Week thirteen has arrived!

In case you didn't get enough squash last week, make sure to check out the delicata squash!

Pumpkins will be at the farm stand next week, so make sure to pick up a few for the whole family.
Student Gardens Updates

September 4, 2014 (Week Thirteen)

Weekly Produce
Solo Shares
Fennel
Delicata Squash
Green Onion
Lettuce
Eggplant
Tomatoes
Potatoes
Hot Peppers
Medium Shares
Kohlrabi
Summer Squash
Colored Peppers
Full Shares
Okra
Farm fresh eggs delivered for $4.00 a dozen!
This week’s fruit shares receive apples!

My Garden, the Social Paradigm
Garth Woodruff

Two landscape designers living in the same house creates a fascinating dilemma. After owning a few homes now, I have noted two consistencies. The first is that we can’t agree on any personal landscape plant or plan. Secondly, the ‘shoemaker’s shoes’ syndrome is simply doubled because there are two of us. This data results in being very, very slow to get any yard work done. So, now that we have lived in our new home over a year, with no landscape to speak of, we are ready to start placing our first green treasures. On a kick to incorporate food into my ornamental yard earlier this season (grow food not lawns), I brought home a flat of strawberries to use as a ground cover; which then sat in pots for entirely too long on my front porch. They did get planted even though my wife didn’t think they would work. And in the wrong place, because I had preconceived ideas that I chose not to share until it was too late. So, we moved them and they sat neglected for the rest of the summer in a third home. A week or so ago we got on a little kick and jump-started some real planting. Purchasing some Home Depot cast-offs at 50% the price, we renewed our vows and soon found our selves on the same page. Plants have started flowing into our landscape. Also, emails have gone out to contacts that can acquire this material and we are digging and watering on a regular basis.

I don’t know if this happens to the rest of you: I was watering some of these new babies on Sunday when I found myself lost in extremely deep thought. Unlike many, who, while in one of these silly mindless moments, save the damsel in distress or win the race at the last second, crowd rising up into a massive cheer… I fall into philosopher. I’m staring down at a wee strawberry “groundcover” and am swept back to an odd morning about a month ago. I was speaking to a local group about our Mobile Farmers Market. First, sharing the good news of spending money at local farms and stores. We then provided that fantastic food, along with education, to a segment of our society who, for one reason or another, hasn’t the same access or finances to acquire healthy options. It wasn’t going over very well. Curmudgeons were shifting in their chairs and starting to look at me as if I were food.
My Garden, the Social Paradigm
Continued...

I picked up the tempo and told myself, “this is good stuff, sell it Garth!” To which I then added defining facts like:

The USA, the wealthiest country in the history of the world, has 4% of its population living on two dollars a day. That’s about 25% of the population who lives under the poverty level. It may not seem like a lot but it calculates out to 12,752,099 people in America living on two dollars a day and over 50 million living in poverty. American farmers in 2011 sold 153 billion dollars of livestock for food. Equally, the estimated medical cost of obesity related diseases were 147 billion. These are non-communicable disease such as heart disease, stroke, type II diabetes and certain cancer (Center of Disease Control and Prevention) that can be preventable through diet. I added that this is an education and access issue. The USDA has identified these Food Deserts, the population segments and the barriers creating difficulty for them to eat well and the fact that education and access directly correlate to that 147 billion dollar price tag on obesity. I assured them that our program is combating these same issues with wisely placed government money. We make it easy for a “bridge card” (food stamps) user to be able to make decisions about their health. They needn’t buy bagged chips from the corner store when they can use the bridge card at our stand, which sells fresh local fruits and vegetables.

“This sounds like Socialism,” snirks one listener close by. No, it wasn’t looking good for me. I had to think fast. “Do I run? Are they really going to throw me into the St. Joe River or kill me if I can swim?” For a split second I was wondering if I would taste okay with syrup or if they would just eat me raw. So, to my rebut, I dropped the stats and employed common sense. “A rising tide floats all boats,” I say. Little did I realize at the time that that was a JFK quote. No wonder the man closest to me snapped his head so hard he had to adjust his toupee. “If we support the segments of our local society with local products many things happen,” I say. “Healthy people are healthy workers, they contribute back to the tax base. When you spend a dollar locally it statistically gets spent seven more times in the name community. We are selling local food that’s supporting the local farmer. In turn, groups who need the help are put on the mend to later contribute back to our community.” They weren’t biting.

So, while I watered my strawberries I pondered. One strawberry was neglected for the last three months. In the last two weeks we added competition all around it with new plants; nutrients are being stolen, sun is being choked out, and more. But they look better than ever! All this competition was also bringing in benefit. We never watered our plants over the summer; we didn’t give them any attention at all. Now, because the competition everything was getting water. When life gets better for those around us in one way or another, life gets better for us all.

My strawberries were a perfect example of how and why feeding those who don’t have access to food will in some way come around to benefit the community as a whole. Of the 1,484,343 Michiganders now living under the poverty level, scraping to feed the children they dearly love, the chance to buy healthy food vs. packaged products is a game changer. Who can honestly argue with that? And how can this not benefit us all in the long run?

Delicata Creamy Squash Soup
Allrecipes.com

INGREDIENTS
- 1 delicata squash, halved lengthwise and seeded
- 3/8 onion, chopped
- 1 cup and 3 tbsp. vegetable broth
- 1/2 cup and 1 tbsp. heavy whipping cream
- 2-1/2 tsp. butter
- Salt to taste
- Ground black pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS
STEP 1 Preheat oven to 325 degrees F (165 degrees C). Place the squash, cut sides down, in a baking dish. Add 1/8-inch water in baking dish, cover with foil and bake 50-55 minutes or until tender, Cool.
STEP 2 In a large saucepan, melt butter. Add onion and cook over low heat, stirring occasionally until onion is softened but not brown.
STEP 3 Scrape the squash out of the flesh and add to onions. Add the stock and heavy cream. Cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, about 25 minutes.
STEP 4 Puree the soup in a blender or food processor. Season with salt and pepper to taste and serve.

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