

# What's Sprouting...

at the Oxford Community Garden?

[www.OxfordCGA.org](http://www.OxfordCGA.org)

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## Welcome!

As we begin our 5th growing season here at the Oxford Community Garden, we'd like to welcome y'all to our first edition of *What's Sprouting*, our new OCGA newsletter. Since this is a new venture for OCGA, please feel free to offer input on topics you'd like to see included in our upcoming newsletters. (Contact Jennifer Fassinger at [jmntnlvr@gmail.com](mailto:jmntnlvr@gmail.com)). Hope to see/meet y'all at the garden this spring.

## When Can I Plant?

Now that our deep freeze here in Oxford has thawed, I'm sure you are as anxious as I am to get your garden planted. Depending on what you're planting, this may or may not be a good idea. According to the Farmer's Almanac, the following seeds can be planted right now: broccoli, Brussels sprouts, carrots, cauliflower, collards, kale, kohlrabi, leeks, onion sets, peas, radishes, spinach, and turnips. The Farmer's Almanac has a [great chart](#)<sup>1</sup> on their website with recommendations on when to plant each variety of seeds and starts. For a slightly different point of view, the Mississippi County Extension considers Oxford to be in Zone 2, and also has its own [charts](#)<sup>2</sup> for when to plant particular seeds and starts. Wondering what the weather will be like for your plants? Go to The Weather Channel's website and you can view not only the forecast for the next 10 days, but you can also view the [average highs and lows for Oxford](#)<sup>3</sup> in April and beyond to help with your garden planning.

## Prepping for Spring Planting

During our annual meeting last month, we learned from one another what works well in our garden. Some of our members have found great success in their gardens by not only mixing compost into their soil before planting each spring, but also by spreading leaf mulch across the top of their garden after planting. Many have found that after doing this extra, step they have fewer weeds to pull and have to water less frequently, some mentioning they only water ONCE per week! Wow! That sounds like a great plan!

## Where to Buy

Seeds and starts can be purchased at a number of locations around town. Here's some ideas: The Barn (2657 West Oxford Loop, 238-7730); Farmer's Market (274 CR 101, actually on North Lamar past 30, but before North Oxford Baptist, 234-9363); Oxford in Bloom (1446 South Lamar, 236-4686); Dash for Cash (1307 North Lamar, 234-2304); Home Depot, Walmart, and Kroger.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.almanac.com/gardening/planting-dates/zipcode/38655>

<sup>2</sup> <http://msucare.com/lawn/garden/vegetables/planting/map.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.weather.com/weather/monthly/38655?month=1>

## **Throw Out Your Probiotic - Garden Instead!**

Are you aware those little sprouts growing in your garden could be the answer to your digestive problems? Experts on fermented foods explain how growing your own vegetables and fermenting them (like sauerkraut) can provide a much higher, more digestible, and more potent probiotic than can ever be manufactured and sold in a bottle. *The Art of Fermentation* by Sandor Katz explains the why, the how to, and the benefits of fermenting your own garden grown produce. Can't spare the time to read this excellent book? Dr. Joseph Mercola has a great article summing up the [benefits of fermenting](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## **Plots and Memberships Available**

Don't have room at your home to garden? Looking for a place to meet other like-minded individuals interested in growing healthy food to feed yourself, your family, and maybe even the Oxford community? The Oxford Community Garden has plots available. Available on a first-come-first serve basis: 4' x 8' plots are \$15 per year, 10' x 16' plots are \$20, and 16' x 16' plots are \$25 (prices include \$10 OCGA membership fee). Maybe you have a garden at home but would like to meet others who share your passion. The OCGA also has members who do not have a plot at the garden but do share in the fun and learning of the garden. Recent education events sponsored by the garden have included classes on canning and ridding our plants of pests. To inquire about becoming a plot-holder at the garden, please send us an e-mail ([oxfordcga@gmail.com](mailto:oxfordcga@gmail.com)). If you just want to support OCGA by becoming a member, please visit our website ([www.OxfordCGA.org](http://www.OxfordCGA.org)).

## **Oxford Community Garden Association Elects Board Members**

A big thank you goes out to our new and old OCGA Board Members who volunteer to work to keep our garden going strong:

- President: Jason Hoeksema (234-4152, [Jason.hoeksema@gmail.com](mailto:Jason.hoeksema@gmail.com))
- Treasurer: Kathy Wachter
- Secretary: Ashley Fly
- At-large Board Member: Sunny Young
- At-large Board Member: Benjamin Koltai
- Garden Committee Chair & Garden Manager: Tiffany Bensen
- Community Harvest Chair: Vicki Reithel
- Landscaping Chair: Mary Hartwell Howorth
- Education Chair: Katelynn Dillard

To find contact information for all board members and committee chairs, please visit our website ([www.OxfordCGA.org](http://www.OxfordCGA.org)).

## **Garden Work Day**

Plan to spend the morning out at the garden doing some Spring Cleaning. After a long cold winter, the common space in our garden is in need of some TLC, and what better way to get something done than get together and all pitch in! Our next work day will be either the second or third weekend this month (April). Watch for an email about it and an announcement on the garden website. Y'all come out and join us, ya hear?

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<sup>4</sup> <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2013/12/29/sandor-katz-on-fermented-foods.aspx>

### **Garden Plot Damaged!**

Recently a plot was damaged and sprouts were trampled when someone walked across it. Sometimes the border of a plot is hard to discern, please be mindful of this and remember to walk around all plots – not through them - even if it doesn't look like anything is growing. Thanks! If you are at the garden and find something amiss, for example a damaged plot or a burst pipe, or if you have a question about garden operations, please contact our Garden Manager, Tiffany Bensen ([tiffanybensen@gmail.com](mailto:tiffanybensen@gmail.com), home phone: 234-4152, office phone: 915-2089).

### **Garden Rules**

Each year as members we are asked to read over the [garden rules](#)<sup>5</sup> and sign the binder in the shed that we've read the rules and agree to abide by them. In case you forget, they're also posted on the side of the shed for your perusal at any time. Here's 3 reminders to help things go smoothly this spring: 1. Any synthetic chemical use (fertilizers or pesticides) must be used such that they don't leave the boundary of the plot holder's plot (the worst offense is DRIFT -- it doesn't take more than a gentle breeze to carry a chemical into others' plots.) 2. Everyone is responsible for keeping the pathway surrounding their plot maintained (weeded and chipped -- it's best to weed and create space for cardboard, then spread chips on the cardboard); if everyone maintained their own area, it would be very helpful. 3. Please clean off shovels and hoes when returning to storage.

### **Need Help?**

Keeping up with weeding is one of the most tedious tasks a gardener faces. In our garden especially, we all want to be sure that the walkways are clear of weeds.

13 year old Luke Kelly is available for weeding outside of your plot. For \$10, he will come and pull all the weeds around your plot. You can text his mom at [662.801.1008](tel:662.801.1008) when you need him. He is also available for more regular work including watering and weeding inside your plot.

### **Give Us Your Tips & Tricks to a Great Garden**

Got a great tip for planting? Keeping away those pesky pests? Growing strong healthy plants without chemicals? Share it with the rest of us! Email your tips and tricks to Jennifer Fassinger ([jmntnlvr@gmail.com](mailto:jmntnlvr@gmail.com)), and we'll share them with y'all in our upcoming newsletters.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=b3hmb3JkY2dhLm9yZ3x3d3d8Z3g6M2NkNmE0ZDM2M2U4MzA3Nw>

