



HAH Happenings

May 2020



The Horticultural Alliance of the Hamptons

631.537.2223 hahgarden.org

P.O. Box 202, Bridgehampton, NY 11932-0202

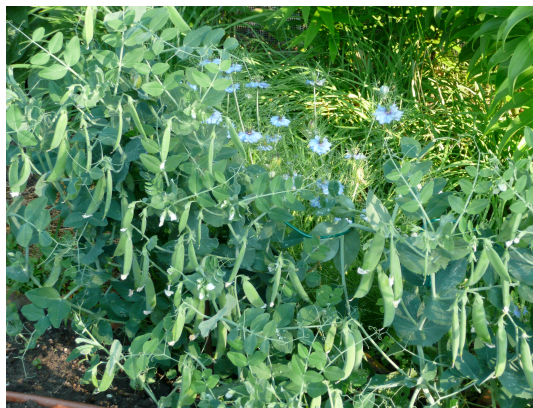
at the Bridgehampton Community House

HAH Home Growing 2020

Since the world seems to be finding comfort and real sustenance from gardening with vegetables while on lockdown due to the Corona virus, we thought our members would be interested in hearing from other members on the subject of growing their own food favorites. So we asked and in this issue you will find some ideas to inspire you, places to find starts, and some websites to turn to for more information.

While the vegetable growing season really starts in the previous fall with planting garlic and shallot bulbs and continues in winter with early seeding of leeks, greens and celeriac inside under lights among others, seeding inside and outdoors can go on into late summer. Whether you have only deck space for a few pots or a whole acre from which to carve out a new bed for growing vegetables, there is plenty of reward in doing so. Waking in the morning to check in with them is sheer delight and as good as coffee or tea in starting the day. And it reminds us what a privilege it is to be able to grow anything.

Choice of variety is one important reason to grow your own because what grows in the small home garden can be an unusual or more delicate version than what one can find in the markets, even in our wonderful local farm markets. We all need those markets so please keep them in business! No matter how much you grow in your own garden there are always more vegetables needed that the professionals provide well and in abundance. But have some fun exploring your own green vegetable thumbs this year. You'll never have more time or a better time to try it!





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Friends,

It's shocking how quickly things changed – the first week of March we had a well-attended lecture, and by mid-March we were self-isolating and continue to do so. As we adapt to our new normal of social distancing, we are so lucky to have our gardens.

This month's newsletter, usually full of information about the plants for sale at the Garden Fair, is focused on growing food. A number of our members have profiled vegetables that they love, giving us tips about how to grow them and how to cook them. And if we are successful and have a bounty to share with others, all the better. But you can do a lot in a few containers, with some vegetable starts from the garden center, and have fresh, organic, and safe food.

We are concerned about the wholesalers and retailers on the East end who supply our wonderful plants. Hence the blast emails about nurseries we know about that are open and serving us using safe practices. We will add to that list as we hear from our partners, as we know that you will be eager to do plant shopping safely.

HAH 2020

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The Library Chairperson (who serves on the Board with a vote) is currently: Susan Kennedy Zeller

On occasion the board may appoint someone to fill an unexpired term if necessary.

NEWSLETTER/WEBSITE EDITOR

Elaine Peterson

hahmember@optonline.net

Submissions must be received by the 10th of the month prior to publication. Please include NL in the subject line.

MAILING

John Benson

PHOTOS

Sarah Alford, Elaine Peterson, Jay Hunt, Erika Shank, Alicia Whitaker

We are making plans for what we hope will be a fall season that looks more like life as normal, and we've rescheduled our postponed speakers to 2021. Let's hope that we can soon be together outside of a Zoom meeting.

Stay safe, stay strong, and enjoy your gardens,

Alicia



Lazy in the Hamptons - Lettuce Patch in a Pot

I garden on a strange property. The area around my house and patio is surrounded by a 6' fence and so far, the deer are staying out. Beyond the fence, anything I plant is fair game for the critters. I don't have a proper vegetable garden – the mixed borders are too crowded, so I start the few things I grow for the kitchen in pots.

If I were better at seed starting (like my sister!), I'd start lettuce seeds at the end of February and plant them out by the end of March. I don't – I buy lettuce starts, plant them at the end of March and am happily picking leaves or heads and eating them by the end of April. My plants usually produce and do well through the middle to end of June, depending on how quickly it becomes really hot. The pots are outside the back door, near the grill, so I notice them and water them as needed.

You can find many varieties of lettuce starts in garden centers. My local resource is the Peconic River Herb Farm, where they grow many varieties. My favorites are buttercrunch and their cousins, and looseleaf red lettuce. Mache when I can find it. When I can get red romaine, I jump on it and use it in pot plantings with flowering plants as well as in my lettuce pots. We are so lucky to have organic or near-organic growers on the East End who usually offer vegetable starts. Once you get them home, plant them in a mix of potting soil amended with a bit of compost. I use fish / seaweed fertilizer, as they are crops that love nitrogen. The squirrels don't bother the lettuce but I worry about the groundhog who lives nearby and gets into my yard. No pesticides and no chemical fertilizer are needed.

