on. The scape is edible and there are a number of dishes can be made with the garlic scapes. Harvesting scapes video [here](#)

Softneck garlic does not produce a scape; this is an advantage to growing hardneck garlic as you get a bonus crop from the plant. The scape will appear about four weeks before the plant is ready to be harvested. the lower set the leaves will begin to turn yellow and die this is an indication that you can Harvest your garlic the softneck garlic will do such but will crimp at the base and fall over



(Red arrow points to the scape)

To harvest the garlic a shovel or garden fork is needed in order to lift the bulbs out of the ground keeping the stalk in tack and not tearing the stalk from the bulb. You can use the garlic right away or you can let it cure by hanging 8 to 10 garlic plants together vertically for 4 to 6 weeks. Keeping them out of direct sun. This allows additional energy that is in the stalk to drain back into the bulb for additional flavor. We have found just sitting them vertical in a Rubbermaid tub will give them ample air circulation and can achieve the same results. After the plants have fully dried and cured you can remove the stalk from the plant leaving the bulb. How much stalk is left is personal preference and store them in a cool dry Place 4 up to 8 months. The harvest comes in mid-to-late spring. Once the curing process is done you can sort through and find the largest bulbs that potentially will have the largest cloves in them that you can plant again the following fall. 2021 Garlic harvest [here](#)



Powdery Mildew

BY HOLLY BAIRD

Powdery mildew can be a problem in your garden if left uncontrolled. This disease affects vining crops like squash, melons and pumpkins. Powdery mildew is a fungal disease that affects a wide range of plants. Powdery mildew diseases are caused by many different species of fungi in the order Erysiphales, with *Podosphaera xanthii* (a.k.a. *Sphaerotheca fuliginea*) being the most commonly reported cause. You can identify it by a powder-like substance growing on the leaves of your vine crops. This fungus is caused by too warm nighttime temperatures and high humidity which doesn't allow the plants to dry off fully. Then powdery mildew begins to emerge and grow. The problem will continue and the leaves will begin to suffocate, which will cause the plant to die. This can be controlled or eliminated.



There are many conventional products on the market to control this problem. However, it is to control, not eliminate. Also, some of these products are highly toxic and not very sustainable. There are great homeopathic alternatives that can actually eliminate the problem. When spraying these remedies on the plants be sure to spray both sides of the leaves.

Baking soda has many uses around the home and garden. This has been noted as one of the best remedies for powdery mildew. You simply mix one tablespoon of baking soda with a teaspoon of dormant oil and one teaspoon of insecticidal or liquid soap to a gallon of water. Spray on plants every one to two weeks.

One remedy we found success that greatly slowed powdery mildew was milk. Simply apply a weekly dose of one part milk to two parts water. Acidic components are ideal as well. When using these remedies take care where you are spraying them as the high acid can have an adverse effect on the microorganisms in your soil. If a little gets in that's ok, just don't spill a large quantity. Generic, ethanol based mouthwash is a great use for powdery mildew.

Mix one part mouthwash to three parts water and spray. Avoid the tender new growth, focus on the older and more mildew affected growth. Vinegar is another acidic remedy. A mix of 2-3 tablespoons of raw apple cider vinegar mixed with a gallon of water sprayed on the plants does the trick. Just be aware as too high concentrations of either of these acidic sprays can burn the plants.

One way to prevent this at the start of the season is to look for disease resistant plants and to make sure you are spacing the plants apart correctly.

Just like most problems in the garden, there is often a simple remedy for something you may already have in your kitchen or bathroom.

If you see powdery mildew on one or two leaves and no where else you can cut those leaves off at the base of the plant and throw them in the trash. And then spray the plant to stop what you do not see on the leaves forming. Also be careful when removing infected leaves from the garden sores can fall on other plants and infect them as well. Wash your hands after removal and application.

CANNING SAFETY

BY HOLLY BAIRD

Home canning is something everyone can do and a great way to preserve food and extend your harvest. However, canning is a science, proper methods and techniques must be followed, and using trusted resources is important.



Being uneducated in canning is a common and often beginner mistake. You don't need to go read every book, blog or news story on home canning, however, basic knowledge is best. This includes things such as common canning tools click [Here](#), what method is used for what you are canning, what you cannot can safely, etc. Many books, such as the Ball Blue Book of Canning have basic knowledge laid out and step by step canning directions. Also, I have made several simple canning videos on our website click [Here](#) where I show you clearly how to can safely. Knowing the basics and having good knowledge will keep you safe in the kitchen and beyond.

