

AOVS URBAN FARM NEWSLETTER



JUNE 2019
ISSUE 11

Farm Update JUNE

The heavy rains have brought abundant growth to the farm. It feels as though many crops have doubled in size over night. The weeds have also taken off, and so we are spending time every morning chipping away at the weediest beds. Like with all things, we must find a balance though- if we don't prioritize and manage our time well, we could easily be spending all of our time weeding.

However, if we continue to work on building up the soil beneath our feet, the weeds will have a harder time making it. Every time we flame weed, it kills off the weed seeds near the top of the soil without destroying the microorganisms underneath. Using crop residue as mulch returns nutrients to the soil that have been depleted by the previous crop. Adding compost improves the soil structure and adds organic material that earthworms and other soil organisms consume. Earth worms also eat weed seeds- either destroying them or reducing their ability to germinate.

DID YOU KNOW?

Earthworms don't have lungs so they breathe through their skin. This is why they die if their skin dries out.



a worm's worth: HOW EARTHWORMS HELP THE GREEN GRASS GROW

Whether you call them nightcrawlers, rainworms, angleworms, earthworms, or just worms, these little wrigglers contribute to healthy, beautiful lawns in a variety of ways. Learn more about these often unseen creatures, and how you can use them to benefit your lawn.

they break up thatch

THATCH IS A ROUGH, DENSE LAYER OF MATTER (DEAD GRASS, STEMS, AND ROOTS) THAT BLOCKS THE FLOW OF WATER AND NUTRIENTS.



It will be difficult to deny the probability that every particle of earth... has passed through the intestines of worms.

— CHARLES DARWIN



5x
MORE NITROGEN IN SOIL WITH WORMS

they eat nematodes

NEMATODES ARE PARASITES THAT FEED ON GRASS ROOTS. UNCHECKED, THEY CAUSE YELLOWING, WILTING, AND BARE PATCHES.



they help water flow

THE TUNNELS THEY MAKE BREAK UP THE SOIL AND PROVIDE A PATH FOR WATER TO FLOW AND REACH ROOTS EASILY.



7x
MORE PHOSPHATE IN SOIL WITH WORMS

they eat other pests

BY REDUCING THE NUMBER OF HARMFUL BACTERIA, FUNGI, AND MICROBES, WORMS INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF BENEFICIAL MICROBES.



11x
MORE POTASSIUM IN SOIL WITH WORMS

they fertilize the soil

EARTHWORM WASTE - CALLED CASTINGS - IS MORE NUTRIENT-RICH THAN THE SOIL THE WORM INITIALLY CONSUMED.



PSST... NITROGEN, PHOSPHATE, AND POTASSIUM ARE THE NUTRIENTS REPRESENTED BY THE 3 NUMBERS ON FERTILIZER BAGS.

HELP YOUR EARTHWORMS HELP YOU!

Keep them fed by creating an earthworm pile (a stack of leaves, kitchen scraps, and other vegetation) near your lawn, and by leaving grass clippings in the lawn after mowing. Also, herbicides and pesticides can kill earthworms, so be careful!



Worms are the intestines of the earth.

— ARISTOTLE

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LawnCare.net

SOURCES

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Featured Vegetable

BEETS



Beta-cyanine is what gives beets their dark red color. This antioxidant is known to fight against cancer and other diseases. Beets also contain many anti-inflammatory phytonutrients and so eating them can help your body guard against chronic inflammation and pain. Adding beets to your diet can also help lower and maintain healthy blood pressure levels.

Beet greens are packed with nutrients, including magnesium (helps with prevention of Alzheimer's), potassium (good for nerves and muscles), as well as zinc, copper, and vitamins A, B, and C (immunity boosting). In fact, many endurance athletes drink beetroot juice before or after a workout because the nitrates in beets improve blood flow throughout the body. Beets also aid the liver as it detoxes the body.

Featured Recipe

BEET GREEN PESTO PASTA

5 to 6 cups beet greens, cleaned and trimmed
 1/4 cup walnuts (or pecans)
 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 2 garlic cloves
 Juice and zest of half a lemon
 1/2 cup olive oil
 2 tsp. salt

Place all ingredients except oil in blender container. Pulse for about one minute, then slowly add oil. Remove from blender with spoon and serve over pasta, meats, or anything your heart desires!

ROASTED BEETS

1 lb beets, peeled and cubed
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 a few grinds of fresh black pepper
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 tablespoon fresh thyme
 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar

Roast for 20 -25 minutes until beets are just about done cooking. Remove pan from oven, add garlic and thyme, stir to combine. Cook for 10 additional minutes until a fork easily pokes through beets and the edges are starting to caramelize. Remove from heat, and add balsamic vinegar. Stir to coat the beets. Taste and adjust salt if necessary.

Preheat oven to 400F. Place beets in cast iron skillet or a baking sheet, toss with olive oil, salt, and pepper.

Yum yum gimme some! -Dusty
Faron Levesque, Community Kitchen Coordinator

Questions about the AOVS Urban Farm?

Contact Becca Hart, Community Garden Organizer
 becca@memphistilth.org or 774-6768 ext. 607



Memphis Tilth has partnered with AOVS to build an urban farm and garden project in an effort to serve, educate, and empower AOVS residents. Memphis Tilth is a nonprofit collective housing like-missioned initiatives for land, food, people, and place.
memphistilth.org

