



Time to Plant!

Dear Homegrown Gardeners,

It is finally the time we have all been waiting for! After a dreary winter, the world is turning green again and it is time to get our hands in the soil and plant our future bounty. We are so excited for another great season of Homegrown, and we are looking forward to seeing each of you, visiting your gardens, and seeing how productive each of them are!

Over the winter, we have been hard at work preparing materials for the season and getting ready for the very busy summer ahead. We are pleased to announce that we have already installed a number of gardens and are accepting

applications for this season. As always, we will be recruiting fresh faces and installing gardens throughout the summer, so if you know anyone who is interested in joining our community, now is the time to get them involved. We also have a number of great classes scheduled for the summer months and would love to see everyone attend. The class calendar through August is inside this newsletter!

As always, we love to hear from you with questions and comments, so don't be shy — we are here to help out in any way that we can. We hope to see everyone soon and we will be in touch.

Happy gardening!



inside

Reap the nutritional **benefits of peas**

Enrich your soil **by adding compost**

Cook a quick and healthy **chicken and peas recipe**

Discover the best way to **plant tomatoes**

The Homegrown Herald

The Official Newsletter of Homegrown, Phipps' Edible Garden Program

For Your Health

Peas are one of the oldest known and most widely cultivated vegetables — they have been an essential food source for humans throughout history. They are one of the most versatile vegetables, available in numerous varieties that can be prepared in endless ways. They are not only sweet and delicious, but they are also beneficial to our health.



Peas are essential in supporting bone health, fighting anemia and managing diabetes. It is best to plant them in late winter and to harvest them late in May right as your summer crops are going in the ground.

Anemia — If you're feeling fatigue at the end of a long day, try some peas. Peas are loaded with iron, which is an important part of a substance in your red blood cells called hemoglobin that carries oxygen to your lungs.

Bone health — Vitamin K is critical in helping the body absorb calcium. Just one cup of

boiled peas can provide almost half of your daily need. Also present in these tasty seeds are Vitamin B1 and folic acid, which help to prevent osteoporosis.

Diabetes — Peas are an easy way to consume manganese, an important nutrient that your body uses to produce enzymes, which help to turn amino acids into sugar that you need. These enzymes also help to regulate the balance of sugar within the bloodstream. One serving of green peas contains a quarter of your daily manganese need!

Upcoming Events

Homegrown Garden Club programs

Meet other gardeners and learn from guest speakers.

Second Thursday of each month | 6 – 7:30 p.m.
Homewood-Brushton YMCA
7140 Bennett Street

June 8 | Home Composting

Learn how to add nutrients to your garden naturally.

July 13 | Plant Close-Ups

Take a closer look at some of our most popular crops with Hanna from Homewood-Brushton YMCA!

Aug. 10 | Harvesting Techniques

Learn how and when to harvest your favorite vegetables from your garden.

Chicken and Snap Peas

- 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 2 lbs. chicken breast, patted dry
- Salt and pepper
- 3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1/3 cup cider vinegar
- 4 tsp. sugar
- 1/2 tsp. red pepper flakes
- 1/2 lb. snap peas

1 cup fresh basil leaves, torn and divided

1. Preheat oven to 425°. In a large skillet, heat oil over high heat.
2. Season chicken with salt and pepper and cook, skin side down, until deep golden, 8 – 10 mins. Flip chicken and remove pan from heat.
3. Tilt pan slightly and carefully remove fat with a spoon. Return pan to heat and add garlic, vinegar, sugar and red pepper flakes. Bring to a boil, then transfer pan to oven.
4. Bake 17 minutes. Add snap peas and half the basil and bake 5 more minutes. Remove from oven, sprinkle with remaining basil and serve.

Garden Tips



Adding Compost

Adding compost to your garden every season is one of the best ways to ensure proper soil health and give your plants the nutrients they need to grow strong and healthy. Healthy plants will be less susceptible to disease and insect infestation. Take the extra time every fall or spring to top off your bed with a heaping dose of nutrient-rich compost! You can pick up compost at any of the following locations: Grow Pgh Garden Resource Center (147 Putnam St., Larimer; PA 15206), Penn Hills Lawn and Garden (200 Jefferson Rd, Penn Hills, PA 15235) or a home and garden store near you!

Planting Tomatoes

Tomatoes are one of the most popular and prolific vegetables that you can grow in your garden. They are unique because they have the ability to grow roots right out of their stems. This means that when you plant your tomato seedlings, it is best to dig deep and plant about halfway up the stem, removing any leaves that will be buried. Doing this will ensure that you get a strong, healthy plant that can support the weight of their juicy fruit!



Trellising/Staking

Planting isn't the only task for gardeners in the spring. When planting tall crops like tomatoes, and vining crops like cucumbers and pole beans, it is important to support them from the beginning. To avoid damaging sensitive plant roots, stakes and trellises should be added to the garden as soon as seeds and seedlings are planted. This video demonstrates how to make an easy and inexpensive trellis:

<https://youtu.be/oCCx93hEoa8>

Homegrown Hero: Pearl Diggs



could remember. You have to treat your body with care before an issue develops."

The spotlight for this month is on one of our most experienced gardeners, Pearl Diggs. As an 89-year-old Georgia native, Pearl has walked through the sweltering heat of southern pastures, past the segregation signs and dividing lines, and under the apple trees to meditate with the Lord and Mother Earth. While she admits that she had a hard life, Pearl radiates with positive energy and explained that the difficult times made her a good woman: strong and independent. From washing the backs of burn patients (even when she was off the clock) to crocheting blankets for babies with AIDS, Pearl's hands have helped the world in so many ways. It's no surprise that she has a seemingly magical touch when it comes to gardening and can bring any piece of land to life. Growing up on a farm made her into a plant extraordinaire, with tips and tricks for any gardening issue. When asked what her tip was for staying so youthful, she said, "Your life doesn't start when you are 50. It starts the day you

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