Sometimes when canning it is tempting to substitute ingredients in a recipe – maybe you are short on an ingredient, perhaps you thought you had more of something than you really do, or one of the ingredients doesn't seem necessary. For example, many recipes in canning tomatoes require the use of bottle lemon juice added to the jar for proper acidity -many people feel they could replace fresh squeezed lemon juice and that is not ideal. Bottled lemon juice has consistent acidity while freshly squeezed can vary in acidity. When starting to can or preserve. Read the recipe first before you even get started canning so you know what you are getting involved in.

For proper canning safety, inspecting your equipment is crucial. Your pressure canner should be checked over yearly because of the rubber parts, gaskets, etc. You can contact the manufacturer on where to take it in, or you can contact your local extension office and they would be able to direct you as well. Many people may not think of it, but check your jars also. Check the sides and bottoms for any hairline cracks. This can make a huge difference and prevent jars from breaking in the canner. You also want to check the rim of the jars for dents. If you have a dent in the top of the jar it may not seal properly, and that is frustrating,



(potatoes going in pressure canner)

When it comes to canning, patience can be key. Some recipes may call for you to let something sit and drain for 30 min continuing on to the next step, or let vegetables sit in salt. These steps are there for the best preserves, best shelf life and best flavor.

It is also best to keep in mind that if it says not to double the recipe, then that is the best practice to follow.

Canning is a great hobby, ideal for extending your harvest, and can be enjoyed year round, but safety and smart canning is ideal and best.



Jerusalem artichoke relish



I am new to gardening Update



A guide to help new gardeners start their garden by answering questions from new gardener

WORDS BY DIANA PRINCE

The last time I wrote into the The Gardening with Joey and Holly Radio Show was to get some answers to some questions that my nephew Jack and I had. My nephew and I had plans for a garden in our backyard. I thought I would give you an update as to how our garden turned out. We decided to try both raised bed and ground gardening. The area that we picked was in the backyard partially shaded by a tree. As recommended the area got about 10 hours of sun a day. We planted several different kinds of herbs and many vegetables. Some examples are peas, carrots, tomatoes, edamame, pole beans, and a host of other vegetables in our ground garden. Some of the herbs we planted are: sage, thyme, basil, marjoram, and parsley in our raised beds.

We chose to use fencing to keep the animals out of our ground garden. Animals were not a big problem in our raised beds. The type of fencing we used at first was chicken wire. We found that that did not work because the holes were too big and we didn't have it tucked into the ground tight enough. To correct this problem we had to use chicken wire with smaller holes and tuck it into the ground tighter. Since we were advised by The Gardening with Joey and Holly Radio Show that potatoes could be dangerous to pets we decided not to plant any. Although we did find a few volunteer potatoes so we decided to let them grow. Since Jack and I live in Wisconsin it can get very hot during the day so we set up a regular weeding and watering schedule. This schedule included weeding in the morning before noon and mulching in the afternoon after 4pm.

At these times the sun was not as high in the sky so it was not as hot. We also watered our raised beds and our ground garden every time we weeded and mulched. We decided to do weeding and mulching every week. Here are the results of everything we planted so far: the tomatoes are budding, most of our herbs except the Rosemary which did not grow outside in the raised bed, so we brought rosemary in the house and now it is flourishing. The edamame that we planted did not come up at all. I think it was because of the drought we are in, like most of the country. Jack and I are hoping that the rest of our garden blooms with a good harvest. Thank you to The Gardening with Joey and Holly Radio Show for all of their help. We will keep you posted. and happy gardening.

Continues on next page

what our garden looks like



Potatoes



Squash



Raised bed



New beans



Tiny Tim Tomato



Basil

Watering is key

BY JOEY BAIRD

Watering is the key to a successful garden. It is the number one activity you should focus on. Even above the soil. You can have poor soil and plants will grow but without water soil or bad soil means nothing. As we are experiencing drought conditions in 2021, What is the best way to water the garden? There are many different devices available on the market that do this task. Sprinkler systems that spray water across your garden such as the [Quick Snap sprinklers](#), drip tape from companies such as [Dripworks](#), soaker hoses, and sub irrigation systems that you bury it underground beneath the plants you are growing. Devices such as a [TreeDiaper](#) do not hook up to a faucet or rain barrel, it absorbs the water from when you water or when it rains and releases it over 30 days. This can be extremely versatile based on your growing conditions. trees and bushes can be watered very easily with a [waterhoop](#) and you can control the flow of water.

