



DOWLING COMMUNITY GARDEN

FALL 2007
GARDENING NEWS AND VIEWS

newsletter

Intrepid Tasters Turned Out for HEIRLOOM FESTIVAL

A steady light rain didn't deter vegetable lovers from sampling more than 50 kinds of tomatoes and almost 30 kinds of sweet and hot peppers. Thanks to all the Dowling gardeners, and to Ward 12 Councilmember Sandy Colvin Roy and Mayor Rybak, for stopping by to taste tomatoes and peppers.



The tomato tasting featured a rainbow of cherry tomatoes, from Blondkopfchen to Brown Berry; dark purple, red, yellow and orange salad tomatoes; tasty beefsteaks, from sweet Valena Pink to Cherokee Green and Aunt Gertie's Gold; plum and paste tomatoes for cooking and a tomato for drying. Top taste pick was Brandywine (*Sudduth strain*).

Sweet peppers ranged from meaty orange bells to thin-walled Italian frying peppers to tiny chocolate-brown bells used for stuffing. We sampled round paprikas, fruity and not-hot habaneros, and mushroom-shaped peppers from Nepal. Hot varieties started with mildly spicy Beaver Dam and progressed to fiery Fatalii.

HEIRLOOM FESTIVAL HANDOUTS For PDF versions of recipes, pepper information, and descriptions of tomatoes and peppers presented at Heirloom Festival, visit the web site: www.DowlingCommunityGarden.org.

DOWLING ON TV Minneapolis Television Network (MTN) came to film during Heirloom Festival, and the following week when weather was nicer. They are preparing a segment about Dowling Garden to air sometime in the next year.

PARADE OF GARDENS GardenWorks sponsored the second annual metro tour of community gardens, and Heirloom Festival was part of the tour. To learn more about GardenWorks, go to <http://www.gardenworksmn.com/>.

HEIRLOOM GARDEN *Vegetable Results*

The Heirloom Garden (plot 85) showcases different open-pollinated crops each season. Spring crops included Golden Sweet snow pea from India. This is a yellow peapod, and the flowers and plant were very pretty. The taste, however, wasn't

that great, which explains why we haven't seen them at the market! A summer standout was Trombetta de Albenga, an Italian squash with a very long neck ending in a small bulb. This plant is vigorous! Squashes are tender, with a nutty flavor, and are purported to grow into a winter-keeping squash; we'll have to see if the fruit matures before a killing frost.

Marizol Purple, from Germany's Black Forest region, produced a good quantity of beefsteak tomatoes with meaty texture and a sweet flavor. Coyote, a tiny yellow currant tomato, had a unique, sweet flavor that tasters either really liked or really didn't! Scotland Yellow's fruits were golf ball-sized, and not exceptional in flavor or yield. Riesentraube, a small grape-shaped cherry tomato from Germany, wasn't a standout either.

Peppers from Corno di Toro, an Italian heirloom, were meaty and tasty. Golden Swiss chard, with yellow stems and green leaves, had uneven color across the planting (some plants were pale yellow and others really bright in color).

Other crops grown this season: Black-seeded Sorghum, Early Bush Scallop patty pan squash, Triomphe de Farcy and Pencil Pod Black Wax bush beans, Red Russian and Nero di Toscana kales, Diamond eggplant and Cylindra beet. Is there a variety you'd like to see planted? Contact Susan at srdesign@visi.com.

CHERRY TOMATO EXPERIMENT RESULTS Our test to see if we could grow a similar orange cherry tomato this season from seed saved in 2006 was not successful. Fruits on the plants ranged from red to yellow, and .75 to 1.5 inches in diameter.

Heirloom Day at MIDTOWN MARKET

Dowling Garden presented information on heirloom varieties and conducted a tomato tasting on September 8 for Heirloom Day. We were repeatedly asked "Where can we buy these tomatoes?" Perhaps we'll see more heirloom varieties at the market next season.



