HORTICULTURE NEWS

It’s been a great spring for cool-season gardens. I picked a lot of spinach, lettuce, asparagus, strawberries, snow peas, kale, cilantro and radishes out of my garden and have preserved a lot of it for use during the winter. Our baby chicks have really grown since we got them in March and should start laying in a couple of months. All of my chickens have been enjoying the excess produce and scraps from the garden.

Some diseases to be aware of at this time are Septoria Leaf Spot and Early Blight on tomatoes. Both are caused by fungus and cause the lower leaves of the plant to turn yellow with brown spots or lesions. Be sure you have your plants staked or caged, mulched with straw, and take off any leaves that touch the ground. There is a lot of information and pictures of these diseases online, or call me and I will mail you information.

Black Rot is showing up in grapes right now. It appears as black spots on your clusters of grapes. Use a product containing the active ingredient myclobutanil. You may also see other fruit diseases at this time such as fireblight, cedar-apple rust and apple scab.

Anyone with cole crops is probably seeing holes in the leaves. Cabbage loopers and cabbage worms love to feed on broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and other cruciferous vegetables. I have not seen the spotted wing drosophila yet, but it has been found in Missouri. So, watch for it closely in ripening raspberries. I gave instructions in a previous issue on how to make a monitoring trap.

Pine trees are still dying of Pine Wilt. We are still seeing winter damage on various trees and shrubs. Emerald Ash borer is concerning homeowners, but it still has not been found in northeast Missouri. Some people have been finding very large, green beetles called caterpillar hunters. These are beneficial and not harmful, so please don't kill them. Wolf spiders have also been found. They are not venomous, so no need to kill them. If you leave them alone, they will leave you alone. Honeybees have been found in swarms. Contact exterminators or try to find someone local that can remove them from yard trees, walls in homes, etc. Also, remember that black snakes and garter snakes are beneficial, so do not kill them either. They are probably more scared of you than you are of them and usually slither away quickly.

It is fair time all across the country, and it’s a great way to show what you have grown in your gardens. Whether you have flowers, potted plants, fruits or vegetables, you can show any of them at a county fair. Most county fairs have an open division for adult exhibits. Fair books are available at most county extension centers, or you can call the extension center if you have any questions about exhibiting. Support your local fair-exhibit your produce and flowers!
INTEREST IN LOCAL FOOD CAUSING A STIR, CHANGING HABITS

One hundred years ago, nearly half of Americans lived on farms, and most of the food bought and eaten was produced locally. For many foods, availability was dictated by the growing season. Today, only about one percent of Americans live on working farms, and food routinely travels many miles before it reaches our local markets. Consumer demand for local food has skyrocketed over the last few years according to Dr. Pam Duitsman, a nutrition and health specialist with University of Missouri Extension.

“A variety of studies have looked into the reasons for the growing demand for local foods. The studies have found the primary things driving demand for local food are: Quality and freshness, support for the local economy, nutritional value, knowledge of where the food came from and the growing methods, effects on the environment, and support for local farmers.” Many shoppers also say the taste of local food is preferred and that the food is fresher and often has been allowed to ripen fully prior to harvesting. “While local products generally have a higher cost, studies have shown that quality, nutrition, and environmental concerns increase the consumer’s willingness to pay.”

The National Restaurant Association surveyed 1,300 top chefs and reported that the top trends for 2014 focus on local sourcing of food, environmental sustainability and nutrition. “The association noted that this trend is more than a temporary fad—increasingly our society is shifting toward a demand for locally grown food. Government and non-profit groups, including food assistance programs, have recognized the demand for local food and are increasing their support. For instance, USDA is providing education and grant funds for communities in finding ways to support farm-to-institution procurement of local foods.”

This can sometimes be a challenge since local production may not be able to supply large markets like hospital systems, schools, grocers, and businesses that may prefer to purchase local food. USDA and other government groups are also interested in policies that will promote local food markets, provide incentives for low-income consumers, and help communities form local food policy councils—which provide forums for interested community partners.

Research indicates that thriving local food systems help improve the quality of food and help provide sufficient access to healthy food for those whose food dollar is stretched. “One of the most beneficial aspects of the local food movement is that it allows us to develop a greater connection to our food, and to the people who raise and grow it. We benefit from knowing what we are eating and where it came from. It is also good to choose whole food rather than what comes in a box. This process supports social, psychological and physically healthy behaviors for many people.”

Many groups in Missouri communities are cropping up to build community and school gardens. Farmers markets are multiplying, and CSA’s (community supported agriculture organizations) are increasing. In 1986, there were two CSA operations in the United States. In 2007, this number was closer to 12,000 according to USDA. Tens of thousands of families now purchase food through CSAs.

“If you are interested in becoming involved in the local food movement, check out your local farmer’s markets, and investigate what CSA’s might be operating near you. Plant a garden, or get involved in a school or community garden. These projects may be worthwhile to you as an individual and provide benefits to the community where you live.”

