



# Coppell ISD School Garden Newsletter

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Larry freezes the Black Eyed Peas that were harvested.

### WHY?

Freezing kills any little critters that might be on the peas. They were growing in a garden, you know, and good gardens have lots of the right kind of critters. However, we don't them on the peas when they get into our kitchens.

Freezing also micro-fractures the peas. The moisture inside the pea freezes and the shells crack at the microscopic level. The cracks will help the peas to sprout next Spring.

Maybe we can look the peas under a microscope and see the fractures.

## FARMER LARRY IN THE GARDEN:

Larry Thompson, our intrepid Master Gardener, has been busy this summer.

- He is working on videos about tomatoes for the schools
- This past spring through the summer, the gardens provided over 800 lbs. of produce for reduced lunch programs and Metrocrest Services, the local Food Bank.
- Larry recently harvested and shelled over 4 lbs of black-eyed peas. They are in the freezer for 10 days then he is going to dry can them. He plans to use them for demonstrations. The black-eyed peas are coming to the end of their life cycle and will be removed by end of September 1st week of October.
- The sweet potatoes are almost ready. Larry will be reaching out to schools to schedule times to harvest. Go to pg. 3 to see the Sweet Potato info sheet created by Jodie Deinhammer's students at Middle School East.
- The first wave of transplants from the Coppell Community Gardens: Kale, Swiss Chard, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Lettuce and Spinach have been planted at the schools where the gardens are ready.
- Larry picked up the second wave of transplants from the Community Garden greenhouse on 9/18.

## TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE GRANT NEWS

The Child Nutrition Department's "Expanding 3E's" Grant from the TDA ends in December.

The grant provided \$100,000 to support all our work in the gardens by providing for drip irrigation, soil amendments, seeds, teacher training and much more.

Especially, we were able to bring a Garden Coordinator on board. We are grateful that CISD has taken over responsibility for the position.

The TDA Grant requires us to serve food from the garden in the school cafeterias. The goal is to introduce learners to fresh, local food. To do this, we celebrated Farm Fresh Friday each month.

Now that we have some students back in school, the Child Nutrition Department plans to continue Farm Fresh Fridays. We have created a planting/tasting calendar for the 20-21 school year.

### GOING FORWARD:

CISD Child Nutrition will continue to support the gardens by providing seeds and general maintenance. Unfortunately, the department will not be able to provide for any major capital improvements.

## WHAT MAKES SOIL, SOIL AND NOT DIRT?



TRANSPLANT FROM  
THE COMMUNITY GAR-  
DENS AT DENTON  
CREEK ELEMENTARY

### Special Thanks:

Many thanks to the Coppel Community Garden for partnering with Coppel ISD. They provided over 2,000 transplants of various varieties, 50 lbs. of potatoes and over 1,000 onions so far in 2020.

Bert Tindal with the Community Garden Greenhouse worked early in the year to ensure that the school gardens had healthy transplants for the students and teachers to plant.

Larry, Master Gardener, and CISD Garden Guru, is always talking to us about the difference between **DIRT** and **SOIL**, so we ask:

### WHAT MAKES SOIL, SOIL AND NOT DIRT?

**DIRT** is what you get under your fingernails

**SOIL** is the thin living layer that covers the land.

**DIRT** is soil that has lost the ability to support life – it is “dead”.

**SOIL** is alive.

Healthy soil is one of the most important factors in growing healthy plants

In CISD we use “raised bed” gardening (as opposed to “in ground” gardening) That means Larry developed a recipe for us to create our own soil.

CISD has chosen to practice organic gardening methodologies therefore all ingredients added must be organic.

The soil in the CISD School Garden raised beds were developed with a combination of:

**Cardboard in the bottom of the newly built raised bed**

**Good topsoil \*CISD purchased in bulk from “Texas Pure” in Plano**

**Compost \*CISD purchased in bulk from “Texas Pure” in Plano**

**Cotton Burr \*CISD purchased bags from “Grow It” in Coppel**

**Black Kow Manure \*CISD purchased from :Grow It” in Coppel**

**Kellogg Garden Mix \*CISD purchased from a big box store**

**Organic Fertilizer \*CISD purchased Texas 2 Step from “Grow It” in Coppel**

Larry added some additional micronutrients, too!

