

# Backyard Views

The Backyard Gardeners

Summer, 2012

## Local Produce...Yes!!! by Patti McCambridge

The Backyard Gardeners, Inc. was established in 2007 as a non-profit organization to provide free education to homeowners in the Hampton Roads area on gardening and horticultural practices, designs and techniques in order to encourage conservation of our natural resources, the enjoyment of gardens, garden-related activities and creative garden art.



To me, summer brings fond memories of eating juicy, ripe tomatoes and crisp, sweet corn fresh from the garden. Often, it meant eating right in the garden! Enjoying fresh produce lovingly planted and tended by my Grandfather and now by my Dad, was and is a way of life for my family. Local meant from

our own gardens. I grew up never buying veggies from a store. An endless supply of fresh and canned vegetables and fruits was always available. However, once I moved away, my gardening skills did not translate to growing the wonderful produce I had enjoyed in my youth, so I needed to rely on purchasing those items. It was a rude awakening.

The idea of buying foreign or well traveled produce was strange to me but I quickly learned what to buy and when to buy it to insure a “somewhat” fresh taste. Amazingly, the average US grown produce is picked 7 days prior to appearing on the shelves in your local supermarket. By its arrival, it has traveled over 1500 miles to reach your family. Just imagine how many “frequent flyer miles” produce from Mexico, Asia and South America amasses before you see it. Staggering! So “fresh” is a relative term.

The *Buy Fresh, Buy Local* movement has gained interest and support recently. Defining local can be difficult since it’s not a legal term, but its definition is based on an individual’s locale and his/her specific produce needs. One accepted definition considers “local” to be produce grown within 100 miles. Buying local requires “eating seasonally” or buying only those vegetables grown in the local area during a specific season. This narrows one’s choices, so dietary changes must be made or the area definition must be expanded. Even though the term is variable, buying local has its advantages.

Reasons for buying and eating local produce and food products include:

- ✓ It stimulates the local economy. If each family spent \$10 weekly on local produce, \$384.2 million & \$1.65 billion would be generated respectively in SE Virginia and Virginia annually.
- ✓ It aids the community by developing a relationship with local farmers helping to sustain their way of life and insuring a future for the family farmer.
- ✓ It helps save “green spaces”. From 2002-2007, over 500,00 acres of farm land were lost in Virginia.
- ✓ It helps support the environment and benefits wildlife since small farmers are good stewards of the earth using conservation methods in to sustain the land. It reduces transportation costs, thus reducing energy costs and pollution.
- ✓ The food is fresher, tastes better and is more nutritious.
- ✓ Knowing the source of your food allows you to choose products grown by farmers who use fewer chemicals and/or hormones, use organic methods and/or grow non-genetically engineered products.
- ✓ It helps maintain genetic diversity and sustains heirloom varieties of produce.

*Buy Fresh Buy Local Hampton Roads* (BFBLHR) chapter promotes the movement. For more information on the topic, join us for our “Garden Talk” on **Tuesday, June 19<sup>th</sup>** from **6-7:30 pm** at the **Chesapeake Central Library, 298 Cedar Road**. Rachel Burns, executive director of BFBLHR., will present a comprehensive program on how and why to buy locally and tips for getting the most “bang for your buck”. Just in time to shop!!

## Calendar of Events

Due to change in library hours  
NOTE NEW TIME!!!

Garden Talks, 6-7:30 pm  
Chesapeake Library  
298 Cedar Road

June 19

“You and the Farmers Markets”  
Rachel Burns  
Buy Fresh Buy Local

July 17

“Herbal Delicacies”  
Elizabeth Meska  
Lifestyles by Elizabeth

August 21

“It’s Time to Think About Winter  
Veggies”  
Gill Gillespie  
Norfolk Master Gardeners

The Backyard Gardeners, Inc.  
Education to help make gardening fun!

Check out our website  
[www.thebackyardgardeners.org](http://www.thebackyardgardeners.org)  
for seasonal tips and information  
from “Garden Talk” speakers.

