

The gardens are looking more and more like summer gardens. There are potatoes, tomatoes, squash, and cucumbers everywhere. We continue to add to the early summer season with peppers, lettuce, tomatillos, and yes more squash. The potatoes and onions in the annex are doing really well this year, the best I've ever seen them at this time of year. In May we will be harvesting both the onions and potatoes and making ready for the long hot summer season. What you say? What more can you plant??? Well, just before school lets out we plant sweet potatoes in a "pay it forward" sense for the next year's 5th graders. Hopefully you remember how much fun it was to dig those sweet potatoes. Well I'm getting ahead of myself. Does anyone know how we decide when it's time to harvest the onions? Or the potatoes? If you've forgotten go back to your garden manuals and refresh your memories cause we'll probably be asking!

I had some pretty good answers to the question of whether our potatoes need to flower to make potatoes. I was impressed!! But we're getting a little rusty because it was hard to remember why plants flower in the first place. See if you can list a few reasons why plants flower!! The subtleties are pretty nearly endless. The most obvious being to make seed. And to make seed depends on pollination. And.....

The onions in the annex and orchard are growing very nicely. So how do we know when to harvest our onions? Has anyone seen an onion flower? Do onions produce seeds?

Sadly, the citrus trees in the orchard are not showing any outward signs of recovery and while many gardeners are cautioning to wait for one more month before concluding that the citrus trees were killed by the frost, it is hard not to think the worst.

This is the last week we will be studying insects and pest management. Pay special attention to how organic gardeners use organic means to control pests. What does IPM mean? The benefit of these methods is that we don't poison our environment and ourselves. The trade-off is best summarized as minimizing crop damage due to pests while having the least negative effects on our environment. See if you can spot how this can be done without harming our planet.

Looking forward to working together this week.