

School Garden - Summer Maintenance Guide 2019



Thanks for helping the school garden continue to grow and thrive in the summer – without your help, the hard work of our students could go neglected. As a summer garden helper we ask that you:

- ✓ Read this document in full
- ✓ Check to see the water is working correctly
- ✓ Weed well
- ✓ Check for pests. Research and use organic methods to remove pests.
- ✓ Trellis plants when needed

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This guide modeled after a similar document produced by Common Threads Farm. Thank You.

Garden Care Schedule

Week By Week Schedule

Week	Name	e-mail	phone
June 16-22			
June 23-June 29			
June 30 - July 6			
July 7-13			
July 14 – 20			
July 21 -27			
July 28 – Aug 3			
Aug 4 – 10			
Aug 11 – 17			
Aug 18 – 24			

Need Help?

We encourage you to use this list to get in touch with your fellow garden helpers if you want to trade time, seek help, or share the joys of the garden together. If you have additional questions or concerns contact Beth Thiel at 509-386-2037 or beth.wwvf2s@gmail.com

Another fun way to visit your and other gardens will be to participate in WW Wednesday Weeding and W(h)ining at rotating gardens 7:00-8:30pm throughout the summer. Attend 5 times for one hour of maintenance help and you'll get your choice of a bottle of local wine or a pint of honey. Check <https://www.facebook.com/wwvf2s/> to find out which garden to visit each week.

Garden Activity Schedule

Garden activities will be occurring with Campfire and City Parks and Recreation, summer program participants at Green Park, Edison and Sharpstein, following this general schedule:

Green Park – Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30am – 11:30am

Edison – Monday 9:45am – 12:00pm

Sharpstein – Wednesdays 9:45am-12:00pm

* Schedule includes time necessary to set up and take down activities.

We ask that you allow these clubs to pick and prepare available produce in these gardens. When there is extra produce, the summer garden coordinator, Whitman intern – Jane Ellsworth, will email to let you know what is available for harvest.

Watering the Garden

Gardens have automatic watering systems, but they can malfunction. The system is set to water early in the morning on variable days.

Please check to see that the system is working by checking the soil around water emitters to see if the soil is moist. The amount of watering time may need to be increased when weather is hot (over 95°) for several days. If you have concerns about the system or the amount of time it is watering, please contact Beth Thiel at 509-386-2037 or beth.wwwf2s@gmail.com or District Irrigation Specialist Dave Webber at 509-386-4999

Signs your plants need more water: wilted, yellowed or dried leaves are a sign that your plants need more water. Lack of water lowers a plant's resistance, so bug infestations or early bolting can be indicators that your plant is under water stress.



Weeding the Garden

Don't pull out lettuce and greens that have seeded. Our goal here is not to be on the cover of Gardner's Magazine, but to make sure that the weeds in our garden do not out-compete our crops. Understand what is planted in each bed and remove all other plants. **All grasses are weeds**

How often should I weed? Plan to spend 15 minutes a day weeding (or 1.5 hour total during the week). If each garden helper commits to consistent weeding, we'll be able to keep on top of the weeds. Please remove the entire weed including roots but leave the soil in the beds. Gloves and a trowel are essential for this tough work. **Where do I put weeds?** Weeds should be composted only if the weeds have not gone to seed yet - put them on the compost pile if there is one. If they have gone to seed, throw the entire plant in the dumpster. You can feel free to collect them and take them to the city green waste composting at your own expense.

Guide to Common Weeds



Thistle



Lambs Quarter



False Clover



spotted spurg



Common mallow



smart weed



Goat head weed



large leaf plantain



Kochia

Bermuda Grass

Crab grass

lactuca –lettuce ancestor

Plant Care

Plants that have Seeded or Bolted – “Bolting” is when a plant goes to flower near the end of its life cycle. Seed saving is an activity at schools, so you can leave the bolted salad green plants such as kale and lettuce in the garden. Often these seeds overwinter and grow



new greens in the spring, giving early garden participants something to taste. The flowering heads of kale, broccoli and radish can make a delicious and colorful addition to salads. You can also leave flowers that have finished like Poppies, Borage, Lupine or Echinacea.

Bolting = Salad greens shoot up from the center and put flowers at the top. Once a plant bolts it is no longer ideal for eating as the amount of formic acid in the plant increases and it takes on a bitter taste. The leaves also become rough.

In some plants, like basil, you should regularly pinch off the flowering heads, encouraging the plant to continue leaf production. For most plants though, trimming the flowering head will make little difference – they will continue to bolt.

Thinning – Carrots, beets, salad greens may need to be “thinned”. When there are many seedlings coming up, some will need to be pulled out to make room for the others to grow. Thinning may need to happen multiple times as the plants grow. Do an initial thinning when the plants are 1-2” tall, thinning so that one finger fit comfortably between each plant.

Suckering – Tomatoes are a vine and their impulse is to spread. We want to encourage our plants to grow UP and FRUIT rather than putting energy into more leaves. As the plants grow, remove the “suckers” or side shoots from the plants, these are the little shoots that emerge in the V between the main stem and the leaf branches. They are best pinched off when small – use garden clippers or scissors if they are more than a few inches to ensure a clean cut.



grow, resulting in a bigger harvest. It also

Hilling Potatoes – Hilling potatoes adds loose soil around the plant, in which more tubers can easily cover existing tubers,

keeping them from turning green in the sun. Continue hilling potatoes weekly until midsummer. With each hilling, cover the base of the vines with an inch or two of new soil or leaf/straw mulch.

