

This week we directed our attention to Pollination and its importance. One third of all the vegetative food we eat is possible as the result of pollination. One out of every three plants we eat is dependent on pollinators for the production of fruit! Next time you are enjoying an apple or tomato or pumpkin pie think about all the effort that has gone into making these delicious entities! Every time we kill an insect we may be reducing our harvest of food! The actions we take have consequences!!

The weather this last week was on the cool side and wet. That is good for leafy greens and as long as the temperatures are moderate good for peppers, squash, cucumbers, and tomatoes to name a few. The garden is looking really good. We have finished planting tomatoes, but peppers, yard long beans, squash, and okra still need to be planted not forgetting the sweet potatoes! It is time now to really get the spring garden planting completed. It is also our plan to have much to harvest such as turnips and radishes, collards, kale, spinach and pretty soon those 1015Y onions we planted not so long ago.

The potatoes in both the Annex and the Orchard are looking really good but we need to keep them watered as the warmer weather will put stress on these plants as they try to store their food.

The past couple of times in the garden we have been experimenting with a form of no-till gardening. This is not so different from that which we are currently practicing with a few subtle differences. One is we leave the roots of the dead and dying vegetables in the ground and use compost in place of heavy fertilizing which puts less of a burden on the soil's organisms. That said this method of gardening is interesting as it supports keeping carbon dioxide stored in the soil rather than releasing it to the atmosphere. The reduced digging of the soil supports an intact soil/fungal root network which incidentally provides an enriched soil content of phosphorous responsible for strong root growth. There are other advantages as well, for instance, the gardener gets to work less hard because there is less turning of the soil called tilling AND less weeding too.

We are rapidly approaching the end of the school year there is one more lesson set after pollination namely 'insects and pest management'. This lesson shows how to deal with the adversities of gardening.

You all have learned a lot this year and hopefully have come to realize that gardening is fun and loaded with science and mathematics which believe it or not are also great fun. Knowing how things work and work together is great power and allows us to build a fulfilling life.