Have you seen this?

Root Crops

What’s the big deal about root vegetables? There’s more to root vegetables than meets the eye – potatoes, eyes, get it? All kidding aside, root vegetables are the darlings of the culinary circuit these days. Every famous chef has a favorite recipe for roasted root vegetables. It’s hard to find a restaurant menu these days without at least one beet dish gracing its pages. And, collectively, they pack a nutritional punch. Take a look at the Vegetable Nutrition Database (from Fruit and Veggies More Matters).

New to growing root crops? Go to the GIEI vegetable profiles to learn about root crops that you still have time to plant this season.

July Tips

- It’s time to begin thinking of fall vegetables. Seed for fall crops of broccoli, kale, turnip, and cauliflower should be sown in containers by the 3rd to 4th week in July. Late crops of squash, beans and cucumbers can be direct sown through the end of July.
- Choanephora Rot, a common fungal disease on squash has been reported in the area this season. Lay a mulch of shredded leaves, dried grass clippings, or newspaper covered with straw under plants. Quickly remove infected fruits. Remove all plant residue at the end of the growing season.
- Late August through September is usually a good time to transplant, divide and plant perennials such
All GIEI Classes
All Ask a MG Plant Clinics
(the above list may not be complete - be sure to check with your county extension office for the latest scheduling info)

More seasonal tips

Article

The Wanders of the Eastern Box Turtle
Ray Bosmans - Professor Emeritus University of Maryland Extension

The box turtle gets its name from its ability to close up very tightly, like a small box. This is possible because of a special hinge in its plastron (bottom shell). This tight armor provides good protection against most natural predators. The Eastern Box Turtle (Terrapene carolina) is native to most of the states east of the Mississippi River from Maine to Georgia.

Box turtles eat earthworms, caterpillars, slugs, mushrooms, fallen fruit, and berries. They do little harm to vegetable or flower gardens. Where box turtles are still plentiful, they may visit a garden and take a few bites out of tomato fruit within their reach. Help them by leaving a few tomatoes close to the ground for their enjoyment.

Young box turtles are not totally safe from predators until they are about four inches in length; this takes three years or more. It’s easy to see that the reproductive potential for box turtles is very low. While they may live a long time, (50-100 years which helps offset their low reproduction rate) their longevity is not enough to keep up with the numbers being killed on today’s busy roads.

The box turtle stands a good chance of surviving in harmony with man if we can provide a suitable habitat in our landscapes, exercise care when mowing lawns, avoid using too many chemical pesticides, and use caution when driving. If you find a turtle egg nest site in your yard, place a heavy screened box over it to keep raccoons from digging up the eggs. When the eggs hatch release the hatchlings in a well-planted area in or near your yard. Be sure to take plenty of pictures!

Learn more at the Mid-Atlantic Turtle and Tortoise Society website
Turtles on the HGIC website

Article

Send In Your Photos and Stories!

Show off your yard, garden, or interesting wildlife you find! Having a great harvest this season? Proud of your flower bed? Encounter a snake or other interesting wildlife? Send in a photo or two and a short description and we may share your experiences with the HGIC audience.
Cucumber Trellis

Maryland Master Gardener Larry Kloze, who's tended his garden for 35 years in Baltimore, explains how he grows cucumbers, and what to keep in mind for when YOU do.

→ Watch on Youtube

Q&A

I have some lacinato kale plants in a raised bed. They've been in the ground now for about six weeks after planting them out as transplants. I saw some worm-like things on them a few days ago, and was wondering if you could help me to identify them. The kale leaves are being eaten from the edges to the ribs by something. Could this be the culprit? Is any kind of control in order? Right now I am removing them by hand and crushing them. Thank you!

Your kale in being eaten by imported cabbageworms. This is a common pest of plants in the cabbage family which includes kale. Damage can range from small holes to entire leaves being consumed (leaving the midrib behind). Removing and crushing them can work for a small infestation. There are organic insecticides that will work if spraying is necessary. Other options include using floating row cover to protect the plants from egg-laying as soon as they are planted. It is important to clean-up and remove plant debris after harvesting to eliminate overwintering sites. You can find detailed information on imported cabbageworm and using floating row cover on the Grow It Eat It website.
Have a plant or pest question? University of Maryland Extension’s experts have answers! Send in your questions and photos here.

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