



September/October Newsletter 2010

UPDATE FROM THE BIG CHEESE

a.k.a. Andy Eckart, PCG Board President

What a year we are having! I want to celebrate all we have done so far in 2010. This Spring we built more than a dozen new raised beds allowing us to add more gardeners to our ranks. We now have more than 30 gardeners sharing the work and the harvest. We have a well appointed tool shed and increased watering infrastructure. This year we contracted with Kristin Vogel to be our garden education coordinator. Kristin is running our portion of the Lights On program, teaching cooking and preserving classes, has set up a PCG Facebook page, and is distributing PCG newsletters to improve our communication with gardeners and to reach out to others interested in this community project. Renae Ragsdale taught a Parks and Recreation course on kids gardening, introducing kids to the wonders of being a part of what we grow. We built several hundred feet of fencing around the perimeter of the garden to define the garden space and to keep the deer and rabbits out. We have helped to support the Farmers Market and promote local food production. We laid weed barrier plastic and wood chips to keep weeds down and dress up the areas between raised beds. Oh yeah, and then there are the piles of vegetables and flowers we have reaped and shared. To carry on this celebration, we would like to invite everyone to a Harvest Party being held at the garden at noon on Saturday September 25th. This gathering will be an opportunity to gather with other gardeners and garden supporters, share in some of the bounty of the garden, and revel in what this community has done. Check your email or the Facebook page for coming details. Come to the garden early on the 25th and help raise the shade pavilion being donated by Whimpy Wolf Builders. This generous gift will provide relief from the sun in midsummer and a focal place for future events.

Andy Eckart
PCG gardener and board chair



It's time to reap what we have sowed! Grab the kids and come on down to the garden at noon on Saturday, Sept. 25th for some food, games, prizes, music and fun! This is NOT a work party! Bring a dish to pass potluck style, or some fresh veggies from your garden to grill. PCG will provide the meat and buns. Hope to see you there!



Soup-er Harvest time Cooking

Easy to make. Easy to store. Yummy to eat!

Soup is a much underappreciated cuisine. It can be as fancy and complex, or simple and hearty as you like. Soup is also a great way to combine lots of garden fresh vegetables. And, you can store it in canning jars, old yogurt containers or plastic bags in the freezer for an instant lunch or dinner. Soup recipes are also very flexible and forgiving. If you don't have a veggie or herb a recipe calls for, no worries. You can experiment and use what you have on hand, or what you prefer. The basic base for many soups is chopped onions, celery and carrots sautéed in butter (or oil). Then a liquid is added, usually water or a chicken or vegetable stock. (Milk, cream or rue can also be added towards the end to make the soup creamy.) Veggies, herbs, salt and pepper are then added and voila! You can also always puree a soup at the end to give it a thick, baby food like consistency. Potato and squash soups are usually pureed. Here is a simple vegetarian recipe to try! Have fun and experiment!

Vegetable Soup (adapted from *The Enchanted Broccoli Forest* by Mollie Katzen)

1 large potato, scrubbed and diced	3 to 4 medium-sized ripe tomatoes
2 cups chopped onion	1 ½ cups tomato juice
2 cups chopped cabbage	6 medium cloves garlic, minced
½ lb. mushrooms, sliced	1 med. Sized zucchini, diced
1 large celery, minced (or celeriac bulb, chopped)	5 scallions, minced (greens and whites)
1 large carrot, diced	freshly ground black pepper
6 cups of water or vegetable broth	OPTIONAL: small amounts of minced fresh
2 tsp. salt	herbs (thyme, marjoram, basil, dill, parsely etc.)
2 bay leaves	

- 1) In a soup pot or Dutch oven, sauté onions, celery, and carrots in a little oil or butter on medium high heat until onions start to soften. Add cabbage and mushrooms and continue to sauté for about 5 minutes. Add the water, potatoes, salt and bay leaves. Cover and bring to a boil. Lower the heat, and simmer, covered for about 20 minutes.
- 2) Meanwhile, core the tomatoes and gently drop them, whole, into the simmering soup. After about 20 seconds, fish them out with a fork. Pull off their skins, cut them open and squeeze out and discard the seeds. Mince the remaining pulp and add this to the soup, along with the tomato juice. Simmer another 20 minutes.
- 3) Add garlic, zucchini, and scallions and simmer for about 10 minutes more. Season to taste with pepper, and check to adjust salt. Top with fresh herbs.

