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# October 2022 Newsletter

## Issue 8

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Leon, the Ground-dweller

## What's Growing On?



**LEARNING  
THROUGH  
GARDENING**

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Hi friends,

Fall is here! I think that fall is my favorite season in so many ways. We are in the home stretch now; I have planted my very first fall garden: I am sticking with leafy greens this time around, and I am still getting some carrots. I am also trying a cover crop in one of my gardens. I am wondering if it really will help? Only time will tell. In our next issue we will talk about putting our gardens to bed for the winter.

Things have been super busy for me; I am so excited that the Best Practices workshop is coming up! I have been planning this event for a while so it will be great for it to come to fruition! There are also some other exciting events coming up at the Chatsworth Cranberry Festival and the Teachers' Convention in November. Additionally, I have been finishing up the requirements for my Master Gardener certificate and a couple of weeks ago, I took a master composter class...so interesting!

As our outdoor gardening begins to wane, consider keeping your garden growing in your classroom window. You can start a kitchen scrap garden with your students. This is a fun way for your students to learn about different ways to propagate plants and keep them growing all winter long! Want to learn more about a kitchen scrap garden? Make sure you sign up for the Best Practices Workshop!

Please make sure you fill out the Food for Thought google form (see page 5). Additionally, here is a short It's Fall video from my YouTube Channel: <https://youtu.be/jZEsWkLp7bY>

Happy Planting!  
Nancy

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## Upcoming October Events:

October is Farm to School Month and Apple Month

1<sup>st</sup> – Model T introduced

12<sup>th</sup> – Farmers' Day

16<sup>th</sup> – World Food Day

26<sup>th</sup> – Pumpkin Day

29<sup>th</sup> – Oatmeal Day

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## Important Announcements:

- I will be at the Chatsworth Cranberry Festival on October 15 and 16. I am also presenting at the NJEA convention on November 10 in Atlantic City! Come and see me!
- The application window has opened for schools to apply to Growing Together! Be sure to tell your friends if they are interested in starting a school garden at their school! Applications due December 31, 2022.
- **WINTER LESSONS?** All schools who are current Associates and Partners will automatically receive lessons and supplies for winter lessons. **Ambassador schools MUST let me know if you want them.**
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## Growing our Curriculum!

We are so excited to have been awarded a Farm to School Grant from the USDA. Learning through Gardening in conjunction with NJ Agriculture in the Classroom will be producing a **four-video series**. Each video will feature a live streaming trip to the farm where students meet farmers across New Jersey and learning about the sources of their food and about what it is like to be a farmer, directly from the farmer. We want to educate students so that they become adults who work to keep New Jersey green, growing, and nourished. Each video will also have pre- and post-activities to introduce and extend learning.

I just spent a week in Boston planning and preparing for this Farm to School video series project; it is an exciting and daunting project which will no doubt be an outstanding addition to our existing program. I am sure **I will be reaching out to you** for your continued support in participating in our virtual field trips and trying out lessons and activities. Your input is of **vital importance** as we explore this new curriculum and grow our program and it is **so appreciated!**

### **BEST PRACTICE WORKSHOP:**

Tuesday, October 18 – Best Practice South will be held at Rowan College at Burlington County; 8:30-12:00

Friday, October 21 – Best Practice North will be held at Institute of Food Nutrition and Health\*\* (Rutgers); New Brunswick, NJ; 8:30-12:00.

\*\*Please be advised, that food and drink are not allowed in the room.

Registration is open, now! [Click here!](#)

[If you have already registered, you will be receiving a confirmation email, soon!](#)



**NOTE:** I apologize, since scheduling my workshops, I realize that the BPW competes with workshops sponsored by Farm To School and NJ Agriculture in the classroom! Boy, talk about luck, I couldn't have done that if I tried! Anyway, when I schedule in the future, I will be sure to doublecheck, so we don't encounter that problem again. Therefore, there will be **another Best Practice Workshop** held sometime **in February 2023** so not to worry if you are not able to attend this time around. Details to follow in our next edition!

**Remember to update your information and join Growing Together! as an Ambassador School...to receive plugs for the upcoming calendar year!**

For schools who have been a Growing Partner School or a Growing Associate School. The application is just an update for our records! All applicants are happily accepted!

[Click here for the application.](#)

Thank you to all of our Ambassador Schools!

Come Grow with Us!

### **School Garden of the Year!**

Does your garden have what it takes?

Details coming soon about this fun contest where you can win a terrific prize for your school garden!

I am also looking for our next Spotlight Garden! Please email me if we can feature your school garden in one of our upcoming issues!

# Your Fall Garden

## How to Harvest Lettuce

Your fall plug delivery contained five different types of lettuce. But did you know not all lettuces are harvested the same way? I sent you romaine, loose-leaf and butterhead; here is what I found out:



### Harvesting Romaine and Butterhead Lettuce

There are two distinct ways of harvesting romaine lettuce. When romaine lettuce is mature, you can harvest the whole head at once by cutting the leafy head off from the stem at its base, or you can harvest individual leaves from the outer layer of the head as you need them, leaving the inner leaves to grow and mature. You may be lucky enough to reap a second harvest from the stem if you have cut it. So, keep an eye out for a second wave of leaves sprouting up.

