

# FALL VEGETABLE PLANTING

Luisa and Jesse Walden

September 8, 2020 8pm – 9pm

September 12, 2020 12pm – 1pm

City of Albany Recreation & Community Services Department

Berkeley Garden Club

# Fall and Winter Vegetable Gardens

Hi,

We are Jesse and Luisa Walden and we want to share with you the vegetables and fruits that we have had success with planted in the fall.

We will talk about how we start our plants from seeds or in some cases why nursery starts are preferable and which varieties are good for growing in our San Francisco Bay Area.

Our mantra is something there is that does not love an empty hole, so find a hole & fill it!

Our garden space is not very big, but we try to maximize every space we have. The narrow strip along our driveway has citrus as the main landscaping – Improved Meyer Lemon, Bearss Lime (far right), mandarins and 2 very productive Blueberry bushes (far left). The edging is kitchen herbs, especially Lemon Thyme which is very pretty, usually backed by lettuce.



The vegetable garden mixed in with permanent plantings can still be an attractive place.

Whenever possible we paint our inexpensive tee-pees (8' long 1" dowels) and trellises from Home Depot bright colors to add a playful touch to the garden.



Payback!



# Payback for later

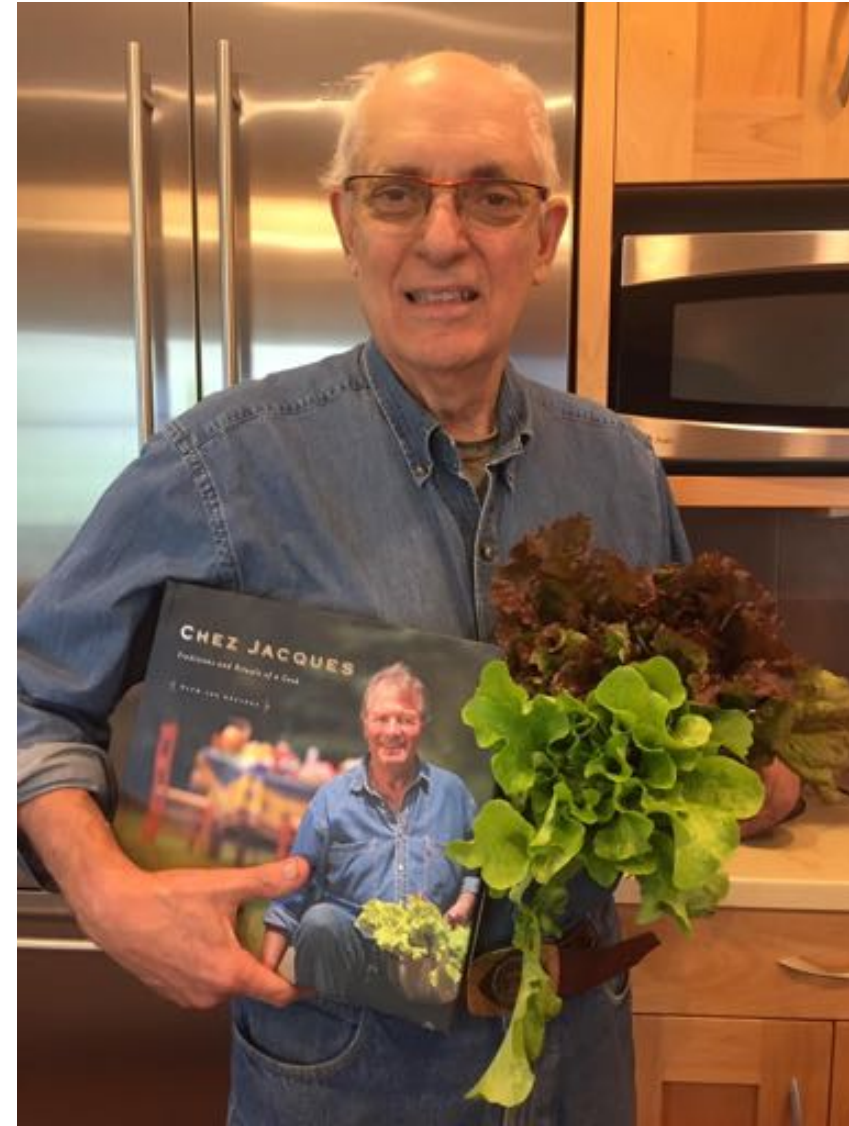


# Keep Records



Now that summer is over,  
let's keep the bounty coming!