Is there one device that is superior to other watering devices and techniques? It is up to the individual gardener to figure out what is best for their garden. Each device is designed for a specific task and can be adapted to other watering jobs. Whether you are watering a ground garden or raised bed garden, or even a container garden, proper hydration of the soil is needed in order to allow the plants to uptake the nutrients in the soil to grow correctly. When the soil is dry those nutrients are locked in the soil as there is no moisture to allow the plant to uptake it into the system of the plant. This can and does cause underdeveloped and damaging problems to the plant. On tomato blossom end rot will happen. Blossom end rot is the blackening or undeveloped portion of the tomato when the rest of the fruit is completely ripened. Typically this is the direct result of available calcium in the soil not being able to be taken up by the plant.

The soil is too dry and proper watering allows the plant to take up the available minerals in the soil to develop the fruit correctly. There are cases in which calcium is very low in the soil. A proper soil test from your local University Extension can give you exact data on what you have and not have in your soil. It will tell you how to give the plants what is needed to grow to their genetic potential.

An irrigation system or irrigation devices are an investment that will pay you back year after year, as it will save you time and money by watering and keeping your plants hydrated. There are timers you can purchase from an irrigation system manual, or digital, and even ones that run off an app that you can control from your phone. When is the right time to water? It comes down to the needs of the plants. We use all the devices that were listed above in our garden. The drip irrigation system runs three times a day at 8 AM, Noon, and 5PM. for 20 minutes at a time.

When it rains for several days we bypass the system and turn it back on when the soil needs hydration. Soil should remain damp like a sponge not sopping wet nor bone dry.

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If the system you are using is above ground spraying water across the garden, it is best to water early in the day to allow the water to evaporate off of the leaves of the plants. This is not because the sun will burn the plants through the droplets of water. This is a garden myth. Watering in the evening the plants are wet when darkness falls. Water can stay on the leaves and begin to develop mildew that will hurt the plants. A regular watering schedule is key, in combination with utilizing mulch with an irrigation system is the one-two punch to keep your plants hydrated. With drip tape, soaker hose, tree diaper and other systems you can cover the units with the mulch to allow the water to be right at soil level. This

does not hurt the irrigation systems to cover them with leaves, shredded paper, straw, chemical-free seed free grass clippings, or any type of organic mulch. Do keep in mind throughout the growing season mulch will gradually biodegrade and feed the soil. You will need to continually add mulch. Mulch is great for holding moisture in the soil and suppressing weeds. When watering is not done regularly plants become stressed. Keeping the soil hydrated allows the plants to have proper moisture so they can focus on development of the fruit or the leaves to let you have a good harvest. When they are stressed they are trying to survive rather than producing what you planted them for.



Tree diaper around squash



Waterhoop around a cherry bush



Timmer and drip irrigation from Dripworks

Fall Planting

BY HOLLY BAIRD

As we are in the midst of heat in the middle of summer it may not seem easy to think about fall, or maybe it is. We cannot forget that fall is approaching and another season of gardening can be achieved. Fall is a great time to get one more crop in before the winter hits. Some crops can grow all season. Others are sensitive to day length and can only be grown in the spring and the fall.

Swiss chard is one of the crops that can be grown all season long and is not affected by day length. Swiss chard is a leafy green with edible foliage and stalk. The stalks, based on the variety, can be red, yellow, pink, orange, white and of course green. If you like spinach, swiss chard is an excellent substitute and can be grown anytime of the growing season. Swiss chard is in the same plant family as the beet, with large tender leaves that can be eaten raw, stir fried or even grilled with a little cheese rolled up inside making a cheese and swiss chard roll up. Swiss chard can take 50 to 60 days for large plants but can be harvested as small greens at 25 days. Swiss chard does well in containers, raised beds and even traditional ground.