How do I dress lettuce? As minimally as possible, with lemon juice and olive oil, sprinkled with sea salt. If I have the time, I use these ingredients with a bit of Dijon mustard and a minced garlic clove. Simple is best.



Alicia Whitaker, Westhampton

SEEDS

There are more seed suppliers than ever in recent years as the interest in vegetable gardening grows. In addition to others mentioned in this issue, here are a few of my favorite seed catalogs you can explore. Not only are their seeds reliable but their websites are FULL of instructions on how to grow them well. www.selectseeds.com Select Seeds - flowers, herbs, edibles, many heirlooms - they also sell some plant starts, packed beautifully and sent from CT.

www.kitchengardenseeds.com John Scheepers is also known as a great fall bulb supplier. Terrific info on all they sell on this site. Located in CT also.

www.reneesgarden.com Well known grower for fine food, Renee Shepherd's choice of the best non-GMO seed for flavor and reliability.

These companies have many unusual varieties from around the world that you can't find at the market. Ed.

PLANTS

We are all disappointed not to have an HAH Plant Fair this spring, but you can find many plants from our favorite wholesale growers at local nurseries throughout the East End. Look for:

- Landcraft Environments - annuals, exotics, tender and some hardy perennials too.
- Beds and Borders - annuals.
- Glover Perennials - a great variety of hardy plants, many native to our area.

Call your local nurseries to check their open hours and special sales procedures during this lockdown time. Some deliver orders or ask you to pick up at certain areas. Most are trying to accommodate our needs. This is their big season and the lockdown is tough for them! Please get out and support them whenever possible with your purchases.

Mad for Kale

I love to grow Kale, and do so for many months of the year. I start kale seeds in my home beginning in March, and plant them out by the end the month or early April. I grow five to ten different kinds – there is so much more diversity than what is found in the market. Some of the unusual kales I grow include Scarlet Kale, Bear Necessities, Gulag Stars, Russian Frills, and Siber-Frill Kale. My sources for these unusual varieties are High Mowing Organic Seeds www.highmowingseeds.com and Adaptive Seeds www.adaptiveseeds.com.



Use organic seeds when possible and grow without using pesticides in soil enriched with compost. Due to its new-found popularity, a lot of market kales are grown with a ton of fertilizer. Avoid that by growing your own. If you don't want to start seeds, you can find small "starts" of kale plants in a number of local garden centers. We had such a mild winter that I have a lot of kale that wintered over and is already growing well. It doesn't do well in the heat of high summer, but I start seeds in August to plant out in the early fall. It keeps going through hard frosts.

I use young kale leaves in salads and sauté older leaves in olive oil with garlic. They're great in pasta. Try mixing the young leaves into a salad mix with other greens. Older leaves can also be used in salad if you use a bit of olive oil, lemon juice and salt and to "worry" the leaves before eating.

Linda Whitaker, Westhampton

Kale Pesto from bon appetit

Ingredients

- 1 large bunch Tuscan kale (or a mixture) ribs and stems removed
- Kosher salt
- 1/3 cup raw pistachios, (I used raw pignoli nuts)
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 garlic clove (I used 2)
- 1 oz. Parmesan, finely grated, plus more for serving
- Freshly ground black pepper

Preparation

- Cook kale leaves in a large pot of boiling salted water until bright green and wilted, about 30 seconds.
- Transfer to a rimmed baking sheet with tongs. Let kale cool slightly; wring excess water with your hands.
- Blend nuts, oil, garlic, and 1/3 cup of water in a blender or food processor until very smooth.
- Add kale and 1 oz. Parmesan. Puree, adding water (kale cooking liquid) 1Tbsp. at the time as needed, until smooth.
- Check seasonings and store in tight container.
- Serve over whole wheat pasta or linguine (cooked in kale cooking liquid) and add pasta cooking liquid until sauce coats pasta.
- Add additional parmesan or pecorino.
- You can also put it on eggs, sandwiches or add to soups.
- Add some fresh basil or other herbs.

Delicious and nutritious!