Here is Jesse doing his best  
Jacques Pepin imitation





# The Year-Round Bounty

Here in the Bay Area we can garden for 12 months a year, although not so much fun this week!

In most parts of the country in February people are shoveling snow while we are harvesting fresh escarole and Brussel sprouts.



We do need to plan and prepare for our various seasons and their bounty



# The fall garden in the Bay Area

- The building blocks of the vegetable garden – soil, water and light
- Seeds and plants –
  - Seeds in the ground
  - Seeds started indoors
  - Plants from the nursery
- What to plant now
- Information about individual plants
- Some resources
- Questions

# Soil – Water – Light

**Soil** – good garden dirt should be

- Loose enough to poke your finger in
- Full of organic material and worms
- Well draining, water should not stand on the surface for a long time
- Not compacted - don't step on it
- Neutral to slightly acid, the pH about 6.5 to 7. If you can, test the soil every year or two. Test kits and meters are available at most nurseries.
- Check your plants. Some need a higher or lower pH to use available soil nutrients



# Soil – Water – Light

## *How to improve your soil*

- Add compost every time you plant
- Top dress as the plants grow. Add some compost around the plant about an inch or 2 away from stem.
- Use high quality weed free compost
  - American Soil – Walt Whitman Blend
- Mulch to keep weeds down, moisture in and protect the soil surface
  - American soil – ¼ inch fir bark



# Soil – Water – Light

## *Water*

- Prevent new seedlings from drying out!
- Even water promotes even growth
- Have a simple drip irrigation system to assure even watering
- Add an automatic timer
- Don't count on rain



# Soil – Water – Light

- **Light:** Know your garden

Where are the buildings, trees, and other sun blocks in the fall and winter?

- Partial sun vegetables generally need 4 to 6 hours of sun.
- Light shade vegetables need about 2 to 4 hours of sun.
- How do you know how much light your vegetable need? Look them up on line, don't guess



# Seeds and Plants: Starting from seeds or buying plants from the nursery?

- ***Seeds in the ground***

- Loosen the first inch or 2 of soil
- Make a shallow trench
- Plant seeds at a depth of 4 times their size in the trench a few inches apart
- Cover with fine soil and press down gently so the soil is in contact with the seed
- Gently water regularly until the seedlings are up
- Snip to thin, don't pull
- Check germination time for your variety
- Essential method for starting root crops



\*The advantages of seeds are availability of more varieties and, best of all, the ability to trade seeds with your gardening buddies!

# Seeds and Plants

- Starting Seeds indoors
  - Having plants ready to plant can save weeks
  - Avoids empty garden space
  - Some seeds require special treatment, temperature or may take a long time to germinate



Some of our 6 packs almost ready for planting



Starting seeds indoors need not be difficult or very time consuming. The basic pieces are light, heat, water, some soil and containers.



Seed Tray



Plant Light



Bottom Heat

This is how I do it. It may not be the most elegant set-up, but it works well, was not very costly and was pretty easy to set-up.

I used 2 x 4's and scrap ply to build 2 tiers.

I hung grow lights above each level and heating pads on the bottom controlled by timers.

You can use a corner of the basement, the back of the garage, an enclosed porch or a spot in the house.

A one tier set-up on a long table would be even simpler.

Suspend some lights over the surface. Have an electric outlet for the heating pad and lights. A timer is nice too.

The returns will justify the effort!



Here you see Jesse's set-up for starting plants indoors

# Seeds and Plants

- Soak Jiffy Plugs\* until they expand to full size and keep seeds moist
- Supply bottom heat. I use purchased heating mats.
- Supply light to seedlings after germination
- You can give the roots more space later by later transfer plugs to 6 packs
- Keep them under lights
- Harden the plants off for a week before putting into ground by gradually acclimating them to outside conditions



Google seed variety to determine its requirements

\*Jiffy Plugs can be planted directly in the ground thus minimizing transplant shock