# Spotlight on Gardens

## Local Farmers Markets

To find the best produce available, shoppers need to be armed with information. The best source for information on local markets and farms and the produce and food products they offer can be found on the *Buy Fresh, Buy Local* website under [Food Guide](#). Farms and markets in the Hampton Roads area including Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, the Eastern Shore, Knotts Island, Isle of Wight and Surry County are included, along with addresses, times of operation and products sold so you can easily find locally grown products no matter where you are!



The BFBLHR [website](#) also has a wealth of information including an explanation of the mission of the organization, definitions of various terms, the products available locally during each month, tips on how to effectively shop the markets, recipes for the various products and more. Check it out.

The Chesapeake City Market normally located at the Chesapeake City Park, will be located at the **Battlefield Park, 120 Reservation Rd. at the foot of the Great Bridge Bridge beginning June 16<sup>th</sup>**. Plans are to return the market to the newly build Farmers Market Building at City Park later in the summer.

In addition to garden markets, the growing season also marks the continuation of the **Plant-A-Row for the Hungry** program (PAR) sponsored by the Chesapeake Master Gardeners. Recognizing that gardeners often produce more vegetables and fruit than they can consume, the program collects the excess to be distributed to those in need in the local area. The collection location is the **Extension Trailer Classroom, 310 Shea Drive** (in front of the Great Bridge Rec Center), from **9 am-noon** each **Tuesday** from **June 5-September 25**. For more information, call **382-6348** or check their website at [www.cmcv.org](http://www.cmcv.org).

## Tool Corner

Thanks to information from the Dunes of Dare Garden Club you can make your own reusable shopping bags from tank tops or t-shirts. All you need is a heavy weight tank top or t-shirt, pins, a sewing machine, medium size bowl, marking pen and scissors. Turn the shirt inside out, pin and stitch the bottom of the shirt closed. If using a t-shirt, turn the shirt right side out, line up all seams, pin around the neckline to hold front to back, place the bowl half way over the neck opening, trace and cut. Cut the sleeves off at the armhole seam and you're ready to go.



They credit the idea to Martha Steward Living, Oct. 2007.



Brent and Becky's Bulbs offers a fundraising project for non-profit groups. If you wish to order from them, click on the logo above and select our group, The Backyard Gardeners, from the list. We will receive a portion of the sales. This a great way for you to help us help you!! For more info on this program, check [www.thebackyardgardeners.org](http://www.thebackyardgardeners.org).

## Garden Hints *from Buy Fresh Buy Local HR*

- ✓ Be prepared. Bring cash and your own bags.
- ✓ Arrive early to get the best selection.
- ✓ Be knowledgeable on what is available and have a plan for what you want to buy.
- ✓ Be open to fruits or vegetables that may be different for you. Talk to the farmers and find how to prepare and save the produce you buy.
- ✓ Ask questions on how the food was grown and produced.
- ✓ Bring a cooler to keep food fresh if you plan to run any other errands.

You may request to be added to the newsletter mailing list at

[www.thebackyardgardeners.org](http://www.thebackyardgardeners.org)

or by emailing [gardenguru@thebackyardgardeners.org](mailto:gardenguru@thebackyardgardeners.org).



