

Even though the weather has turned hot and humid, the garden continues to produce. This past week we've harvested nearly 138 lbs of veggies. Cucumbers being the lead with (54#), tomatoes (38#), yard long beans (20#), and squash (12#) among the double digit producers. It may surprise you to know that since June 4th of 2019, the gardens have produced 4048 lbs of produce. If you go to "garden activity" on our website OFEGrowers.org you can see the variety and bounty that has been shared with the community predominantly through OFE's 5th grade students and two giveaways.

This week, we continued to work on the butterfly beds, weeding, pruning, and mulching in preparation for the summer. On Thursday we pruned around our long orchard shed which helps with air movement as well as lets in more sun. Saturday we began the process of installing more sun shade screening around the main garden shed work area. We are officially on our summer schedule which everyone should have a copy and is posted in the main garden shed. The schedule lists the OFE gardeners helping with harvesting, watering, and general care of the gardens on a particular day. The response has been nothing less than superlative with many more volunteers than signed up for any individual day showing up and helping with caring for the gardens. The result of which is the most beautiful garden we've had to date. While a lot of the produce now goes to canning to entice donations there is much that is too perishable to hold for canning purposes and can be taken home by those that come to help on that particular day. This week the following volunteers will be helping in the gardens per our schedule: Tues 6/16 & Thurs 6/18 (Eric, Phyllis, Annette, and Sydney) and Sat 6/20 (Hal, Eric, and Denton). As usual if you can't make it for some reason please let either Hal or Denton know and thank you all for your help and enthusiasm!

In the upcoming week, we will be finalizing the shade area work around the composting bins and work bench, as well as keeping up with the harvesting. With these hot days, we need to continue to deep water the cucumbers, tomatoes, okra, and beans which need a continuous supply of water in order to produce. While it doesn't get mentioned much with the watering comes weeds which is no ones' favorite job but please pull them when you see them!! We are anxiously awaiting the ripening of the figs which will require all hands on deck. It's a sticky job but means a lot to our canning activity.

Below is an email from Hal on the state of the gardens and as he has talked about different things I am just going to append it to this newsletter.

Thank you all and we look forward to seeing any and all whenever you have the time.

Hi, Everyone!

This week we will be working at the gardens on **Tuesday and Thursday at 8 AM**. We will have the gate on the Kindergarten driveway open at that time. Even if you are not on the "official" schedule for those days, it is always wonderful to have a bit of extra help.

On **Saturday, we will be there at 9 AM**. Have an extra cup of coffee before you come. Yesterday Denton, Eric, and I worked on a special project and that left Gudrun and Sydney to do all the harvesting and watering. Yes, the rains have shut off and heavy watering is now necessary to keep the garden growing.

The special project? You will just have to stop by to see. We hope to complete it this week.

Canning: Gudrun and Jo have been spending a lot of time canning all those tomatoes and cucumbers. The pile on the dining room table is growing. Last summer over 800 jars were canned as our fundraiser. It is great that a number of you have expressed an interest in helping this summer. The first group canning event will be this Wednesday at Leslie's house. We typically try to have most of the product ready by Falcon Fest which will be in early August this year. Of course that depends on the fruits and veggies ripening in time.

On the schedule this week:

Tuesday: Eric, Phyllis, Annette, Sydney, and anyone else is welcome

Thursday: Eric, Phyllis, Annette, Sydney and anyone else is welcome

Saturday: Hal, Eric, Denton and anyone else who wishes to come.

If you find you can not make it on your day, please let Denton know ASAP

Hal

PS Please RSVP to Gudrun with your yeas or nays for the upcoming volunteer party. The party will be at the home of Phyllis and Steve Bost, at 5106 Mulberry Grove Dr., Kingwood 77345.

We will be having fajitas and fixings, so we need to let the restaurant know numbers by midweek. Please let us know asap about your plans. I do have a partial list of folks who have responded.

We need to hear from the rest of you.

The entrée and lemonade and water will be provided. Should you want any drinks beside these, bring your own, please. Anyone wishing to bring a dessert to share, feel free.

Phyllis has offered her pool for swimming, but bring your own towels. This will be an outdoor affair so we can spread out. Come casual!

Looking forward to seeing you all on the 27th.