Grow lights, electric heating pad available on-line

These are 12" LED units

The fluorescent fixtures are 2 feet long

# Transplanting starts



Seedlings a few weeks after planting seeds

Escarole, lettuce and chard in the garden



\*Always have plants ready to go into empty spaces

# This morning's transplants



- Kale and salad greens

# Seeds and Plants

Buy organic 6 packs or 4" pots from the nursery



- Can save weeks
- Someone else does the work
- Control over placement in the garden
- Best for difficult plants  
but
- Higher cost per plant
- Less selection than starting from seed packs



# Grow Bags

- Good choice where space is limited
- Available in different sizes – we use 10 gallon
- Great for root crops where loose soil is a must
- Useful for crop rotation
- Last multiple seasons



Compact “Sunrise Sauce Patio”: ideal for bags

# Fertilizers and soil amendments

- The summer growing season has used up many soil nutrients
- Fertilize regularly – organic fertilizers are slower acting [weakly bi-weekly]
- Top dress with compost
- Winter rains wash nutrients out. Replace them for happier plants.
- General purpose organic fertilizer
  - Espoma Garden-tone 3-4-4
  - Jobe's Granular Fertilizer 4-4-4
  - EB Stone Tomato & Vegetable 4-5-3
- Fertilizer for root crops
  - More phosphorous and potassium
- Fertilizer for leaf crops
  - Generally more nitrogen
- Fish Emulsion
  - Minerals and trace elements
- Acid Loving Plants fertilizer
- Citrus Food
- Container Plants
  - Maxsea
- Oyster meal for calcium where you will plant next year's tomatoes



# What to plant

- Fall planting: Shorter and cooler days
- Microclimates: Cooler and foggy or warmer and sunny in your garden?
- What do you want to eat? Don't grow stuff you and your family hate!
- What is available? Seeds or 6 packs?
- Try new, unusual or expensive things.

# Late Summer & Fall: August - November

## Plant Direct

Arugula	Mustard
Beets	Onion sets
Cabbage	Peas
Cauliflower	Potato
Carrots	Radish
Chard	Spinach
Endive	Turnips
Kale	Fava Beans*
Lettuce	

## Start Seeds Indoors

Arugula	Cabbage
Bok	Endive
Choy	Kale
Broccoli	Lettuce
Brussels	Mustard
Sprouts	Spinach
Chard	

## Buy Plants at Nursery

Broccoli
Brussel Sprouts
Cabbage
Cauliflower
Kale
Parsley
Spinach

\*Fall Fava beans are good eating in the spring and help enrich the soil as a cover crop.

# Arugula –(Rocket) It's never a bad time to plant arugula!



Cool weather is best

Edible flowers

Part sun/shade

Consistent water

Self sows



Salad



Pesto

# Beets

Roots, Greens & Sprouts



Presoak seeds 24 hours

Direct sow ½" deep

"Snip" greens to thin"



Microgreens



Bull's Blood Beets

\*Beautiful with Scarlet Runner Beans in the spring

# Cauliflower



White varieties should be blanched to maintain color (tie leaves over) and mild flavor  
1 – 2 weeks before harvesting



50 – 100 days  
Needs fertilizer  
Can be challenging



Roasted

# Carrots — Lots of heirloom choices

- Direct sow
- Must have loose soil
- Even water



Can be raised in Grow Bags



Roasted carrots

# Chard

Garden art: Red, green or multi-colored chard



Sauteed with lemon & garlic

# Chicories: radicchio, curly endive, escarole



Eros OG Escarole: Johnny Seeds

Escarole for  
salads and soups



Radicchio



# Kale – easy and versatile green for cooler weather



Great for sautés, salad or pesto



Tuscan Lacinato



Red Russian

For Powdery Mildew, try a home-made spray:

2 tsps baking soda

2 Tbls horticultural oil

3 drops dish liquid

1 gallon water

Mix well. Spray weekly to stop spread of mildew.

# Lettuce

- Loose leaf is faster in cool season
- Romaine is heartiest:  
Flashy Trout Back in the foreground  
(always tender and delicious)



# Mizuna

- A spicy Asian green
- Easy to grow year-round
- Adds pizzazz to mixed salads, stir fries and soups



Mizuna and cauliflower salad



# Mustard Greens

- Prolific and so pretty in the cool weather garden
- Sow every few weeks



Giant Red

Sautéed mustard with garlic and lemon

# Sugar Snap Peas



# Snow Peas



Direct seed 1"-2" deep, 2" apart or start indoors.

Put supports in early - 3' tall for bush varieties, 6'-8' for pole peas.