Thanks to our vendors!

### ADDITIONAL GARDEN GRANT RESOURCES:

WHOLE KIDS FOUNDATION <https://www.wholekidsfoundation.org/>

Several different grants, including: Garden Grants and Bee Grants

ANNIE’S GRANTS FOR GARDENS <https://www.annies.com/grants-for-gardens/>

SAVE OUR MONARCHS <https://www.saveourmonarchs.org/schools.html>

COPPELL EDUCATION FOUNDATION

# news from the school gardens

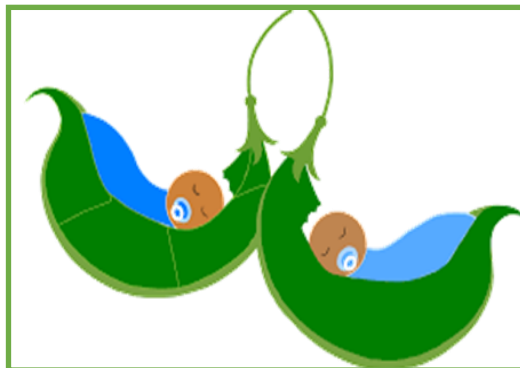


## What is Dry Canning? To Dry Can

Place dry crops like peas, beans and rice that have been harvested and cleaned into canning jars. Heat in the oven to 200°. Tops can be placed on the cans either before or after they go in the oven. If you put the tops on the jars after they come out of the oven, make sure to put the tops on while the jars are still hot.



BLACK EYED PEAS AT WILSON. ELEMENTARY



We put the CISD Gardens that are working with Child Nutrition to bed for the summer.

What does that mean? How did we do it?

Putting the beds to rest:

End of school year, when school gardening activities are at their lowest, many gardens decided to "put the beds to rest". This included the following"

Removal of all old plant growth, installing a layer of cardboard on top of existing beds.

Topping the beds off with Texas Pure "planters mix", organic fertilizer and micronutrients and hardwood mulch.

Cardboard works as a weed barrier but more importantly is a food source for macronutrients. Couple of months later, and the beds are watered properly, the cardboard has disappeared, and a rich dark soil will take its place, look closely you may see worms

Hardwood mulch also plays a significant role in putting the beds to rest, acts as "sunscreen for the soil" and provides haven for much needed fungi for later planting of transplants.

### Sweet Potatoes!

<p><b>Name:</b> Sweet Potato</p> <p><b>Soil:</b> well drained, sandy loam soil.</p> <p><b>Temp:</b> &gt; 65°F</p> <p><b>Moisture:</b> little to none</p> <p><b>Ph:</b> 5-7.5</p> <p><b>Depth:</b> 8 inches</p> <hr/> <p><b>Environment:</b></p> <p><b>Climate:</b> Hot days and warm nights</p> <p><b>Sunlight:</b> full sun</p> <p><b>Season:</b> spring - summer</p> <hr/> <p><b>Pests:</b></p> <p><b>Diseases:</b> Leaf Spots, Nematodes</p> <p><b>Insects:</b> Beetles, Cutworms, Weevils</p> <hr/> <p><b>Harvesting:</b></p> <p><b>Time:</b> immediately before or after the first fall frost, when the leaves turn yellow the plant is ready for harvest.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Be Careful, Sweet Potato skin is sensitive so handle with care</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Appearance</b></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p style="background-color: #f8bbd0; padding: 2px;">Flower</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p style="background-color: #f8bbd0; padding: 2px;">Stem</p> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> <p style="background-color: #ffe0b2; padding: 2px;">Leaves</p> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p style="background-color: #ffe0b2; padding: 2px;">Slip</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p style="background-color: #ffe0b2; padding: 2px;">Vegetable</p> </div> </div> <hr/> <p><b>Nutrition:</b> Sweet potatoes have lots of beta-carotene which is converted by the body into Vitamin A.</p>
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SWEET POTATOES READY FOR HARVEST AT AUSTIN ELEMENTARY

In May, we sent home "Farm Fresh Friday from Home" bags containing school-garden grown potatoes. We created a fun, interactive brochure and a recipe for students to cook their own potatoes at home.

