

Kid's KOrner

All Kinds of People Enjoy Cultivating Vegetable Gardens

WASHINGTON — "Last year raccoons kept diggin' up my corn, and the worms got into my tomatoes, but I didn't give up, and I won't this season," says Sharina Price.

The 10-year-old Washingtonian displays the same sod-busting determination shown by millions of other Americans who are confidently attacking another growing season with hoe, rake, and shovel.

Gardening ranks as the country's number 1 outdoor leisure activity. Last year 39 million households were involved in food and flower gardening and the number is expected to grow.

Motivated by a desire for fresh, nutritious, better-tasting food, the postwar baby-boomers are swelling the gardening ranks. "They garden because they like to, not for the economic reasons of past generations," says Charles Scott, president of the National Gardening Association in Burlington, Vt.

Everybody's Doing It

Baby-boomers are only one offshoot of the planting craze. Special gardens are sprouting up for almost everyone. The young and old, the handicapped, prison inmates, and corporate employees all have their private plots. So do Bible-lovers, history buffs, Asian refugees, and married couples, among others.

Gardens for inner-city kids, such as the one at the National Arboretum, have been especially beneficial. As Sharina Price says, "Gardening is fun, you can watch things grow, then eat them. Besides, it beats staying at home where there's nothing to do."

One of her supervisors, David Johnson, concurs. "School, pool, and Bible studies are the only things a lot of these kids can look forward to in the summer," he

says. "Gardening gives them another dimension."

Children added such a dimension at a nursing home in Milwaukee that had plowed up part of its lawn for a garden. Someone came up with the idea of inviting youngsters to help the oldsters with the arduous weeding and digging chores. Friendships and working relationships blossomed along with the crops.

The elderly and handicapped aren't the only shut-ins who enjoy gardens. "Prison inmates don't have to sit around and act like vegetables; they should grow them," says Nancy Flinn, author of "The Prison Garden Book."

Flinn, who has journeyed around the country encouraging voluntary gardening in prisons, says the response from inmates has been overwhelmingly positive. "Gardening gives them dignity and helps the time pass," she says. "And the vegetables don't pass judgment. A brussel sprout doesn't care if someone's a saint or a murderer."

Massachusetts Freezer

The gardens have been so successful in Massachusetts that correctional institutions there have converted their cannery in Concord into a freezing plant. It operates five days a week, four months a year, and produces about 500 pounds of vegetables and 100 gallons of tomato puree weekly.

Prison gardens soon may blossom under the most arid conditions. An acre has been set aside near the correctional facility on St. Croix in the Virgin Islands for a new planting system known as "Living Wall Gardens." The gardens are formed by vertical plastic containers of various sizes. Plants grow out of small openings in the sides of the containers and require relatively small amounts

of water and fertilizer.

F. Wesley Moffett Jr., who developed Living Wall Gardens, thinks they may become vital weapons in the war against hunger.

Cultivating difficult areas has long been a specialty of the Hmong people, many of whom have migrated to the United States from the mountains of Laos.

In Seattle, church groups have helped Hmong refugees find neglected patches of land near parking lots, highways, and steep hillsides, which the displaced tribesmen have cleared to plant some of their favorite crops, such as mustard greens.

The spindly mustard is one of the plants that grow in the "biblical garden" nestled next to the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. Composed only of plants that thrived during biblical times, the quarter-acre garden surprises some visitors when they don't find an apple tree there.

Botanists have concluded that apples didn't grow in the Holy Land in those days. Some biblical scholars think Adam and Eve might have been undone by an apricot, plum, quince, or fig, the apricot being the likeliest culprit. Trees bearing these fruits shade the New York garden.

Propagating Colonial Plants

At the Northshore Community Garden in Middletown, Mass., green-thumbers honor a much smaller slice of history. They collect "heirloom" seeds and propagate plants that flourished in the 18th and 19th centuries. As many as 312 types of beans and 29 varieties of squash have been raised in the garden during a single growing season.

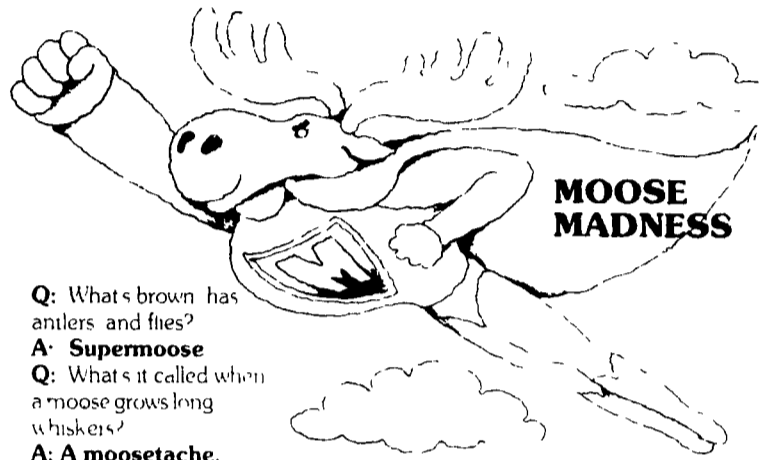
A crop's yield, not its pedigree, is what matters most to married couples who tend a plot of land set

aside for them at the University of Vermont. Created primarily for low-income couples, the garden was designed to help them through college by saving on their food bills.

Many companies have found that gardens ease executive tensions as well as help employees at the lower end of the pay scale. A Hewlett Packard scientist in Palo Alto,

Calif., said, "My lab work is very intense; gardening gives me a change of pace and a few calm moments in a rigorous routine."

Industrialist J. H. Patterson is credited with pioneering company gardens in the United States in the 1890s. Garden-minded young people, he theorized, would make the best factory foremen and civic leaders when they grew up.



- Q: What's brown has antlers and flies?
- A: Supermoose
- Q: What's it called when a moose grows long whiskers?
- A: A moosetache.
- Q: What do moose do at concerts?
- A: Make moosic.
- Q: What do moose have that no other animals have?
- A: Baby moose.
- Q: When does a moose flunk out of school?
- A: When he makes too many moosetakes
- Q: What do you get when you cross a moose and a hippo?
- A: A hippopotamoose.



COLOR THIS!

- | | |
|-----------|---------------|
| 1. BLACK | 6. ORANGE |
| 2. PINK | 7. PEACH |
| 3. YELLOW | 8. LT. BROWN |
| 4. BLUE | 9. LT. BLUE |
| 5. BROWN | 10. LT. GREEN |

COMMON MOTHS ARE CLOSE RELATIVES TO BUTTERFLIES. THERE IS NO SURE SIMPLE WAY TO TELL MOTHS AND BUTTERFLIES APART. SOME MOTHS ARE HARMFUL TO MAN, BUT MANY ARE HELPFUL. THE SILKWORM MOTH SPINS THE SILK TO MAKE BEAUTIFUL CLOTH, WHILE THE HARMFUL MOTHS DESTROY TREES, FOOD CROPS AND SOME PLANTS.