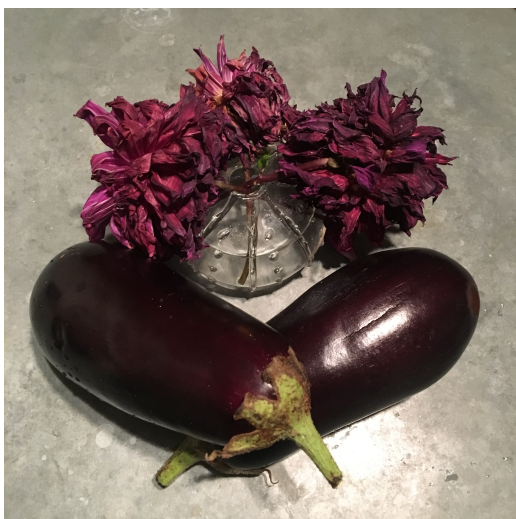


Erika Shank, Amagansett

Favorite Garden Vegetable?

When struggling to answer the simple question regarding a favorite vegetable for a home garden, my best answer is also the cheekiest: small vegetables. I don't mean small plants, but rather varieties with small vegetables that can be picked more frequently.

I've tried a dozen different varieties of tomato plants and prefer small to mid-size tomatoes. There's less waiting for a few prized specimens to reach peak ripeness. Two hardy and steady producers I like are yellow pear (a vigorous heirloom variety) and sun gold (a reliable hybrid). Plum tomatoes are about as large as I grow, although I plant the medium-sized yellow taxi variety for its flavor and vibrance, as well as the nod to my home for 15 years. Excess small tomatoes are easy to oven roast and preserve for winter meals.



The same preference for small goes for eggplants, for which I favor the slender Asian varieties. Eggplant thrive in our hot summer weather, yet I lack the patience to wait for the larger varieties to reach full size.

I also favor plants that grow vertically, as the sunniest garden plot in my yard requires compact planning. Tomatoes will eagerly climb up a six-foot trellis I make from my neighbor's invasive bamboo patch. Right now, snow peas and purple pole beans are just starting to grow on a metal trellis that will transition to support zucchini and cucumbers during the heat of the summer.

I've had great success with plants from OMO, Sag Harbor Garden Center and the Green Thumb in Watermill; many other garden shops sell excellent selections of vegetable plants as well.

Sarah Alford, Sag Harbor

I LOVE LOVAGE! (*Levisticum officinale*, that is)

How many times have you bought celery for your tuna salad – used it once – and found it a week later languishing in the back of the fridge? A solution - in the summer anyway - plant the perennial herb Lovage which was even loved by Emperor Charlemagne, who included the herb in his landscape.

Lovage leaves, stems and seeds all taste like celery, but do use it sparingly as it has a great punch. The flavor adds life to many low-salt or no-salt recipes. Chop it, add it to your tuna salad or soup and, voila, you have no need to go shopping.

Although Lovage enjoyed great popularity in the Middle Ages when it was grown in kitchen and physic gardens for its medicinal and culinary properties, it has recently fallen out of favor and is now, thankfully, being re-discovered again. Try it - you'll like it!



Marie DiMonte, Hampton Bays

HOW TO GROW VEGETABLES IN YOUR GARDEN

The situation today is just right to turn us into gardeners who want to grow our own vegetables.

How do I start?

If this is new to you, start small. Turn over an area of your yard or build a raised bed or use existing flower garden or flower pots, window boxes, whiskey barrels or deck garden to make room for vegetables. I used an old sand box and added soil to make my herb garden.

Where do I put it?

All these plants like sun. Close to the house is more convenient. Think “kitchen garden” so you can walk out with scissors and clip herbs & greens while you are cooking.

What do I need?

Sun, soil (potting mix or compost), water and fertilizer (dilute Miracle Grow or Plant Tone)

Where do I get the plants?

I grow for a community garden and need thousands, so I grow from seeds using fluorescent lights, transferring to greenhouse and then cold frame. If you only need a few plants, you can buy a six-pack from your local garden center. You can buy seeds there, from your local hardware store, or online from Johnny's Seeds www.johnnyseeds.com or Burpee www.burpee.com.

A small herb garden by the deck should include parsley, basil, cilantro, dill and chives (all can be bought in cell packs as you'll want several of each plant), plus single pots of tarragon, rosemary, thyme, sage & mint. Continuous basil, dill and cilantro can be grown from seed when the soil warms up.

Vegetables

Indispensable cool weather plants are lettuce, arugula, bok choy, Swiss chard & peas (need trellis). Get a head start with cold frame, or plant seeds in the ground. Warm weather vegetables like tomatoes, beans, peppers, zucchini & summer squash need warm soil - think Memorial Day. Tomatoes, peppers & eggplant need a head start so that you can put the plants in the ground then. Bean, squash & cuke seeds can be planted directly in the ground. Root crops like radishes, turnips, carrots & beets can be planted directly in the ground when it is cool.