Harvesting:

An exciting project provides garden and cooking activities for Campfire and City Parks and Recreation summer program participants at Green Park, Edison and Sharpstein Elementary Schools. (see garden activity schedule on page 3) Not only will these participants be taking part in some garden maintenance activities, they will also be taking part in cooking of garden vegetables that they harvest. Students will utilize produce, flowers and seeds from the gardens. Although Berney is not part of them summer camp programs, some Berney garden produce may be selected to augment produce for cooking activities at the other gardens with camps.

Harvesting Salad Crops:

If there are still salad crops available in June, harvest them early before the heat makes them bolt. Harvest as much as you like, but once it has bolted, **leave flower heads to remain** for seed collection lessons in the summer and fall. Harvest leaves leaving about 2" above the base for re-growth.

✓ 2-handed harvesting keeps plants intact and rooted. Use one hand to hold the plant and the other to pull off your harvest.

Harvesting Fruit Crops:

Many fruit crops will be harvested for the garden camps. However, if there are missed fruits in the garden that are clearly ripe and ready, you're encouraged to harvest.

Cucumbers: If it is missed by harvest crew, cut the stem just above the mature cucumber.

Tomatoes and Peppers: If they are missed by the harvest crew pick once they've turned their true color (there are some green zebra tomatoes, which will be green when mature). 2 handed harvesting is recommended to ensure the plant is not damaged or uprooted.

Peas/beans/corn –if you see peas left in June, help yourself. Peas are ready to harvest when the pods are at least 2"long. Pole beans and corn will be used once dried and the students return to school so leave those for class activities in the fall.

Contact Beth Thiel (509)386-2037 if you have questions about harvesting.

Harvesting Root Crops:

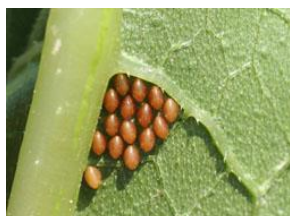
Potatoes: Potatoes should be left for classes to harvest and cook in the fall

Radishes – If left too long, these plants will bolt and the radish will become fibrous. If they are planted in the garden, eat them while you can. This year, most radish are already finished.

Carrots – pulling carrots should serve a dual purpose, harvesting and thinning. Only pull out closely spaced plants so that the remaining ones have more space to grow. Once there is 1 finger width spacing, let them grow. If space in the garden allows, new carrots and beet seeds can be sown in July/August for continued harvesting in the later fall.

Pests in the Garden:

We have had major problems with these two pests (Squash Bugs and Marmorated Stink Bugs) in the school gardens. It is worth keeping an eye out for them as early as possible.



nymphs and adults primarily feed by sucking sap from to wither and die. Eggs can be detected around mid June easily detected on the underside of the leaves and can be removed. Egg surveys should be done at least once a week. If bugs are found you and toss them in a container of soapy water. Squash bugs are also sensitive to soap (1 Tbs. dish soap to 1 quart of water). Stink bugs are not and require drowning or squ

them to remove

Squash bugs and Stink Bugs: These bugs can be the most destructive insect pest. Both plants causing them into July. Eggs are

The Marmorated stink bug is new and prolific. It can be found on many different plants. Once found, don't hesitate to pick off adults and eggs and place into a container of soapy water.

Check under squash leaves for squash bug eggs

Colorado potato beetle: Handpicking, especially in small gardens, can be effective. Drop adults and larvae in a pail filled with soapy water. Also remove or crush the yellowish orange eggs on the

underside of leaves. New adult beetles can fly into gardens so be sure to check your potatoes regularly.



Adult and larval stage potato beetle



Potato beetle eggs on underside of potato leaf

Ideas for fun in the garden:

- Have a picnic in the garden. Invite friends and family to join you!
- Bring a magnifying glass to observe flowers, insects or worms up close.
- Bring art supplies to draw and color the flowers and plants.
- Record your and wildlife, things you're curious about. discoveries in a garden journal: bugs that you tasted/smelled/touched, things
- Take photos to share! Farm to School and Post them on the Walla Walla Valley School Garden facebook page.
- Observe pollinators up close
- Find and Name the 6 parts of a plant
- Write a poem about a creature you find
- Pretend you are an ant and write a story from her perspective.



School Specific Instructions School:

Water Access	Automatic Irrigation comes on in the garden to water the plants (thanks to the school district irrigation specialists). Bring water bottles for personal hydration☺. See irrigation section above.
Composting System	Please be sure that if you are adding pulled weeds to the compost, that they do not have seeds. If they do have seeds, throw them in the dumpster.
Garden Map	F2S will work to create, laminate and post a map of what is planted in each bed at each school. Look for it at the garden or on the garden shed.
Equipment	It is best to bring your own equipment, but you shouldn't need anything more than gardening gloves, a sun hat, a trowel and a water bottle to stay hydrated.
Crops to save for student use	All of them this year – so we can help students establish their own produce stand over the summer. Before July 1 feel free to harvest strawberry and raspberry

Crops to sow	Carrots and beets and green beans if other items have been cleared out.
Weeds/Pests of Interest	Marmorated stink bugs and squash bugs are bad at Green Park. When you see them, eradicate by placing into a tub of soapy water. You can also spray squash bugs with soapy water.
Other important Notes	