SOURCE: Dr. Pam Duitsman, nutrition and health specialist, Greene County
MONARCH WAY STATION PROGRAM

Each fall, hundreds of millions of monarch butterflies migrate from the United States and Canada to overwintering areas in Mexico and California where they wait out the winter until conditions favor a return flight in the spring. The monarch migration is truly one of the world’s greatest natural wonders, yet it is threatened by habitat loss in North America - at the overwintering sites and throughout the spring and summer breeding range as well.

Monarch Waystation Habitats. Monarch Waystations are places that provide resources necessary for monarchs to produce successive generations and sustain their migration. Without milkweeds throughout their spring and summer breeding areas in North America, monarchs would not be able to produce the successive generations that culminate in the migration each fall. Similarly, without nectar from flowers these fall migratory monarch butterflies would be unable to make their long journey to overwintering grounds in Mexico. The need for host plants for larvae and energy sources for adults applies to all monarch and butterfly populations around the world.

Why We Are Concerned. Milkweeds and nectar sources are declining due to development and the widespread use of herbicides in croplands, pastures and roadsides. Because 90% of all milkweed/monarch habitats occur within the agricultural landscape, farm practices have the potential to strongly influence monarch populations.

Development. Development (subdivisions, factories, shopping centers, etc.) in the U.S. is consuming habitats for monarchs and other wildlife at a rate of 6,000 acres per day - that's 2.2 million acres each year, the area of Delaware and Rhode Island combined!

Genetically Modified Crops. Widespread adoption of herbicide-resistant corn and soybeans has resulted in the loss of more than 80 million acres of monarch habitat in recent years. The planting of these crops genetically modified to resist the non-selective systemic herbicide glyphosate (Roundup®) allows growers to spray fields with this herbicide instead of tilling to control weeds. Milkweeds survive tilling but not the repeated use of glyphosate. This habitat loss is significant since these croplands represent more than 30% of the summer breeding area for monarchs.

Roadside Management. The use of herbicides and frequent mowing along roadsides has converted much of this habitat to grasslands - a habitat generally lacking in food and shelter for wildlife. Although some states have started to increase the diversity of plantings along roadsides, including milkweeds, these programs are small. Unfortunately, the remaining milkweed habitats in pastures, hayfields, edges of forests, grasslands, native prairies, and urban areas are not sufficient to sustain the large monarch populations seen in the 1990s. Monarchs need our help.

What You Can Do. To offset the loss of milkweeds and nectar sources we need to create, conserve, and protect milkweed/monarch habitats. We need you to help us and help monarchs by creating "Monarch Waystations" (monarch habitats) in home gardens, at schools, businesses, parks, zoos, nature centers, along roadsides, and on other unused plots of land. Without a major effort to restore milkweeds to as many locations as possible, the monarch population is certain to decline to extremely low levels.

The Value of Monarch Waystations. By creating and maintaining a Monarch Waystation you are contributing to monarch conservation, an effort that will help assure the preservation of the species and the continuation of the spectacular monarch migration phenomenon.

I want to thank Kirksville Master Gardener Dan Getman for bringing awareness to this issue and creating habitat for monarchs and encouraging others to do so.

**JULY GARDENING TIPS**

**Ornamentals**
- Continue to pinch mums until mid-July. Pinching after this may delay flowering.
- Deadhead perennials (remove dead flowers) that have finished blooming.
- Prune climbing roses and rambler roses after bloom.
- Spider mites may be a problem during hot, dry weather. Leaves will become speckled above and yellowed below. Evergreen needles appear dull gray-green to yellow or brown.
- Water newly planted trees and shrubs thoroughly at least once a week.
- Fertilize trees and shrubs by July 4. Late fertilizing may cause lush growth that is more prone to winter kill.
- Black Spot may be a problem on roses. Remove and pick up infected leaves and spray fungicides as needed.
- Powdery mildew may be found on lilacs. It is rarely harmful and shrubs grown in full sun are less susceptible.
- Divide irises now.

**Vegetables**
- Blossom end rot of tomatoes and peppers may become a problem.
- Maintain soil moisture and do not let soils dry out. Place a layer of mulch 2-3 inches thick around plants.
- Keep weeding! Prevent weeds from going to seed.
- Dig potatoes when the tops die. Plant fall potatoes by July 15th.
- Harvest onion and garlic when the tops turn brown.
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**Fruit**
- Protect grapes from birds!
- Prune out old fruiting canes of raspberries after harvest is complete.
- Apply second spray to trunks of peach trees for peach borers.
- Early peach varieties ripen now.
- Blackberries will begin to ripen soon.

**Turf**
- Water lawn frequently enough to prevent wilting. Early morning irrigation allows turf to dry before nightfall and will reduce the chance of disease.
- Monitor lawns for newly hatched white grubs. If damage is occurring, apply appropriate controls, following product label directions.

-Missouri Botanical Garden-