



Organic Newsletter

Fall Edition, 2013

Perfect Pumpkins!

One of the signature decorations (and flavors) of fall is the pumpkin. According to History.com in 1584 near the Great Lakes/ St. Lawrence region pumpkins were seen and reported as “gros melons” by French explorer Jacques Cartier. The word “pumpkin” is thought to have



originally come from the Greek word “pepon”, meaning large melon. From there the French changed it to “pompon”, the English again changed it to “pumpion” and finally the American colonists developed the word “pumpkin”.

Pumpkins belong to the cucurbit family which also includes gourds, squash and cucumbers to name a few. They are native to the western hemisphere and have been cultivated in North America for over five thousand years. The pumpkin was used in many different ways to provide food for the Native Americans. The seeds could be eaten or used for medicine, blossoms added to soups, the softer flesh could be baked, boiled or dried and ground into flour.

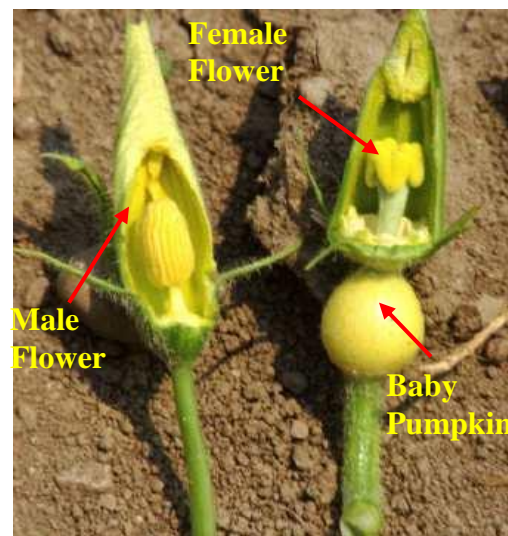
Despite their hard outer exterior pumpkins are actually a tender vegetable. The seeds won't germinate in cold soil and seedlings are injured by frost. When growing pumpkins for Halloween, plant in late May after the danger of frost has passed.

Depending on the type of pumpkin (vining, semi-bush, bush and miniature) the spacing and room needed differs, so follow the directions on the seed package. In general, plant the seeds one inch deep, four to five seeds per hill, when the seedlings become established thin to the best two or three plants.

Pumpkins have male and female flowers and require good pollination for fruit set. Poor fruit set is often the result of the vines being planted too closely together (hiding the flowers from pollinators) and wet and cloudy conditions that slow insect activity.

To achieve larger pumpkins, 45 days before the first fall frost prune the tips of the vines. This keeps the vines from continuing to grow and spread, redirecting their energy back into the fruit.

The tip pruning won't affect further fruit set as any fruit that begins growing around this time won't mature before the first frost.





What did the orange pumpkin say to the green pumpkin?

Why orange you orange?

During the growing season, there are a few problems that your pumpkin vines can develop. The first is powdery mildew. This fungal pathogen spreads through airborne spores causing a white powdery look to the leaves on the vines and if left will kill the plant.

To try to avoid developing mildew by maintaining good cultural conditions such as planting your vines six to eight feet apart, in full sun and allowing for good air circulation by not overcrowding the vines.

If this fails to prevent powdery mildew, there are fungicide sprays (chemical and organic) as well as some home remedies that may help. Although we can't say for sure if the home remedies will be completely effective, it doesn't hurt to try. One spray involves dissolving two uncoated aspirin tablets in a quart of water and spraying on the leaves. (Spray during the day so leaves have time to dry.) Another possibility is a "milk spray". Using a 40% milk/60% water spray wet the foliage thoroughly, if possible wetting the underside.

The second problem is insects like cucumber beetle and squash bugs. Early detection is key, and if possible remove the eggs or bugs themselves. Keeping debris out of your garden and nearby areas is also helpful as it reduces the places for them to hide.

When your pumpkins are ready to harvest they will have a deep solid color and the rind will be hard. Harvesting can begin in late September or early October. When you cut the pumpkins from the vine use clean pruning shears or knife and leave

three to four inches of stem. Pumpkins without a "handle" usually don't keep as well.

With some planning before planting and vigilance during the growing season you can have your own pumpkins for decorating or cooking!



Happy Harvest!!



"There is a harmony in autumn, and a lustre in its sky, which through the summer is not heard or seen, as if it could not be, as if it had not been!"

-Percy Bysshe Shelley

Plants for the Fall!

Fullmoon Maple
(*Acer japonicum*)



- ❖ Deciduous, slow growing small tree, 20' to 30' tall, rounded outline when young, becoming irregular with age
- ❖ Bark on trunk is gray and smooth
- ❖ Full sun to partial shade is best (but also shade tolerant)
- ❖ Prefers moist, slightly acidic, well-drained (high organic matter in soil is ideal)
- ❖ Dislikes hot, dry locations and also avoid windswept, exposed winter locations

Chastetree
(*Vitex agnus-castus*)



- ❖ Broadleaf deciduous tree or shrub, 10'-20' tall
- ❖ Upright, branching, rounded form.
- ❖ Leaves gray/green; aromatic when bruised.
- ❖ Small flowers lilac/pale violet to blue, fragrant, held in dense, erect clusters. Flowers in September.
- ❖ Full sun, well-drained soil; heat tolerant

Autumn Joy Sedum
(*Sedum 'Autumn Joy'*)



- ❖ Full sun- dappled shade; tolerates most soils
- ❖ Light green, succulent foliage
- ❖ Height (with flowers) 18"-24"
- ❖ Flowers mid-August to October, first as a light pink then fading to russet; domed shape
- ❖ If plant starts to "donut", divide in spring



The last time I wrote a blurb for the newsletter we were focusing on spring. We talked about our bodies being seasonal when it comes to food.

