

# Readington Community Garden Newsletter

*Share the work, share the harvest! -- Since 2009.*

**March - April 2019, Web Version**

*The Readington Community Garden is a loosely organized collection of nice people interested in growing food and community. You can 'belong' to the community garden any time of the year by just showing up, doing some work, and bringing home some good food. No obligatory fees, timed work requirements, or forms to fill out. Just stop by, grab a hoe/weed/vegetable, and strike up a conversation. Bring the little ones. All ages are welcome! Email [readingtongardens@yahoo.com](mailto:readingtongardens@yahoo.com) to get on the weekly Newsletter email list.*

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** Hello! We're ready to start our 11th growing season!! We'll meet at the garden 10am on Sat 3/23 (weather willing!) to get started. We reconnect with old friends, meet new friends, talk about what we want to grow, start spreading compost, clean up the garden, & prune the apple trees.

**NEW MEMBERS WELCOME** - all skill levels! Join the garden at any time of the season. Any level of involvement is fine -- come every week, every few weeks, or just a few times a season. Kids are VERY welcome! Kids LOVE the Garden! Bring them and teach them where food comes from.

Work gloves and boots are a good idea. We have tools, but feel free to bring yours if you like. Take some good food! If you're not sure what needs to be done or how much veggies to take, ask one of the leaders or another gardener. Notice the birds, trees, plants, soil organisms, and the clouds. Get some fresh air.

**MEETING TIMES:** During the season (March to October) the official meeting time is Saturdays, 10AM to noonish, but people are usually there earlier (9-ish).

**WE ALSO NEED VOLUNTEERS TO WATER THE GARDEN AND TO MOW THE GRASS PATHS BETWEEN THE ROWS DURING THE WEEK.** If you are interested in a Thursday morning work group, email Dan. It's all very loose, so come any Saturday you can or arrange to do a chore on a weekday if you like.

**GARDEN RULES:** There aren't many! Share the work, share the harvest! No attendance taken, no membership fee, no timed work requirements, no exact harvest shares, and no minimum attendance requirement. Just show up whenever you can, do some work, and take home some food. Respect the soil, the plants, and the other gardeners. No herbicides, pesticides, or 'chemical' fertilizers. Have fun. Try not to step on the soil in the veggie rows.

**NO FEES; NO DONATIONS REQUIRED!** Sure, if you're feelin' wealthy, you can contribute for seed & supplies. \$20 is a common donation, but anything down to spare change is great! Checks are fine, made out to 'Dan Allen'. My address is Dan Allen, 163 Stanton Rd, Flemington, NJ 08822.

**WE'RE FAMOUS!** ...or at least recognized as having a community garden model that works pretty well. Here's where you can check us out:

- We're profiled in Michelle Obama's 2012 book *American Grown* (p. 90-91)
- [http://www.nj.com/hunterdon-county-democrat/index.ssf/2014/04/volunteers\\_expected\\_to\\_start\\_p.html#incart\\_river#comments](http://www.nj.com/hunterdon-county-democrat/index.ssf/2014/04/volunteers_expected_to_start_p.html#incart_river#comments)
- [http://www.nj.com/hunterdon-county-democrat/index.ssf/2013/06/simple\\_model\\_yields\\_bountiful.html](http://www.nj.com/hunterdon-county-democrat/index.ssf/2013/06/simple_model_yields_bountiful.html)
- [http://www.nj.com/homegarden/index.ssf/2012/06/american\\_grown\\_readington\\_comm.html](http://www.nj.com/homegarden/index.ssf/2012/06/american_grown_readington_comm.html).

### **WHAT HAS BEEN DONE SO FAR THIS YEAR?**

- **The seeds arrived in early February (beans, beets, carrots, edamame, zucchini, cucumbers, etc.), so we're ready to go!**
- **Early-tomatoes, kale, cabbage, and lettuce were planted in flats in my basement on Feb 16. (I have fluorescent lights down there.) I'll start seedlings there every week & bring them to the garden as they become ready.**
- **Peppers (and more lettuce, etc.) were planted in flats in my basement on March 2.**
- **The compost for 2019 was delivered to the garden in a big pile this past winter. We'll spread it on the garden in late March. -- A huge thanks to Readington Township and Rich Allen for handling the delivery!!**

### **WHAT WE CAN DO SATURDAY MARCH 23 AND IN APRIL:**

- **Discuss what we would like to plant and MAKE PLANS.**
- **Spread compost on the rows. We have many wheelbarrows and shovels at the ready. Many hands makes light work!**
- **Prune apple trees.**
- **Clean up the rows and remove any stray marking stakes.**
- **Start planting the cool season veggies.**
- **We can stand quietly in the garden and celebrate the beauty around us!**

**NOT ON THE WEEKLY EMAIL LIST?** E-mail Dan at [readingtongardens@yahoo.com](mailto:readingtongardens@yahoo.com). You'll receive an updated newsletter every Thursday morning from March through October.

