

While we refer to the gardens as being fall gardens, we've actually gone into the coolest garden time and the past couple of weeks have intermittently been cool, cold, and warmish making it pleasant to be in the garden and as long as the weather hasn't been super cold the crops have been doing really well. We've had excellent carrots, beets, radishes, cabbage, lettuce, broccoli, and cauliflower! The citrus continues to be outstanding with a bumper crop of kumquats, navel oranges, and lemons. The evening of the 11<sup>th</sup> turned out to be one of our colder nights and there was ice on our bird bath in the herb bed and the sugar snap peas showed some ice on the pea pods, but the garden seemed to fare really well with no major damage. Let's hope our good luck continues but the rest of this week shows lows of 34 degrees which means our garden could experience freezing conditions. Keep fingers crossed.

Last week was the completion of squash and cucumbers and so this week we will be studying onions. We planted 4 beds of onions this last week but are planning to plant another 3 or 4 more beds this coming week. There are still a lot of citrus to pick and as I said the veggies are producing well at this time so carrots, turnips, broccoli, and lettuce are in the need of harvesting.

As some of you, who have had brothers or sisters that have gone through the 5<sup>th</sup> grade garden program before, may know now is the time when we start to plan for arbor day. Please take some time and look up (on the internet or your website) what arbor day is and whether it is a special day or.....??? Normally this is the time of the year when we collect monies (\$3) from the students to buy the tree that the 5<sup>th</sup> grade class presents to Oak Forest Elementary School as gift. This year, however, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade class has already earned its money by sponsoring "Project Based Learning" program in December. So no money need to help buy this year's tree. Our 5<sup>th</sup> grade Arbor Day is an activity that the whole 5<sup>th</sup> grade works on as a team, some are diggers, others are waterers, and yet others are soil movers returning the soil back around the tree that the class has just planted. There are many jobs and it takes the whole class to present and plant this tree!! We will explain more about this but you can read up about it by going to the website and seeing what prior 5<sup>th</sup> grades have done (<https://www.ofegrowers.org/arbor-day.html>).

While the weather is on the cool side please come dressed for this time of year.