Either way, rinse your lettuce in cool water and pat dry and store in the refrigerator until ready to use.

### Harvesting Loose-leaf Lettuce

Loose-leaf lettuce varieties are free-standing and do not produce a head. When it comes time to harvest loose-leaf lettuce, it couldn't be easier because you are actually collecting individual loose leaves. Pinch off loose leaves at the base of each leaf when they are about four inches tall and before any stalks

form and bolt. Gather leaves and toss in a colander with some cool water to rinse.

Once you have your harvest, be sure to celebrate your growing achievements with students! Have a Salad Party! You will be surprised at how far your lettuce will go!



**PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE:** Share pictures from your school garden with me!! Our supporters love to see the impact of the school garden on students!



**Growing our presence on social media, follow us:**

*Facebook and Instagram:*

@Learnthroughgardening

*Twitter:* @LearnTGardening

*YouTube Channel:* LearnThroughGardening





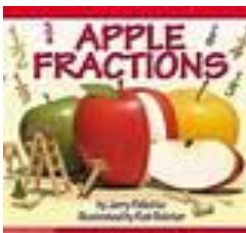
## Got Garlic? Now is the time to plant it!

You can use organic garlic bulbs they sell at the farmer's market!

Six Steps for Planting Garlic:

1. Plan to plant garlic in the fall 4-6 weeks before the ground freezes.
2. Prepare the soil by loosening it to a depth of at least 8" and mix in some compost.
3. Just prior to planting, break up the garlic heads into individual cloves, leaving as much of the papery covering on each clove intact as possible.
4. Plant cloves 3" to 4" deep, orienting them so the pointy ends face up.
5. Water gently to settle the soil and then cover the bed with a 4" to 6" layer of straw. Even as air temperatures drop, the soil will stay warm enough for the newly planted cloves to establish roots before the ground freezes. Sometimes you will see some green shoots form in fall; that's fine and won't harm plants. They'll begin growing in earnest in spring.
6. Next spring and summer, keep the bed weeded and watered!

## Celebrate October with your students!



by Jerry Pallotta

This book uses a variety of different apples to teach

kids all about **fractions**.

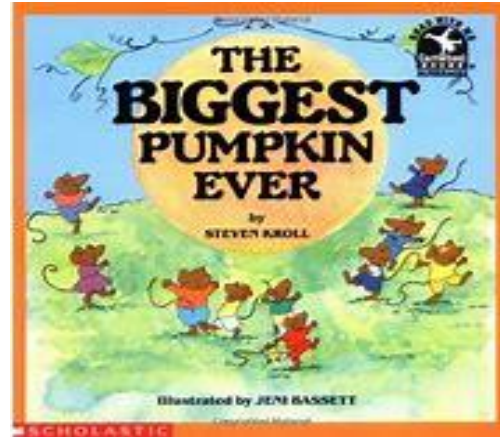
Elves demonstrate how to divide apples into halves, thirds, fourths, and more. Readers will also learn about different varieties of apples!

### Want to go pumpkin picking?

Here is a short video (2 min) for grades 2 and up about growing a pumpkin patch:  
<https://youtu.be/DCrV6ISOdIo>

October is National Farm to School Month! Here is a link for a ton of resources to use with your students and school: [Farm to School Month](#)

The Biggest Pumpkin Ever is a cute story about two mice who fell in love with the same pumpkin....Desmond the field mouse wants to carve the biggest jack-o'-lantern in the neighborhood with his pumpkin. Clayton the house mouse wants to win the Biggest Pumpkin contest with his pumpkin. A great story for our younger learners!



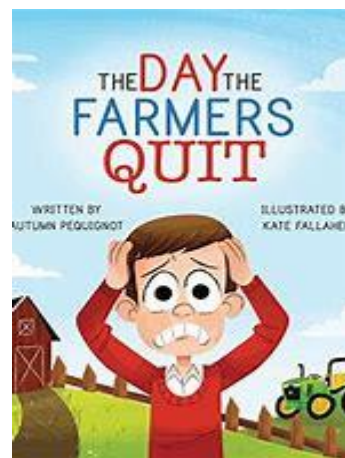
## National Farmers' Day

National Farmers' Day is observed on October 12th each year marking the harvest period that is the culmination of the hard labor put in by farmers across America, to ensure we all have plenty of food on our tables.

Since the 1800's National Farmers' Day has been a day of important celebration. From early on, a farmer's hard work and dedication has benefited our country and its people with their immense contributions to the national and local economies.

For about the last 10,000 years, agriculture and farming have been arguably the most important occupation allowing us to move from being nomadic hunter-gatherers to literally and figuratively putting down roots and establishing civilizations.

Thank you, Farmers!



The Day the Farmers Quit is about a child that wakes up to a world that is unlike anything he's ever known.

He panics when he realizes that the farmer and all the things that he provides are gone. He sets out on a journey to bring the farmers back and to show them how much he and everyone else needs them.

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT:** I have been thinking a lot lately about sustenance lately. I want to help! Please think about what kind of support **you need** to help sustain your school garden:  
<https://forms.gle/aWpABzgmEQMpgZ4AB>