



WEEKLY WEEDER

July 6

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June and Year-to-Date Donations to Micah 6 Food Pantry

June / Year to Date

- Sunshine Produce -- 785 lbs / 1320.75 lbs
- Dry Goods & Non-Sunshine Produce -- 20.25 lbs / 387.75 lbs

Produce donations in June have been amazing! -- especially tomatoes! See the picture of all the tomatoes in the cool room. The quantity and quality of your donations are very much appreciated. Thank you!!

Fresh Produce Donations:

During this busy gardening season, please consider donating excess harvest to the Micah 6 Food Pantry. Donations of fresh produce (from your garden or purchased) may be left in the cool room (south end of the trailer) or in the trailer refrigerator. **Most of the year one delivery a week (Saturday ~ 9am) to the food pantry is sufficient; however, in June and July, we add a second delivery on Thursday around 4pm.**

Dry Goods Donations:

Micah 6 Food Pantry is struggling to keep up with demand. Please consider donating non-perishable items in addition to produce. Leave your donations in the cool room at the south end of the trailer.

Non-perishable donation suggestions:

- Canned meats such as tuna and stew (pop-up tops preferred)
- Canned vegetables and soup
- Dry beans and rice
- Healthy cereals
- Peanut butter

Comment about Cool Room Temperature:

We keep the cool room temperature at 72 degrees, which works for tomatoes and for people. We are so glad that gardeners are using the cool room to cool off during these dangerously hot months. That said, please do not change the AC setting. In the past few weeks we've found the AC set as low as 60 and as high as 86. Please leave it set at 72 degrees.

Once again - Thank You for your generosity!! — *Submitted by Walter Kuhl*



Photo of new gardener Jen's gorgeous sunflower by Susan Van Haitsma

Volunteers Needed For Raised/Accessible Bed Area Expansion

Sunshine gardeners may have noticed the activity in the raised/accessible bed area. The area is being expanded to increase the number of beds from 3 to 10. Four of the beds will be designed specifically for wheelchair bound gardeners with wider paths and a water faucet at each bed.

Volunteers are needed to help with three of the remaining tasks – 1) digging trenches for relocating waterlines, 2) spreading decomposed granite over the expanded area, and 3) filling the new beds with soil. All three will be fairly strenuous work, and we are looking for 6-10 volunteers to help with these tasks. The waterline trenches will be dug over the next 7-10 days and the decomposed granite spread shortly after that. Soil will be added to the beds once they are constructed. We realize the weather is hot, but the goal is to have the new beds ready for fall planting.

If you would like to help with digging the waterline trenches, spreading the decomposed granite, or filling the new beds with soil, please contact Jim Willmann (jhwillmann@gmail.com). — *Submitted by Jim Willmann*



Squash Harvest

Sunshine gardener Luda is holding a mature tatum squash, also known as a tatume or calabacita. It is an heirloom, open-pollinated squash that is remarkable because it is quite good harvested as either a green summer-type squash or a golden winter-type squash. Picked when small and green it has a tender skin and can be "cooked like zucchini," Luda says.

Here in Texas this type of squash is often sold in groceries and farmers' markets under its Mexican name, calabacita. Left to mature on the vine it turns into a large, golden or yellow-orange winter-type squash. While I was chatting with Luda a couple of other gardeners asked her if it was a type of pumpkin. It is not, although it is a *Cucurbita pepo*, a species that includes most familiar garden squashes, including pumpkins. To read more about tatum squash visit this Texas A&M AgriLife Extension blog, "["Tatume': The Squash of Many Names,"](#)" by Jay White. — Submitted by Maria Beach (with photos by Maria)



Photo of John Lee's second corn crop by Susan Van Haitsma

Your July Sunshine Garden

July is a transitional month. Far too early and hot to plant true fall crops like brassicas, it is nevertheless the month when the many spring crops like tomatoes and peppers and corn may be planted a second time for a fall harvest. Some warm weather vegetables like okra and black-eyed peas may either be planted the first week or the last week of the month, skipping the middle of July.

If you want to grow your own pumpkins for Halloween and have not already planted them already then now is the time to do it. Pumpkins need room to sprawl, lots of water, and about 100-120 days to reach maturity, so early July really is the last call for them.