Variations:

- Many other vegetables will blend in well. Add harder vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower) earlier, and softer vegetables (bell peppers, greens) closer to serving time. Or.....
- Leftover cooked beans, cooked pasta and/or other grains can be added the last 5 – 10 minutes of cooking. Or....
- Diced firm tofu or chicken can be added the last 10 minutes of simmering.

Pushroot Community Garden now has a Facebook page! In addition to our website (pushrootcommunitygarden.com) we have started posting upcoming events, gardening information, frost warnings!, and much more on our Facebook page. If you have a recipe, a great gardening tip, or an opinion or thought to share, become a friend on Facebook and post it on the wall for everyone to see.

LEARN TO MAKE YOUR OWN SAUERKRAUT

OUR LAST COOKING CLASS WILL BE MONDAY, SEPT. 20TH AT 6:00 PM AT THE CARE AND SHARE FOOD BANK. FRED GROENKE WILL BE TEACHING THE CLASS ON HOW TO MAKE SAUERKRAUT. EMAIL KRISTINEVOGEL@GMAIL.COM FOR MORE DETAILS.

Putting your bed to rest, or "What do I do with my garden now??"

After the potatoes have been dug, the winter squash has been picked and the last of the tomatoes have been harvested, there are many options for your garden. Carrots can be thickly mulched and left in the ground under the snow, to be harvested all winter long. Many crops can be planted in October for harvest in the spring. The seeds will lay dormant until early spring. When the snow begins to melt, and temperatures are just over 40* during the day, they will begin to grow. They include: spinach, mustard, turnips, some lettuces, peas and radishes. Another great fall-planted crop that does well in Wyoming is garlic. Although you can plant garlic in the spring, fall-planted garlic will be much larger and have a fuller flavor. Cloves are separated and planted 6-8 inches deep. Spacing between cloves can vary. If you have room, 8-12 inches is good, but you can plant them as close as 4 inches. Don't forget to mulch with straw to protect the bulbs from too frequent freezing and thawing. Cover crops or "green manures" are another great option for fall planting that will improve the quality of your soil. Cover crops are fast growing green plants that can be chopped up and spaded, plowed, or tilled into the soil, adding green organic matter that then composts into humus. Plants of the Legume family also add nitrogen to the soil. Some cover crops can be spaded into your garden and with others it is better to cut off the green tops, add them to the compost pile, and spade only the roots left behind into the soil. Clovers, vetches, cereal rye, oats, wheat, and fava beans are all examples of cover crops. **PCG will be providing cover crop seeds for your plot, free of charge! Stay Tuned!**

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

PCG is currently looking for a few good men or women to serve on the board. This is a volunteer position. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, a monthly meeting during the gardening season. The needs are diverse and the Rewards are endless! Contact Andy at andy@andyeckart.com if interested.



PCG Gear is Available

T-shirts (regular and women's cut), tote bags and hats are still available! Contact Jessie Anderson at (307) 221-3933 or nursinmama@gmail.com for price, size and ordering information.

PCG would like to give a big shout out to all of our supporters and partners in 2010. Thank you for making it such a productive year!

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Wyoming Department of Agriculture
Adventures in Learning
Lights On
Lander Parks and Recreation
The Gated Garden
Popo Agie Conservation District
Nancy Debevoise
Whimpy Wolf Builders
Bob Scholl, Red Desert Design
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