

VEGGIES: It's a challenge but it can be done

Continued from page 22

but rotating the crops annually to different parts of the garden will help decrease those potential problems.

Trees, especially aspen, that are close to the garden can be a serious threat. Their roots extend in every direction for water and nutrients and can dominate a garden bed quickly.

Frost is a way of life in Central Oregon — and can occur any month of the year! Watch the weather predictions and be prepared to protect tomatoes, squash, and young corn with special row covers or old sheets. Water-filled plastic covers, like “wall-o-waters” give good protection to tomatoes in a light frost. A thick blanket of straw or hay can protect most plants from serious cold weather. A greenhouse can be used for starting seeds in early spring in a protected environment and can extend the growing season for some plants into the winter.

And if you get really serious about gardening and have enough room, build a root cellar for storing your crops!

Gear up to garden on a budget

By **Kym Pokorny**
Oregon State Extension Service

Corvallis — “Gardening is like any other hobby,” said Brooke Edmunds, a horticulturist with Oregon State University Extension Service. “It takes some level of investment. But it doesn’t have to be that expensive. There are shortcuts.”

Some of them are easy. Buying smaller plants is a no-brainer if you’re looking to save money. Some techniques — think saving seeds or making compost — take more effort. But all of Edmunds’ tips bring the same result — keeping your wallet fatter. Adopt some of her advice to start saving money on your gardening budget.

Use seeds instead of starts. Although there’s an initial investment of lights, trays and planting mix, it doesn’t take long to make up the money and start saving dramatically. “You’ll get a lot more plants — some packets have 100 seeds,” Edmunds said. “You’ll have enough to trade with friends and get a wider variety.” To save even more, reuse trays. If plants grown

in a tray didn’t show signs of disease, just clean with soap and water. If there was damping off or any other kind of disease, wash them and then disinfect with a solution of 1 part bleach to 10 parts water. To save even more, sprout seeds in egg cartons, newspaper rolled into cylinders or plastic cartons with holes punched in the bottom for water drainage.

Buy smaller plants. If you’re not the impatient type, buying smaller plants — a 4-inch pot instead of 1 gallon or a 1 gallon instead of a 5 — will save you a pretty penny.

Make your own compost. “It takes more time, but it saves a lot of money,” Edmunds said. “Use your kitchen scraps and garden waste and start building your own.” If you’ve got your own chicken or livestock or know someone who does, mix that into the compost pile for an even richer end result. Make sure you let it decompose well. A good rule of thumb is until there are no pieces of recognizable bedding left.

Shop sales: Search out plant sales, usually abundant

in spring. Check newspaper calendars, ask friends, contact Extension master gardeners in your area to see if they are holding a sale or know of any. At nurseries, shop during the dog days of summer or in late fall. Also, some garden centers have a corner set aside for plant “seconds.”

Save seeds. Collecting seeds at the end of the season makes sense when you’re looking to save money or even if you’re not.

Hold a plant and seed swap. Dig up plant “babies” or divide larger plants. Set aside some of those tomato plants you started from seed. Brew some coffee, invite some friends who have something to share and throw a party.

Make use of recycled materials. Garage sales, thrift shops and the classified sections of newspapers and online shopping sites often have gardening paraphernalia, everything from used brick and rock to pots and old tools, at greatly reduced prices or free. It’s also fun to forage for natural materials such as interesting stems or stones to make edging or

bamboo poles for fences.

Build your plant collection with cuttings. Propagating by cuttings can be as difficult or easy as you want to make it. Neil Bell, an Extension horticulturist, advocates for the easy way, which has enriched him by thousands of plants over the years.

Attract beneficial insects. Instead of reaching for chemicals or even organic products, plant things that attract beneficial insects that will eat the bad bugs and balance out your garden’s ecosystem.

Split a load of mulch. Save on delivery costs by buying a load of mulch or compost with a neighbor. Save even more by keeping your eyes peeled for arborists taking down trees. They’ll often share wood chips that you can turn into mulch.

More detailed information on these topics is available at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/community/gardening>. Resources include gardening tips, videos, podcasts, monthly calendars of outdoor chores, how-to publications, and information about the Master Gardener program.



BANR

BANR Enterprises, LLC is a locally owned and operated company with over 25 years of experience in the construction industry. The range of expertise they provide allows customers to come to them with a challenge and know that together they will find a solution.

BANR responds promptly to inquiries and gets the job done right — and right on time. That’s why they receive the majority of their work from repeat customers and referrals — clients who know they will receive exceptional service, reliability, and product.

BANR has built long-term relationships with subcontractors who are like part of the company. It’s all about the people doing the work — and the people they’re doing the work for.

BANR’s owners are native Oregonians who have set down roots in Sisters, which will become their headquarters, giving folks in Sisters a local company that has statewide reach — and hometown values.

BANR ENTERPRISES, LLC

CONSULT | CONSTRUCT | COMPLETE

CLEARING + EARTHWORK + GRADING + UTILITIES + ROCK WALLS
ON-SITE SCREENING TO REMOVE ROCK & WOOD DEBRIS
RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL CONTRACTOR

WE LISTEN. WE BUILD WHAT YOU WANT ON TIME
AND ON BUDGET. QUALITY: START TO FINISH.

SISTERS 541-549-6977
TUALATIN 503-692-5305
WWW.BANR.NET
SCOTT@BANR.NET | CCB: 165122

BANR

Providing Central Oregon
with quality cold-hardy, deer-
resistant plant material for
over a decade.

Trust us for all
your nursery needs
including landscape
maintenance

Open in April!
As soon as the
weather allows.

Keep praying
for Spring!

NURSERY
& LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE

541-549-2345
Located next to
Richard's Produce

3 Sisters and Cook Contracting LLC

Yay, Spring!
It's time to think about
your carpentry and painting
projects with me!

Ed Cook
Carpentry & Painting

Sisters-owned • 46 years experience
Licensed & Insured

540-454-2040

CCB#212871