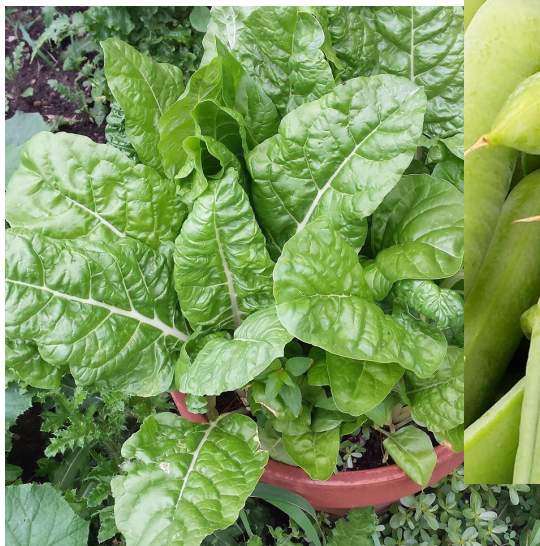
Peas are sensitive to heat, growing them in the fall and spring is the only option. There are several varieties of peas, dwarf, tall, etc, but there are 3 different categories based on what you are looking to do with your peas. Sugar peas or snow peas are flat peas, sweeter and good for stir fry. These are generally harvested in an immature state. Snap peas snap when you break them in half. You can eat the peas and the pods, they are just less sweet. English peas or shelling peas are harvested at maturity and the pods are not edible. These are the ones good for freezing or canning. Peas take 60 to 70 days to reach maturity. Peas are climbers and need to be trellised as their stems are delicate and will snap.

Another cool weather crop you may not be familiar with is bok choy. It is considered an Asian green. Bok choy has a white stalk with tender green leaves. This is excellent in stir fry and soup or even sautéed with butter and garlic. Bok choy is also delicious raw in a summer salad. Bok choy reaches maturity in 60 to 85 days, and it can be harvested early for baby bok choy.

With bok choy and swiss chard, when harvesting, remove the outer leaves first to allow the younger leaves to mature. Do not remove all leaves at once unless you are harvesting the whole plant.



Radishes



Swiss Chard



Peas

Season 5 of The Gardening with Joey and Holly Radio show

Each weekend March - October Joey and Holly come to you via the radio to talk gardening

The radio show is also Available on Podcast replay [here](#)

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Southeast Michigan Sundays 7-8 AM EST on WAAM 1600 AM & 92.7 FM

Utah Saturdays 1-2 PM MST (replay 1-2 PM MST) on KYAH 540 AM

Chippewa Falls, WI Sundays 9-10 AM CST on WOGO 680 AM & 103.1 FM

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania Saturdays 6-7 AM EST (replay Monday 6-7 PM EST) on WMBS 590 AM & 101.1 FM

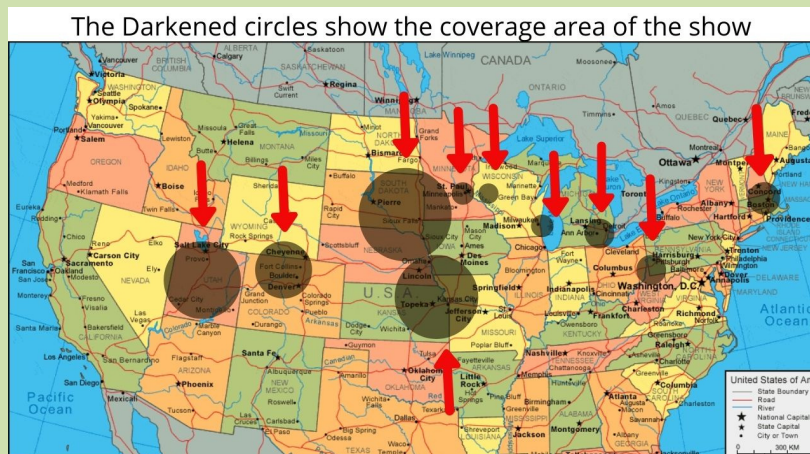
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Kansas City, Missouri Saturdays 6-7 AM CST (replay Sundays 10-11 CST) on KFEQ 680 AM & 107.9 FM

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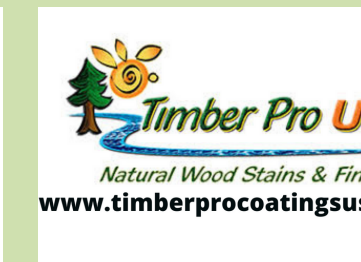
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