**THE COMMUNITY GARDEN NOW HAS A FACEBOOK PAGE!** <https://www.facebook.com/Readington-Community-Garden-1134197870050697>. Follow it and post any of your photos & comments.

**GARDEN MAP: Rows are constantly rotated and being replanted as produce is harvested but the following scheme was typical in a previous year, to whet our appetites!**

*Starting from the uphill part of the garden:*

Row 17: Strawberries

Row 16: blackberry / sun chokes / blueberry (3) / horseradish / rhubarb / blueberry (8)

Row 15: strawberries / zucchini / cucumbers / rhubarb

Row 14: raspberries

Row 13: asparagus

Row 12: chives, lemon balm, & other herbs / strawberries

Row 11: eggplant / basil / kale / cabbage / dill / edemame / zucchini

Row 10: onions / zucchini

Row 09: onions

Row 08: potatoes

Row 07: potatoes

Row 06: zucchini / chard / spinach / parsley / carrots / radishes / lettuce / cilantro / beans

Row 05: tomatoes / peppers

Row 04: zucchini & squash / cucumbers / lettuce / beets / arugula / cabbage / eggplant / ppepers

Row 03: tomatoes / peppers

Row 02: tomatoes / sweet potatoes

Row 01: lettuce / zucchini / green beans

Row 0: zucchini / Indian squash

Circles outside garden: butternut & delicata squash

Orchard: Chinese chestnut (6 trees), apple (5), pear (3), pie cherry (2), peach (2), English walnut (2), pecan (2), mulberry (2), grapes (5)

#### **THE COMMUNITY GARDEN'S FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

**Carry-over from 2018:** \$683.

**New Purchases:** \$300 (seeds, seed potatoes and onion starts)

**Net Balance:** \$383.

## **OUR LINK AT THE READINGTON TWP**

**WEBSITE:** [readingtontwpnj.gov/community/community-garden](http://readingtontwpnj.gov/community/community-garden)

Also follow updates about us & other neat township stuff at the '**Friends of Green Readington**' Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/GreenReadington>

**THINGS WE NEED FOR THE GARDEN:** We can always use compostable wastes (ex: leaves, grass clippings, manure, etc.). And we can always use more tools -- hoes, shovels, picks, etc. . . and especially wheelbarrows.

**WANT TO LEARN HOW TO GROW FOOD?** Come on by & chat up some experienced gardeners every Saturday at the garden! Send away for Fedco's free catalog at <http://www.fedcoseeds.com/>, as well as Johnny's Seeds informative free catalog at <http://www.johnnyseeds.com/>. Also check out these books: Eliot Coleman's *The New Organic Grower*, Eric Toensmeier's *Paradise Lot*, Peter Bane's *The Permaculture Handbook*, Toby Hemmenway's *Gaia's Garden*, Carol Deppe's *The Resilient Gardener*, and Mark Shepard's *Restoration Agriculture*. See also Suzanne Ashworth's *Seed to Seed*, Nancy Bubel's *Root Cellaring*, Sandor Katz's *The Art of Fermentation*, and Samuel Thayer's excellent wild edible plant series, *Forager's Harvest* and *Nature's Garden*. And certainly check out *every* book by Wendell Berry, Gene Logsdon, and Michael Pollan!

**IT'S A PUBLIC PARK!** The community garden is part of Dobozyński Farm Park, a public, township-owned preserve. It contains one of the trailheads for over 15 miles of connected trails over and near Round Mountain, interesting old farm buildings, a pond, the Open Space Advisory Board's tree nursery, the Recreation Department's activity cottage and several Eagle scout constructed nature demonstration projects. A part time caretaker lives in the apartment attached to the large red barn and raises chickens and a friendly turkey. So despite looking a little like someone's property **IT'S YOUR PARK**. As such, you're welcome to stop by any time during daylight hours to garden, hike on the trails, or just frolic.

### **DIRECTIONS TO GARDEN:**

**Google/MapQuest:** 42 Woodschurch Rd, Flemington, NJ 08822. Visual landmarks: big red barns next to road & big open fields.

**From Flemington:** head north on 523 & go 0.9 miles past Schaefer Farm. Turn left onto Woodschurch Rd. Go 0.9 miles on Woodschurch Rd (note: do NOT turn left onto West Woodschurch). Our driveway is on left (big red barns).

**From Whitehouse:** Head South on 523. Turn right onto 629 North (aka Stanton Rd). Go 0.8 miles on 629 north. Turn left onto Woodschurch Rd. Go 0.9 miles on Woodschurch Rd. Our driveway is on right (big red barns).

**From Stanton General Store:** Head South on 629 (Stanton Rd, towards 523). Go 0.5 miles on 629 south. Turn right onto Woodschurch Rd. Go 0.9 miles on Woodschurch Rd. Our driveway is on right (big red barns).

**From Deer Path Park & YMCA:** Turn right out of park/YMCA driveway onto West Woodschurch Rd. Go 0.8 miles. Turn left onto Woodschurch Rd. Go 0.5 miles on Woodschurch Rd. Our driveway is on left (big red barns.)