



Digging It!



All the Dirt from the Allen County Master Gardeners



FEBRUARY 2020



Tidbits from Teresa



2020 is here with new challenges and new opportunities. I am sure you saw the January newsletter and Gretchen's decision to retire as our coordinator. We have been so blessed to have her at the helm since the closure of extension. Her organizational abilities, creativity and dedication have given her successor a hard act to follow. Thank you, Gretchen, for the amazing job you did as coordinator, as well as volunteer, and everything else we needed.

Gretchen will still be an active part of ACMGV's and in fact has the spring seminar ready for smooth sailing. We are waiting to see the direction Clint Schroeder, the new ag educator for extension, is able to pursue with new personnel or if we need to hire on our own. Whichever direction ensues we will continue to be Master Gardeners within OSU extension. In the meantime it will be "business as usual" with the spring seminar (make sure you send in your reservation) and our first meeting in April.

With the coordinator position currently undecided we will need to rely on you, our faithful volunteers to pick up the slack. We look forward to seeing you at the seminar and the start of a new growing season.

Speaking of growing season, I never had much luck with carrots so here's some info I learned while researching the subject. They say carrots will grow in almost any garden no matter what type of soil you have. The key to success is to find the variety that performs best in your garden. In clay soil Royal Chantenay is less likely to break off as you harvest it. Also, beet shaped varieties such as Golden Nugget will do well since heavy soils won't affect it as much. Some newer varieties for clay include Chantenay Red Core, Parisienne, Tonda di Parigi and Touchon. Carrots need fertilizer and compost works well since excess nitrogen can cause branching and hairy fibrous roots. Potassium promotes solid, sweet carrots and wood ashes are a good natural source. If using a commercial fertilizer, try 5-10-10 at a rate of 1 pound per 50 sq. ft. The seeds will sprout in cooler weather but do better when the soil is warm. Later carrots are richer in color and have a higher vitamin level. After planting, about 3 seeds per inch, (I know it is hard to not dump them in the furrow) cover with ½ inch of loose soil or compost. The soil must be kept evenly moist and the seedlings thinned to 3 inches apart. By mulching the seedlings you preserve the sweetness. When the tops are 6 inches tall, side-dress them with a liquid fertilizer. Carrots are ready to harvest in 2-3 months but you can leave them in the ground until you need them. Final harvest is after the first hard frost but before the ground freezes. Now I need to try carrots again! (picture below)

Teresa Diehl February 2020

From Sandy Bindel's desk: (Sandy will be back in our April edition)



ART OF GARDENING UPDATE

The seminar is approaching quickly and the team is working to get our ducks in a row to make this yet another wonderful day for everyone!



As of this writing there are 14 open seats. If you have been remiss in sending your registration, do it today. Text or email me if you have any questions.

Sue Lyon and her team have a huge task in making our breakfast and snack buffets so legendary. Your help is needed to provide items to make this successful. If you haven't already contacted Sue to let her know how you can help, please email her at slyon45@gmail.com or by calling her at: 419-235-7925.

Margie Bush is working to collect door prizes. If you have a connection to an area business and would like to help her by either asking for or collecting prizes, please reach out to her at: 419-991-4723.

Please plan to be a part of the event in some way. We need help in many ways from set up to tear down.

Thanks in advance!



~ Gretchen



<https://www.smartgardener.com/plants/907-carrot-chantenay-red-core/overview>