The trellis gives vertical and horizontal support (chicken wire or nylon mesh – 6" maximum)

Fertilize very lightly – they are a legume and will fix their own nitrogen.

# Onion sets

- Put in all the time, everywhere!  
(except near peas, beans & asparagus)
- Great pest deterrent
- Companion to lettuce, spinach & parsnips



# Potatoes — Don't be shy, grow your fries!

- Buy certified seed potatoes
- Plant in ground, boxes or grow bags
- Need cool temperature soil, prefer acid soil
- Best in loose, well-drained soil
- Plant in fall for spring new potatoes
- See Berkeley Hort website for growing tips\*



Plant small potatoes whole

Cut larger pieces with 2-3 eyes each



\*<https://berkeleyhort.com/how-to/growing-potatoes/>

# Radishes

- Fast growing in cool weather
- Great fillers with almost everything  
(avoid potatoes)
- Tops make edible greens
- Harvest when tops pop out and are 1" across
- Try growing in egg crates, cut sections apart and pop each in the ground



French Breakfast



# Spinach

- Direct sow in cool weather  
Will bolt\* in warm weather  
(\*begins to produce seeds before harvest)
- Sow every few weeks
- Protect from snails & slugs  
(try cardboard collars from toilet tissue  
or paper towel roll), bottomless plastic cups



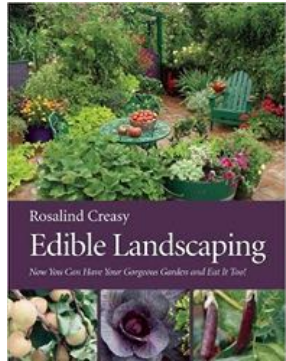
# Turnips

- Fast and reliable
- Do well near carrots and radishes
- Tolerate some shade
- Sow every 2 weeks all winter  
for tops & roots



Purple Prince turnips

# Resources



## Edible Landscaping Rosalind Creasy 2010

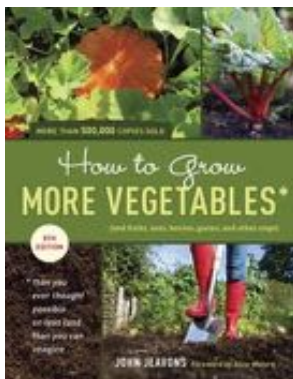
Eat your yard! Great resource for artful landscaping with edibles



## Golden Gate Gardening

Pam Peirce

The bible of vegetable gardening in the San Francisco Bay Area



## How to Grow More Vegetables John Jeavons 2017

The granddaddy of organic gardening on a small but intensive scale. Great charts.

## Local Nurseries

## Seed Companies

Baker Creek

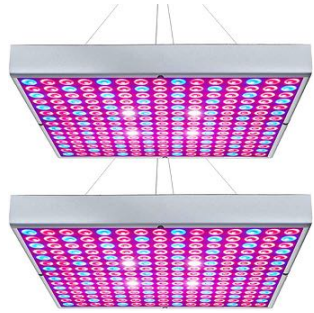
Johnny's Seeds

Renee's Seeds

## Local Garden Club

Berkeley Garden Club

# Resources: Most products are available on-line



LED Plant Lights



Jiffy plugs



Gopher Basket  
Use 5 gal for  
tomatoes



Grow Bags  
Available in  
many sizes  
We use 10 gal.



2 ft Florescent Plant Lights



Plant Heating Mat

# Resources: Most products are available on-line



5 foot Greenhouse



Seed Tray and Cover Kit



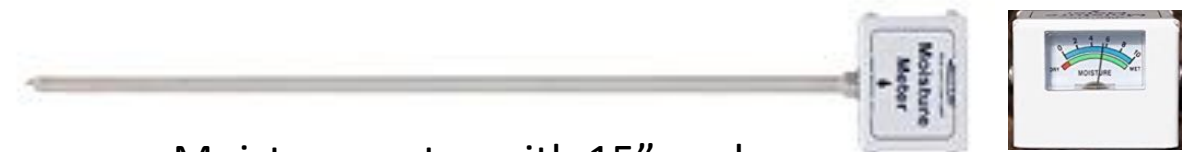
Plant Stand w/ Light



Drip Irrigation Kit



3 in 1 Meter  
Moisture, pH,  
and Light



Moisture meter with 15" probe