



# Extending Your Growing Season

Thursday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013, St. Mary's Anglican Church  
Presenter: Elizabeth Crawford Thurber



*to grow food...to grow minds...to grow community*

## Beginner's Guide to Buying Seeds

- Easy-to-grow plants
- planting instructions
- quantity to buy
- harvest instructions
- type of feeder
- growing conditions required
- common pests & companion plants



## Small Plot / Container Gardening

### Optimize Your Space through:

- **Right-sizing your container**
- **Companion planting**
- **Succession planting** - Plant for cool spring , then hot summer, then cool fall/ early winter
- **Interplanting** - Small alongside or under shelter of larger
- **Vertical** - Tomatoes, cucumbers, beans



# Jump Start Your Seedlings

- What to start indoors
- Soil mixes
- Humidity, Fertilizers, Light
- Potting on
- Hardening off
- Planting out



# Healthy Soil and Composting

## NPK:

**Nitrogen-** for growing leaves;

**Phosphorus-** for root growth;

**Kalium – aka Potassium-** for overall growth and flowering and seeding

- **Organic Fertilizers**
- **Green Manures**
- **Compost** - to boost organic material





To grow food  
To grow minds  
To grow community

# Our Growing Season

**Fredericton - Zone 4b -5:**

May 22<sup>nd</sup> to Sept 22<sup>nd</sup>

**Outdoor growing season:**

- 4 months
- Approximately 17- 20 weeks
- 120-140 days



# The Importance of Fall Prep

**Planting in Spring will be easy  
if you incorporate:**

- Compost
- Aged manure
- Shredded leaves
- Lime



# Timing is Everything!

When to start, transplant, harvest & restore





# Row Covers

*Economical & effective*

## ***Light weight***

- *Protection from insects, birds*
- *Help warm the soil*
- *Protect seedlings from wind*
- *Help trap the moisture*



# Row Covers

*Economical & effective*

## ***Medium Weight***

- *Trap daytime heat – restricts light*
- *Protect from frost – spring & fall*
- *Remove for air circulation*
- *Remove for pollination*
- *Material should not rest on plants*



# Row Covers

*Economical & effective*

## ***Heavy Weight***

- *Restricts lighting*
- *Extends season for heat loving crops*
- *Late-season protection to cool & cold weather crops*
- *Ongoing winter protection*
- *Season extender for mini hoop, cold frames*



# Cloches & Hot Caps

- *Plant incubators*
- *Temporary weather protectors*
- *Gallon milk jugs, soda bottles*
- *Plastic bowls*
- *Water filled cloches (Wall-O-water)*
- *Remember to pre-warm soil*



# Cloches & Hot Caps



## Mini Hoop Tunnels 1.5 – 2 ft tall

- *Inexpensive to construct*
- *Miniature greenhouse*
- *Spring, summer, fall protect crops*
- *Quickly moveable*
- *Can be used for shade*
- *Use ribs for row covers + plastic*



# Constructing Ribs for Mini-Hoops

- 9 gauge wire sunk into ground
- PVC pipes –  $\frac{1}{2}$ " or  $\frac{3}{4}$ " slipped over Rebar



# Mini/Quick/Low Hoop Tunnels

- Must be vented
- Watered
- Compost or rotted manure added regularly
- Can string lights in them for winter
- Snow removal – winter tie down





# Cold Frames

- Plant winter crops around mid August
- Theory is to allow crops to freeze
- Harvest them when inside temp above freezing
- Add additional covers over frame in coldest weather
- Could bury heating coil in soil or thermal collectors like water jobs, concrete blocks
- Snow must be removed
- Needs soil enrichment, watering & venting



# Wooden Cold Frames

- Place weed barrier in the bottom
- Top that can be raised and vented
- Use non-treated wood - Hemlock
- Bury in ground, use Styrofoam 2" around outside perimeter
- Locate close to wall, basement or protected area
- Good drainage & full sun
- Screen when lid is raised



# Straw Bale Cold Frames

- Top covering – 4-6 mm large window piece of polycarbonate or rigid plastic for top
- Protects kale, carrots, leeks, bunching onions
- Brush off snow
- Needs watering & venting



# Mini Greenhouse using old car port



# Protecting Crops