# Summer Calendar of Gardening & Outdoor Events 2012

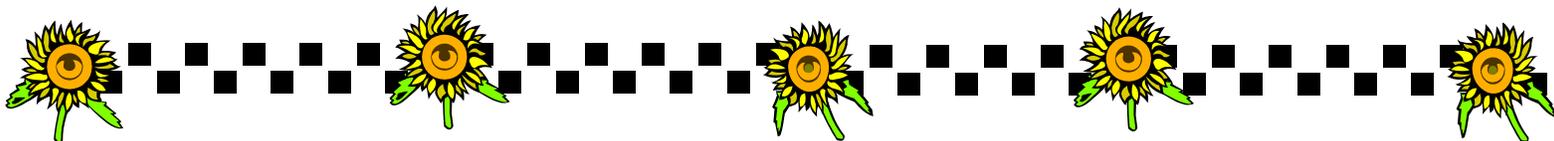
compiled by Nancy Radcliffe

## June

- 1-12 *OpSail 2012 Virginia* begins in our area. Check your local city to see what's happening
- 2 *Clean the Bay Day* 9 am – 12 pm Contact your city to see where you can volunteer
- 2 Smithfield Gardens talk “*Attracting Native Pollinators*” 10 am
- 2 Smithfield Gardens talk “*Controlling Voles and Moles*” 2 pm
- 2-3 *American Indian Festival* at Greenbrier Middle School, Greenbrier Parkway, 10 am – 6 pm
- 2-3 *Virginia Bonsai Society Show* at Norfolk Botanical Gardens
- 2-Sept 3 *Voyage of Discovery* at Norfolk Botanical Gardens
- 2-Dec 22 *Portsmouth Old Towne Farmers Market* along High Street and north along Court Street. Free parking. For more information, call 393-5111.
- 3 Smithfield Gardens talk “*High Tide Gardening*” 2 pm
- 6 Hermitage Museum and Gardens, *Sunset on the River* with Luke Hartman 6:30 pm- 9 pm
- 9-10 *30th Annual Rogelio Kite Festival* Jockey's Ridge State Park, Kill Devil Hills, NC
- 10 Smithfield Gardens talk “*Gardens and Cats and Dogs*” 2 pm
- 10 Norfolk Botanical Gardens, *Tidewater Daylily Society Sale & Show* 9 am – 4 pm
- 14-17 *Boardwalk Art Show and Festival* – Virginia Beach oceanfront
- 16 Norfolk Botanical Gardens, *Butterfly House* opens
- 16-Nov 21 *Chesapeake Farmers Market* Opens on Wednesday and Saturday's from 8 am – 1 pm relocated for start of season to Battlefield Park at the Great Bridge Bridge
- 16-17 Elizabethan Gardens, Manteo, NC, *Father's Day Plant Sale*
- 21 Hermitage Museum and Gardens , *Sunset on the River* with The Green Boy 6:30 pm – 9 pm
- 23 McDonald Garden Center, *live appearance from HGTV's Jamie Durie* at 2 pm, 1144 Independence Blvd, Virginia Beach
- 23 Smithfield Gardens, *Annual Flower Event* 9 am
- 23 Smithfield Gardens talk “*Growing Hydrangeas*” 10 am
- 23 Smithfield Gardens talk “*Perennials and Daylilies*” 2 pm
- 24 Norfolk Botanical Gardens *Summer Music Series - Dancing through the decades 30's and 40's* , 3 to 6 pm
- 27-30 *Outer Banks Sandsculpture Festival Benefit*, for more information call 252-441-4124

## July

- 3 *Chesapeake Concert and Fireworks* at Grassfield High School 7 :30 pm
- 4 *Chesapeake Celebration* at Lakeside Park 10 am – 4 pm



## Summer Calendar continued

- 12 *1st Annual Towne Bank Red Nose Wine Festival* on the Waterfront in Manteo, NC
- 13 *AT & T Summer Brew Festival TGIF* at Town Point Park, Norfolk 5 –9 PM
- 16-17 Chesapeake and Virginia Beach McDonald Garden Centers, *Crepe Myrtle Festival*
- 20-22 *25th Annual Chincoteague Island Blueberry Festival* held at the Chincoteague Center
- 21-22 Kitty Hawk Kites *Wright Kite Festival* at Wright Brother's Memorial, Kill Devil Hills, NC, 10 am. Call 252-441-4124 for more information
- 25-26 *87th Annual Pony Swim and Auction* at the Chincoteague Pony Centre. Call 757-336-2776 for more information.
- 29 Norfolk Botanical Gardens, *Summer Music Series – Dancing through the decades 50's and 60's* , 3-6 pm

## August

- 9-10 Kitty Hawk Kites *Watermelon Festival* at Kitty Hawk Kites, Kill Devil Hills, NC. For more information call 252-441-4124
- 15-16 *New World Festival of the Arts* on the Manteo , NC waterfront
- 18 Elizabethan Gardens, *Virginia Dare's Birthday and Plant Sale*
- 19 Norfolk Botanical Gardens, *Summer Music Series – Dancing through the decades 70's and 80's* , 3 – 6 pm

