The Compost is a SF Environment and the Rec and Park Dept project meant to serve San Francisco community gardens. This post is for you, so please tell us what you need!

Garden Spotlight

"Howard Langton Community Garden has always been a place where I can commune with my neighbors in a friendly setting, sharing with them the peace and tranquility of nature that would otherwise not be available to me in this urban setting. All who garden here share a love of being with fellow gardeners, sharing fresh produce and herbs, and watching the birds raise their young. My daughter was married here, and now her children are growing up learning to garden, and love nature as we do." -Kamurrha Knowles, garden member.

Howard Langton Community Garden has come up with a dynamic group approach to community building and conflict resolution. Deborah Stucker, the garden’s RPD liaison, describes a system where everyone is asked to participate in all garden decisions. If a conflict arises over common garden issues, such as pruning in the common areas or repeated tampering with plots assigned to others, any given member can call a meeting where the entire group discusses the issue. After everyone has had the chance to add to the deliberations, various solutions are considered and decided by a majority vote. Sometimes resolution comes in the form of renewed clarification and promises of commitment to the garden user agreement while other times a period of probation or suspension is chosen to give a member the chance to get back on board. As part of annual membership renewal every gardener recommits to the garden’s user agreement.

Plant, Don’t Plot

As San Francisco’s go-to expert on neighborhood mediation, the nonprofit Community Boards has helped communities deal with all kinds of issues. Jim Garrison, their Communications Manager, gave us tips for dealing with conflict. He says preventing disputes is easier than solving them. He recommends starting with clear and standard garden guidelines that all gardeners agree to and establishing open lines of communication.

Garrison notes that even with the best communication, there’s

What to plant now from the SF Seed Library

April-June

Sunny gardens: Snap beans, Beets, Broccoli seedlings, Cabbage seedlings, Carrots, Celery seedlings, Collards, Cucumber, Kale seedlings, Kohlrabi seedlings, Leek seedlings, Lettuce, Mustard, Onion, Parsnip, Radish, Spinach, Summer Squash, Swiss Chard, Turnips

Foggier gardens can also try: Cauliflower, Peas, Fava Beans, Brussel Sprouts

Visit sfseedlibrary.org for the full calendar list and information about borrowing seeds.
Tomato Time!
The best time to plant tomatoes in San Francisco is when the soil begins to warm in mid to late April. Pam Peirce, author of Golden Gate Gardening, recommends getting the largest plants possible, as they will mature more slowly in our climate. There are a number of varieties suited for City that demonstrated resistance to a common tomato problem: late blight. Blight resistant varieties include Juliet, Golden Sweet, Mountain Magic, Defiant, White Currant, Legend, Koralik, Matt’s Wild Cherry and Tommy Toe. Look for them at the UC Coop Extension Tomato and Pepper Plant Sale on Saturday, April 13 from 9am-1pm.

For more information on the sale, visit: tinyurl.com/uc-tomatoes

Fight the Blight!
Tomato late blight is a fungus that causes dark splotches on leaves, brown lesions on stems, greasy, brown skin on fruits, and eventually the death of the plant. If you’re affected by it, remove all infected plants immediately and keep your garden clear of all potato and nightshade vegetables and weeds from November through April, as they can harbor the blight. For more info: Pam Peirce’s Golden Gate Gardening.

Join the Forum!
The first ever forum will be held at Parque Niños Unidos and Treat Commons Community Garden on Saturday, May 18th, from 9am-2pm and will include presentations on fundraising, hands-on garden workshops, tours, and open discussion time. Please bring something from your garden to share! Space is limited. RSVP is required.

Register at: sfg.eventbrite.com