


**All Gardens  
Great & Small**  
by  
York Co.  
Horticultural Agent  
**Tom Becker**



**DON'T FORGET  
TO WATER**

It's hard to believe, but some "Great and Small Gardeners" have experienced several days without significant rainfall. Although we may feel we've had enough rain in recent weeks to last a lifetime — or at least the rest of the summer, truth is, a few hot, sunny, windy days can result in the need to apply water to our lawns and gardens.

Before you grab the garden hose, take the time to check the flower or vegetable bed to see just how dry it really is. Use a garden spade or trowel (or soil probe for those very serious gardeners who have everything) to dig down a few inches to check soil moisture. Water only if the soil really needs it.

quire about 1-inch of water per week, including rain, under normal growing conditions. Don't count on the rainfall amount supplied by the local news. This is data taken from one place — usually the station itself or a local airport. This may be accurate only for that particular location. Summer "pop-up" storms usually produce widely scattered rainfall with amounts varying considerably even within a small area. Nothing beats a backyard rain gauge for determining how much water your garden is receiving. Just be sure to empty it daily and keep it clean.

**SQUASH BLOSSOMS AND BABY SQUASH**

The amazing variety and abundance produced make squash a truly rewarding garden vegetable to grow. If this means you al-

ways end up with too much (and your neighbors run when they see you approach bearing zucchini) try varying your harvest practices by picking fruit in various stages throughout the season. Squash blossoms are edible and along with baby or immature fruit, add a gourmet touch to your meals. This goes for all types of summer squash — zucchini, scallops or patty pans, straight — and crook-neck, etc.

Pick squash flowers, males and females, in the early morning when they are fully opened; by afternoon they are wilted and difficult to stuff for cooking. Pick the female flowers when their fruit is one and a half inches long. Squash blossoms are great stuffed and sauteed or simply dipped in batter and fried.

Baby squash can be harvested while the blossom is still attached or after the blossom falls. The tiny fruit can be either steamed or eaten raw.

**IDENTIFY  
INVASIVE PLANTS**

Unknown to most gardeners is a list of alien plants called exotics like Kudzu and Paulownia that deplete soil nutrient resources. Invasive plants are found in many wooded areas, both open fields and wetlands of Pennsylvania. Young saplings soon become larger young trees that choke out other native plants.

These trees and shrubs change the balance and diversity of a woodland community. For example, paulownia trees often grow in abandoned areas. It is also shade tolerant but is rarely seen in dense-ly wooded areas.

Ailanthus or tree of heaven has an aggressive underground root system. Like black walnuts, a toxic substance is released by the roots that caused an alleopathic effect. Kudzu vines compete by choking out and shading existing shrubs by forming a mat-like growth. Glossy Buckthorn covers over wetlands so no other species can develop. Deer also enhance invasive plants. For example deer feed on bayberry but not on honeysuckle. To avoid invasive plants, starby by taking a plant problem inventory. Remove by hand those plants found to be invasive or use a registered herbicide. Monitor the area after treatment.

Any questions regarding the above article can be addressed to Tom Becker, Penn State Cooperative Extension at (717) 840-8408.

**Tomatoes Offer**

(Continued from Page B6)

**GREEN TOMATO  
MINCEMEAT**

- 8 pounds green tomatoes, chopped
  - 8 pounds Rome or Ida Red apples, chopped
  - 4 pounds raisins
  - 4 pounds sugar
  - ½ tablespoons salt
  - 1 tablespoon cloves
  - 2 tablespoons cinnamon
  - 1 cup butter
  - ½ cup vinegar
- Combine ingredients slowly and boil for approximately three hours or until thickened. Yields 4 quarts.

Donna Dailey  
Clarks Summit

**SPRUCE UP TOMATO SOUP**

- Diced tomatoes cooked separately, drained, add to heated soup.
  - Top with toasted bread cubes.
  - Sprinkle top with grated cheese.
  - Sprinkle top with bacon bits.
  - Add all four ingredients to tomato soup for great soup.
- Betty Light  
Lebanon

**TOMATO SALSA**

- 7 quarts peeled, cored, chopped tomatoes
- 4 cups seeded, chopped long green chiles
- 5 cups chopped onion
- ½ cup seeded, finely chopped jalapeno peppers
- 6 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 cups bottled lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 1 tablespoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoons ground cumin
- 3 tablespoons oregano leaves
- 2 tablespoons fresh cilantro

Combine all ingredients except cumin, oregano, and cilantro in a large pot and bring to a boil, stirring frequently, then reduce heat and simmer 10 minutes. Add spices and simmer for another 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Ladle hot into pint jars, leaving ½-inch head space. Adjust lids and process in a boiling water canner. 15 minutes at 0-1,000 feet altitude. Yield: 16-18 pints.

**TOMATO TACO SAUCE**

- 8 quarts peeled, cored, finely chopped paste tomatoes
  - 2 cloves garlic, crushed
  - 5 cups chopped onions
  - 4 jalapeno peppers, seeded, chopped
  - 4 long green chilies, seeded, chopped
  - 2½ cups vinegar
  - 2 tablespoons salt
  - 1½ tablespoon black pepper
  - 1 tablespoon sugar
  - 2 tablespoons oregano leaves
  - 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- Combine ingredients in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer, stirring frequently until thick, about one hour. Ladle hot mixture into pint jars, leaving ½-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process in boiling water canner: 15 minutes for 0-1,000 feet altitude. Yield: 16-18 pints.

G. Minckler  
Wayne

(Turn to Page B8)

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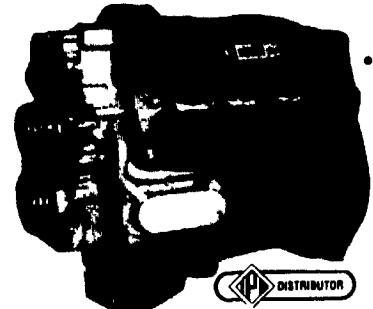
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