Fall Garden Clean-up Day:

OCTOBER 13, 10AM - NOON



Help clean up the garden before winter by raking leaves, cleaning up along the fence, cleaning and storing water barrels, removing improperly dumped materials from the school compost and the woods, organizing the shed and other seasonal chores. Bring rakes, pruners, lawn mowers, trash bags, work gloves. *Plan to attend if you haven't fulfilled your service hours this year.* Meet at the shed rain or shine.

DOWLING COMMUNITY GARDEN

PO BOX 6757, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55406

651-255-6607

FALL CLEAN-UP DAY

OCTOBER 13, 10AM – NOON

Return Service Requested

CLEAN UP *Your Garden by November 4*

Remove dead plants to school's compost pile (located east of the orchard; place as far back on the pile as possible), take down seasonal plant supports, arrange items you will leave in your garden over the winter (bags of leaves, stakes, tomato cages, etc.) neatly stacked and as unobtrusive as possible for the neighbors across the street. If you are still harvesting produce, or have planted crops to over-winter, it's OK to leave them.

Report SERVICE HOURS *by November 7*

Make sure you get your 2007 service hours completed before the end of the garden season. Gardeners are required to work four hours of time each season, per plot. Contact your service coordinator prior to October 1 if you need to fulfill your hours, and report service hours to your coordinator by November 7.

GARDEN SWAP DAY *October 13*

You may recycle usable garden items during Fall clean-up hours, 10am-noon. Any of your items not claimed by noon must be removed from the garden. *Do not leave items next to the shed after clean-up is over, or at any other time of year.*

Red Sweet Pepper Jam

12 sweet red peppers, seeded and chopped
1 head garlic, peeled and chopped
4-5 shallots, peeled and chopped
1 Tbsp. salt
3 cups sugar
1 pint cider vinegar

Grind peppers, garlic and shallots in blender or food processor. Mix with salt and let stand 3 hours or overnight. Drain well.

Add sugar and vinegar. Put in large kettle and slowly simmer until it reaches jam stage (usually 1-2 hours). Watch that it doesn't burn!

Pour into clean, sterilized jars and seal according to directions, or keep in refrigerator. Serve over wedges of cream cheese with crackers.

– submitted by Ted and Betty Caspar

GARDENING EVENTS

Andersen Horticultural Library Book Sale October 5-7, Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, 3675 Arboretum Drive, Chaska, 952/443-1405.

Arboretum Gardening Classes

Growing Grapes: Saturday, October 6; 10am -12:30 pm.

Plan ahead for winter classes:

Starting Plants Indoors: Building/Using Grow Lights; Starting Seeds and Transplanting; Cuttings and Layering; Grafting. Saturdays in January-February, 10am-12:30pm. For more information: Arboretum Education Office, 952-443-1422.

Dowling's Seed Swap Trade seeds and place orders for seeds with other Dowling gardeners. Mid-January 2007. Look for the Seed Swap notice in late December.

Maintaining Historic STEVENS GARDEN

As part of Dowling's community outreach, Dowling gardeners care for the vegetable and native plant gardens at the historic Stevens House in Minnehaha Park. This year, Jeffrey Loesch and Gerald Foley tended the gardens. In the spring, three truck loads of manure were tilled into the sandy soil. Cabbages, potatoes, tomatoes and beans were planted, and rhubarb, chives and other perennials already in place were tended. Gerald identified native plants and planted new ones, and prepared markers to identify them. Jeffrey did most of the vegetable planting, and Gerald did most of the weeding.

The Stevens House garden features the types of vegetables that Col. Stevens grew, and in manner in which he grew them. A new problem this year was deer predation; most of the cabbages were eaten. Next year, cabbages will be replaced by squash, which don't seem to interest the deer as much.

Jeffrey and Gerald also participated in the annual Stevens House open house on Labor Day. They answered visitor questions and dug up potatoes to show kids that potatoes grow underground.