Well I can say again through my own cravings happening lately that it's true. Now that autumn is here I have noticed my body wants soups, squashes, more dense foods.



As these new seasons approach us, physically and mentally we are suppose to be going into a slower time. So these kinds of cravings are beneficial to the body with moderation of course. So pay attention, give



your body what it wants, soups, stews, heavier vegetables. My rule of thumb always is buy locally and as much organic as you can.

Look forward to the leaves turning magnificent colors, the air feeling crisp and the wonderful fall culinary flavors.

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Organically Grown



EGGPLANT & CHICKEN PUTTANESCA STACKS

INGREDIENTS :

For Eggplant:

2 eggplants (about 1 pound each), cut into 1/2-inch slices
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 cup all-purpose flour, or as needed (substitute rice flour)
2 eggs, beaten
1 cup (2 ounces) panko bread crumbs
3 tablespoons vegetable oil

For Chicken:

2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (4 to 6 ounces each)
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
All-purpose flour (use the flour that remains after breading the eggplant)
1 tablespoon olive oil

For Sauce and Filling:

1/2 cup white wine
2 cloves garlic, minced (about 1 tablespoon)
3 anchovy fillets packed in oil, chopped, or 1/2 teaspoon anchovy paste
1/4 teaspoon dried chile flakes
1/2 cup chicken stock
1/4 cup pitted Kalamata olives (about 10 olives or 1.5 ounces), chopped
1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes, or 1 pound plum tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and roughly chopped
Zest and juice of 1/2 lemon

3/4 cup loosely packed fresh parsley leaves, coarsely chopped, divided
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 cup fresh ricotta cheese, at room temperature

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil. To prepare the eggplant, toss with 2 teaspoons salt and let sit in a colander placed over a bowl for about 20 minutes. Pat each piece dry, sprinkle with 1/2 teaspoon pepper, and proceed with breading.

Put the flour, eggs, and panko in separate shallow bowls or pie plates. First, dip an eggplant slice in the flour, shaking off the excess. Next, coat the floured slice with egg, letting the extra run off. Finally, dredge the eggplant slice in the panko. Repeat with the remaining eggplant. Heat the vegetable oil in a large sauté pan over medium-high heat. Working in batches to avoid overcrowding the pan, fry the eggplant slices for about 2 minutes on each side, or until golden brown. Transfer the eggplant to the prepared baking sheet and bake in the oven for 15 minutes. Flip the slices over and continue baking for an additional 10 minutes.

Prepare the chicken while the eggplant is in the oven. Pound each breast to 1/4-inch thickness with the smooth side of a meat mallet. Cut each breast into thirds and season the pieces with salt and pepper. Coat each piece in flour and shake off any excess. Heat the olive oil in it over medium-high heat. Working in batches, sauté the chicken pieces for about 1 minute on each side, or until lightly browned. Remove the chicken from the pan and cover to keep warm.

To prepare the sauce, pour the wine into the pan to deglaze, scraping the bits from the bottom. Add the garlic, anchovies, and chile flakes and sauté for 30 seconds. Stir in the stock, olives, tomatoes, lemon juice, and 1/2 cup of the parsley, and add the chicken back into the pan. Reduce the heat to low and let simmer while the eggplant finishes baking. Taste for seasoning and adjust as needed.

To prepare the filling, mix the cheese, the remaining 1/4 cup parsley, the lemon zest, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1/4 teaspoon pepper together in a small bowl. When the eggplant is done, create stacks. Start with one slice of eggplant, top with a dollop of cheese, and then one piece of chicken. Top each stack with a piece of eggplant. If desired, spoon some remaining sauce and cheese on top of each stack and serve. (Serves 4-6)

Services for 2013:

We offer the following services to help increase the enjoyment and beauty of your property:

Tree / Shrub:

- ❖ Shrub & Tree Spraying / Fertilization Programs
- ❖ Integrated Pest Management
- ❖ Soil Restoration
- ❖ Plant and Soil Stimulation Program
- ❖ Deep Root Feeding
- ❖ Root Growth Enhancement Mature Tree Restoration
- ❖ Air Spading
- ❖ Radial Trenching
- ❖ Vertical Mulching
- ❖ Anti-Desiccant Spraying
- ❖ General Tree and Shrub Maintenance Removal

Turf:

- ❖ Lawn Renovation
- ❖ Fertilization
- ❖ Overseeding
- ❖ Core Aeration
- ❖ Estate / Property Purification

Organic Pest Control:

- ❖ Flying Insect
- ❖ Deer / Geese
- ❖ Rodent Repellent
- ❖ Organic Tick & Flea Control

We also offer Outdoor Holiday Décor.

Call (631) 467-7999 for a free estimate!

