



The Seedling Chronicle



In This Week's Share.....

Summer Squash~ 'Yellow Crookneck'

A light, lemon-yellow variety with tender skin and creamy white flesh. Pick at 5-6" long or smaller for best flavor and tenderness. Very prolific. 50 dtm.

Zucchini~ 'Costata Romanesco'

Distinctive Italian zucchini, prominently ribbed. Medium gray-green, with pale green flecks and ribs. Big, large-leafed bush with only about half the yield of hybrids, but much better tasting; clearly better textured, nutty, and delicious. 52 dtm.

Zucchini~ 'Black Beauty'

Bush type plant produces high yields of straight dark green zucchini squash. The outer surface is very smooth. Best when harvested when squash is 8" long. 60 dtm.

Bachelor's Buttons~ 'Choice Mix'

Classic cornflowers. Blue, pink, red, and white. 1-1 1/2" blooms. Upright plants produce abundantly. Tolerates poor soil of medium fertility. Great edible flower for decorating desserts and salads. **Like many edible flowers, only the petals are actually edible. Avoid eating the pollen producing parts of flowers, especially if you have allergies.**

Violets~ 'Helen Mount'

The true "Johnny-Jump-Up". Also known as Hearts-Ease. 1-2" tricolor flowers in purple, yellow, and white. Abundant blooms make dainty garnishes. 60-70 dtm.

Keeping a Garden Journal

The gardening season is well underway and now is a great time to start your garden journal. Garden journals serve a variety of purposes. Your journal can be a comprehensive reference tool for you to use in planning next year's garden, or it can be a simple memory book for you to look back on.

Good things to include in a garden journal are:

- ✦ Planting dates for seeds and plants.
- ✦ Source and variety information for seeds and plants.

- ✦ Weather information such as frost dates, rainfall and temperatures
- ✦ Plant information such as date emerging in spring, appearance of blooms, and harvest.
- ✦ Date and type of fertilizer used, if applicable.
- ✦ Wildlife and insect observations
- ✦ Garden plan (can be used to figure out next year's crop rotation)
- ✦ General observations about what worked and what didn't work

	Spacing Requirements	Sun Requirements
Bachelor's Buttons	6-9 inches	Full Sun to Partial Shade
Violets	6-9 inches	Partial Shade
Summer Squash	36 inches	Full Sun

A Note on Pollination

Bees are the principal means by which pollen is transferred from the male to female flowers of your cucurbits. When no bees are present in the garden or the bee population is too low for a good fruit set, the dedicated gardener can pollinate by hand. The pollen is yellow in color and produced on the anther in the center of the male flower. You can use a small paintbrush to transfer the

pollen, or you can break-off a male flower, remove its petals, and roll the pollen onto the stigma in the center of the female flower. Remember, flowers open early in the morning and are receptive for one day only.

Also, male flowers are generally the first to appear on your plants without any sight of a female flowers. There is nothing you can do

Though there are no frosts in the foreseeable future, warm weather plants can always benefit from a little additional heat.

Wall o' Water~ a product consisting of a series of plastic cells that you fill with water. The water absorbs heat during the day and releases it slowly throughout the night.

Cloche~ an old-fashioned way to provide protection to young plants. Cloches were traditionally glass jars inverted over plants to protect them from cold weather. You can use gallon milk jugs with the bottoms cut off.

Floating Row Cover~ a very light-weight material (usually spun polypropylene) that is placed directly over crops in order to protect them from unfavorable conditions.



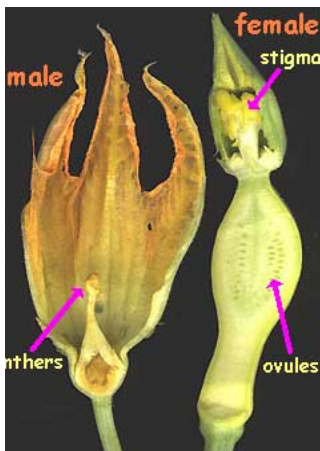
about this. Just be patient and eventually a female flower will appear!



Grilled Zucchini and Summer Squash Recipe

2 zucchini (about 1 pound)
2 yellow squash (about 1 pound)
2 yellow bell peppers, seeds and ribs removed
1/4 cup olive oil
Salt and pepper
1/4 cup thinly sliced fresh basil

Heat grill to medium. Slice zucchini and squash 1/2 inch thick diagonally. Quarter bell peppers.
In a large bowl, toss vegetables with oil; season with salt and pepper.
Grill vegetables until tender, 6 to 8 minutes per side.
Return vegetables to bowl; toss with basil.



Squash blossoms are edible flowers, raw or cooked. Both summer and winter squash blossoms can be battered and fried in a little oil for a wonderful taste sensation. Harvest only the male blossoms unless the goal is to reduce production. Male blossoms are easily distinguished from the female blossoms. The stem of the male blossom is thin and trim. The stem of the female blossom is very thick. At the base of the female flower below the petals is a small bulge, which is the developing squash. Always leave a few male blossoms on the vine for pollination purposes. Use pruning shears or a sharp knife to cut squash blossoms at midday when the petals are open. The flowers can be stored for a few hours or up to 1-2 days.

Summer Fertilization

As your plants grow larger and the summer progresses, you might want to think about using a liquid organic fertilizer (such as fish emulsion or seaweed extract) to keep them strong and healthy. Giving crops an extra boost of fertilizer is called side-dressing and it helps them grow evenly and smoothly and deliver better harvests. Side-dressing is especially important in a newer garden, where you haven't had years to build up your organic matter content.

All vegetable plants differ on the amount of food they

require, as well as when they require it. Many vegetable crops benefit from additional nitrogen after they have made considerable growth, started to flower, or set their first fruits. Too much nitrogen before this time will delay maturity and reduce flowering and yields. Being careful not to over-fertilize is important. Get to know the crops that you're growing and which nutrients they require to make them most productive.

Try to follow these general guidelines for summer fertilization to keep your plants healthy and happy!

The Rambling Cucurbits

The summer squash and zucchini you received today are part of the cucurbit family. Other members of this family that you will be given include cucumbers, winter squash and pumpkins.

Cucurbits are heat loving plants and thus are traditionally planted in raised mounds called hills. They grow best this way because the sun warms the elevated ground, which has more surface area than a flat expanse of soil.

Drip irrigation is the most efficient way to water

cucurbits because they need a constant supply of moisture. Such a system also helps prevent foliage disease. Because cucumbers plants are smaller than those of other cucurbits, they can be grown closer together. One of the best ways to grow vining cucumbers is to train them up a trellis or tomato cage. Squash and zucchini, however, need several feet of space around them to grow.

Squash and cucumbers develop very rapidly after pollination and are often picked when they are too large or over mature. They should be harvested when

Tomatoes and Peppers~ Apply when you see the first blossoms appear.

Zucchini and Squash~ Side-dress when they start to blossom.

Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage~ Apply the side-dressing when the heads start to form.

Vine Crops (Pumpkins, Cucumbers, etc)~ Side dress the plants just before they start to run.

Cauliflower~ When the leaves are full size.

Onions~ When 6-8 inches tall and every 2-3 weeks after until bulbs starts to expand.

Leafy greens~ Apply every 2-3 weeks.

small and tender for best quality. Go over the plants every 1-2 days. Picking the fruits regularly will keep the plants producing heavily.

Winter squash should be allowed to ripen fully on the vine before picking. Wait until the skin is hard and you can't pierce it with your fingernail and the stem is tough and woody. The same goes for pumpkins. Watch for their color to become rich as they mature.

