

OFE Growers Newsletter - 10/21/2021

This week we completed the lesson on planting seeds and very young plants (transplants.) Unfortunately the weather was not cooperative and we had to put off harvesting sweet potatoes until next week. The lesson for next week will be on Cole Crops while tempting don't mistake Cole crops for "cold" crops as actually that isn't a thing. It is true that we are heading into a cooler time of the year and all the vegetables we will be dealing with grow best during the cooler weather. I wonder is it the cooler weather or the intensity of the sun or maybe both that these plants find optimal for their growth? Read carefully page 18 in your book as there is a lot of very interesting points to consider when asking and attempting to answer the question asked above. Why are Cole crops called Cole crops if it's not a reference to cold weather? As it says in the first paragraph on page 18, Cole is a translation of the Latin word *caulis* which means cabbage or more generally the Brassicaceae family of plants.

In our next meeting outdoors, weather permitting, we will start to dig our sweet potatoes. This is a true team effort! We will need at least 4 or possibly 5 teams to work together to complete the harvesting in the class time available. We will need vine removers and composters, diggers, and treasure hunters to just get the sweet potatoes out of the ground. After that we will need to weigh and package the sweet potatoes so that they are ready for taking home. Remember, the sweet potato is not really ready to eat at this point as the harvested potato needs a couple of weeks to finish converting the sugars stored in the potato to carbohydrates and the taste that we all love so much.

Also you may notice that the gardens have changed a bit since you last were there. Two beds in the main garden that were in poor shape needed to have their wood frames removed and replaced with cinder block. They are now ready to be planted.