Many established plants and new transplants will appreciate a little afternoon shade in July and August, so consider using shade cloth. July and August are also typically months when water usage is high at the garden. June's brutal heat was hard on tomato plants this year, and keeping watering consumption in mind means this probably is not the year to try to keep a March-planted tomato plant alive all summer hoping for a few more tomatoes in the fall. Once all the green tomatoes gardeners already have are ripe enough to pick it is probably best to pull up the plants. Gardeners should also keep shade and water in mind for themselves and take frequent water breaks on the porch or in the Cool Room.

July is also an excellent time to mulch empty spots in gardens, to keep bare soil from baking in the sun and giving the earthworms a little shade and sustenance. This will also help keep down the weeds and make planting your fall garden a bit easier in a couple of months.

Vegetables to Plant in July

Corn (late July)
Eggplant (transplants; late July)
Greens, Warm Season (all month)
Okra (first or last week of July)
Peas, Southern (first or last week of July)
Peppers (transplants; second half of July)
Pumpkin (early July)
Tomatoes (transplants; all month)
Winter Squash (late July)

Planting calendar adapted by Maria Beach from the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension [Vegetable Planting Guide for Travis County](#), compiled by Patty G. Leander, Master Gardener Vegetable Specialist, and used with permission. —
Submitted by Maria Beach



Garden Info: [What's Happening in Austin's Gardens This July](#) by Sheryl Williams

Upcoming events: The [AOG newsletter](#), in addition to announcing its monthly meeting, contains good gardening info for your reading pleasure. Also, check out an upcoming event: on Monday, July 10 from 6-9 there is a talk by Harvé Franks called "Sunken Gardens Rising"

Garden Notes from Marsha Riti

The lovely icons for this section were created by Marsha Riti



Heat Advisory

Summer is here so please take caution when working in the garden. Stay hydrated, wear sunscreen, and a hat. Also, remember we have a "cool room" in the trailer where the AC is running, and there are popsicles in the freezer. Please read this article from the CDC about [Heat Stress Related Illness](#).



Service Hours are Due

Sunshine Community Garden and TSVBI service hours are due at the end of this month. If you are unsure how many hours you have left to work please check the [Green Binder](#).



General Workday

Friday, June 14 from 6-8 pm hosted by Marsha Riti



Beautification Committee Workday

Need service hours? There is always a workday every Sunday (9-12pm) in the flower beds around the trailer. Hosted by Matthew Johnston.



Kid's Garden!

Thanks to the volunteerism of Sunshine gardeners, Sunshine is ready to get young members of the community gardening. While there is more to come, in terms of tools for the kids and shade areas, the beds are ready for the kids to start planting!

Gardeners who made contact about sponsoring a child aged 5-11 will be contacted soon by the Children's Garden Zone Coordinator, Pam Kirby. We still have some available beds for children. If you are a garden member in good standing and wish to sponsor a child who would enjoy gardening in his or her own 3x3 bed, contact [Pam](#) for further information.



OMG, Cars, slow down!

Please drive slowly (3 MPH) in the garden. There are cats, kids, and gardeners who use this space, and we need it to be safe for everyone.



Mowers and Weed Whackers

Don't know how to use the gas or electric grass cutting equipment? Please contact:

[Steve Camp](#) (electric mowers / weed wackers)

[Ray Porter](#) (gas mowers)



More grass than garden?

Please clean up your plot. If you have health issues that are keeping you from working on your plot contact your Zone Coordinator or the Vice President for assistance. Also, if you'd like to fallow your plot for the rest of the summer, posted below is how to do that (taken from page 28 of the Handbook). Please make sure your Zone Coordinator or Vice President knows you are fallowing your plot.

Fallow Season or Cover Crop

Occasionally, members may choose to leave a plot fallow for a season. This is a good practice to provide the soil a break. Fallow plots should be cleared of plants and weeds, then covered completely with compost and then cardboard, a thick layer of leaves, or other material that allows water to permeate. Avoid using plastic as it creates a good environment for fire ants underneath, and water pools on top. An alternative to a fallow season is to plant a cover crop to serve as green manure; this can be turned under at the end of the season to condition the soil. Consult the literature or local garden center for details on this technique for soil improvement.

Contact both [Kristin Phillips](#) & [Maria Beach](#) to contribute the Weekly Weeder.



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