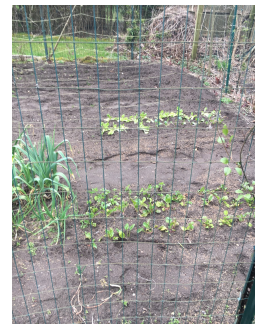
Obviously, you can't start with everything. At least put patio tomatoes in pots on the deck, along with basil. Engage the kids with growing something all their own and they will love it. Remember that some years are good and some not so good, but it is fun to try every year. Marigolds help with pest control. Plant in a “deer-free” space.

Contact Cornell Cooperative Extension for questions about seeds, plants, soil, compost, etc. Send pictures of any garden matter with your inquiry.

Alice Raimondo: aw242@cornell.edu

Sandra Vultoggio: sib7@cornell.edu

Jay Hunt, Southampton



Amelanchier canadensis

One of Montauk's many natural glories occurs during the first week of May, yet few people aside from its residents are aware of the spectacular floral display that greets one most everywhere in the area now. Locally known as shad, because of shad fish and alewives appearing in spawning streams at the same time as this spring bloom, *Amelanchier canadensis* is a multiple stem, suckering shrub, growing up to 25 feet high. Its relative, *Amelanchier arborea* which is also native to Eastern North America takes a tree form. *Amelanchier canadensis* is found in wet areas along the coast from eastern Canada to South Carolina. There are many other amelanchier species across the continent, the Allegheny Serviceberry, *Amelanchier laevis*, being one of the better known ones. However, there is much difficulty in distinguishing one from the other and they are often confused in the trade.

Amelanchier canadensis, also known as Shadblow Serviceberry, thicket serviceberry, Canada shadbush and Juneberry, is covered with small 5 petaled creamy white flowers which is why Montauk in early May looks like a floral wedding cake. Following the flowers are abundant sweet berries which turn from green to red to black, fully ripen in late June and are much loved by birds and animals. Jam and jelly can be made from them though the birds are likely to get them first. The shad leaves turn a lovely yellow gold and orange in fall and the gracefully curving trunks provide winter pleasure. Like many fruiting trees and shrubs, shad are prone to the effects of rust (cedar serviceberry rust is similar to cedar apple rust), and other minor leaf damage that may result in early defoliation some years. In my own garden the native shads appear to have a better tolerance for the rust than the Allegheny variety that was acquired from a nursery. With an obvious tolerance of a salty and sandy habitat, Shad thrives on the east end of Long Island and is an excellent addition to any native plant garden. This is truly a shrub for all seasons. Take a drive out to Montauk Point this year and see the bloom for yourself, especially after missing the cherries in DC, the BBG and Central Park....it will make your heart sing again!

More information about *Amelanchier canadensis* can be found in:

Tripp and Raulston, [The Year in Trees](#)

Michael Dirr, [Dirr's Hardy Trees and Shrubs](#); [Manual of Woody Landscape Plants](#)

John Turner, Carl Safina, [Exploring the Other Island, A Seasonal Guide to Nature on Long Island](#)



Elaine Peterson

HAH 2020 SUNDAY MONTHLY LECTURES - 2 PM - BH Community House

*All lectures are free to members, \$10 for not-yet-members.
Memberships start at \$45. Please join us!*

May 3 - Lois Sheinfeld **POSTPONED**

Outstanding Trees for the Home Garden

June 14 – Bill Cullina **POSTPONED**

*What do you Mean I'm Not a Perennial?! Native Shrubs &
Small Trees for Perennial Companionship*

There are no lectures in July or August

September 13 – Lori Chips

Troughs: Gardening in the Smallest Landscape

October 18 – Judith Tankard

Gardens of the Arts & Crafts Movement

November 8 – Margery Daughtery

Battling Diseases in the Garden

December 13 – David Culp

*A Bountiful Year: Six Seasons of Beauty from Brandywine
Cottage*

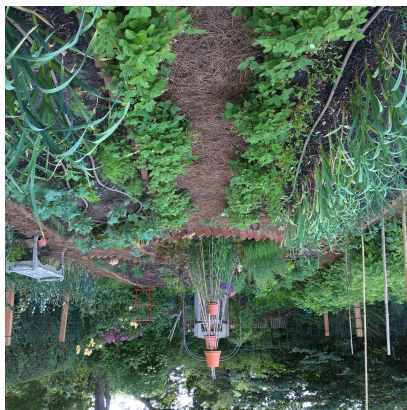
Websites of postponed speakers you can follow:

Tony Avent www.plantdelights.com Read all about Tony and his remarkable nursery.

Lois Sheinfeld www.floragloria.com Lois is a longtime member of HAH who gardens locally.
Her site is full of information you can use to grow your own gardens (plenty of photos and no ads!)

Bill Cullina - check out his books at Amazon. He is one of the best horticulturalists in the USA and his books are terrific! No website available at the moment but there are articles about him online that you can google.

These 3 speakers are being rescheduled for 2021!



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100% Recycled



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