

Growing Groceries



Essential Culinary Combinations

Presented by Gia Parsons & Wendy Jordan



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

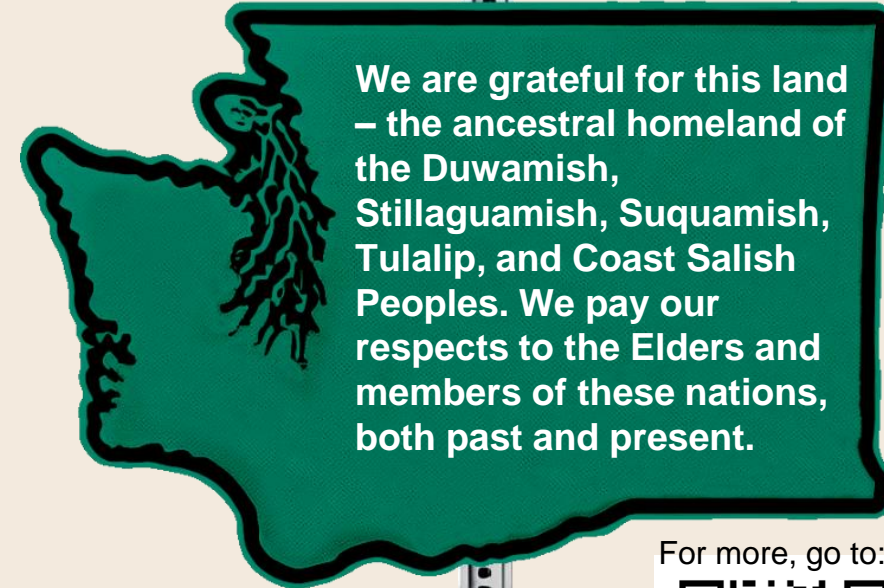
February 19, 2025



Notices

Master Gardener Foundation of King County presentations are based on Washington State University home gardening publications and other science and research-based materials.

To enliven the discussion, speakers may share their own experiences, including successes and failures.



For more, go to:



Master Gardeners are all volunteers and sometimes technical issues arise.

Please be patient.

Tonight's Agenda

- ❖ Aromatic Vegetable Combinations - *almost every cuisine in the world starts with a common, simple vegetable base.*
 - Similarities & differences
 - Why they work
 - Consider the vegetable combinations that you enjoy the most
 - Write these combinations into a collection as you find your favorites
- ❖ Grow these combinations - Plan your growing strategy
 - Plan for early spring and summer crops when dreaming about your garden.
 - Determine what plants to grow to build a collection of foundational vegetables for meal planning.
 - Map out how and when to start seeds in garden bed or seed trays.

Aromatics



Aromatics

Vegetables, herbs, or spices used to "start" a dish



Sofrito

The Spanish mixture of onion, garlic, and tomatoes gently sauteed in olive oil

From the Amber Onion to the Red Mountain or the Parade Bunching Onion, there are many fun varieties to choose from.

Garlic galore: from Music to Red Chesnok to Zemo.

A challenge to any WA gardener, but well worth it.



Tomatoes in the PNW (*Solanum lycopersicum*)

To grow tomatoes you need full sun, warm temperatures, fertile soil, plant supports, and good garden hygiene. (Another detailed GG class is available)
Surprising fact: Tomatoes need much less water than you think.



Mirepoix

The French mixture of onion, carrot and celery/celery root.

From the Amber Onion to the Red Mountain or the Parade Bunching Onion, there are many fun varieties to choose from.

So many colors from Bengala to Cosmic Purple or Carnelian Red



Tango Celery

A root that gives so much flavor,
Porthos Celeriac



Sachet

A mixture of fresh herbs wrapped in cheesecloth



Bay Leaf

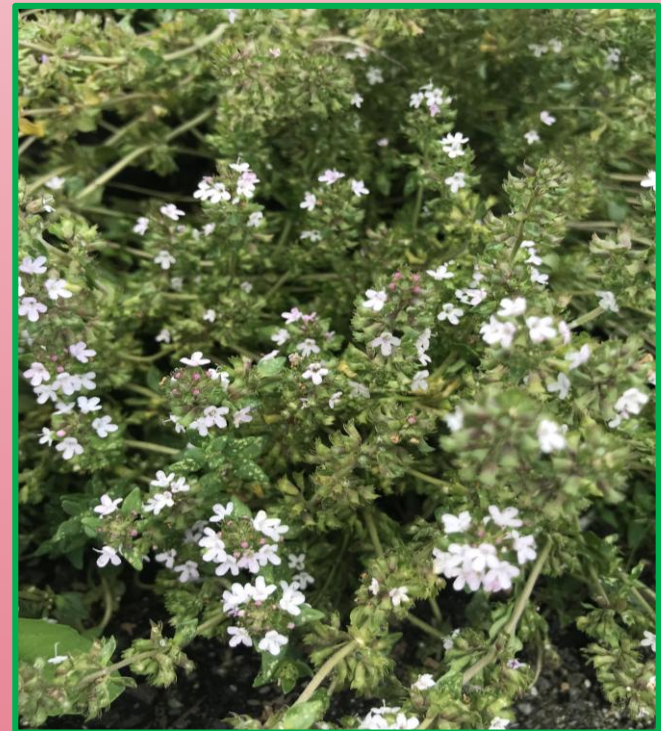
Italian Parsley



Curly Parsley



Thyme



Bouquet garni

A mixture of fresh herbs wrapped in other vegetables

Leeks, thyme, bay leaf, parsley, celery



Can also be wrapped in celery or the herbs alone



Battuto_(Raw) or Soffritto_(Cooked)

The Italian mixture of onion, carrot and celery.

From the Amber Onion to the Red Mountain or the Parade Bunching Onion, there are many fun varieties to choose from.

So many colors from Bengala to Cosmic Purple or Carnelian Red

Porthos Celeriac



Sachet continued

A mixture of fresh herbs wrapped in cheesecloth

Fennel Seed



Rosemary



Oregano



Suppengrün (Soup Greens)

The German mixture of onion, carrot and celery root.

Amber Onion to the Red Mountain or the Parade Bunching Onion, there are many fun varieties to choose from.

Bengala to Cosmic Purple or Carnelian Red

Porthos Celeriac



Włoszczyzna (Soup Vegetables)

The Polish mixture of onion, carrot, cabbage and parsnip root.

Leeks



Bengala to Cosmic
Purple or Carnelian Red



Parsnip



Cabbage



Parsnips in the PNW (*Pastinaca sativa*)



Photo: Allotment Diary

- Long season crop 100-120+ days
- Use fresh seed for highest germination
- Provide full sun and loose, well-drained soil
- Water consistently
- Do not provide high nitrogen fertilizer
- Harvest after a cold spell for sweeter roots.

Celeriac and Celery in the PNW (*Apium graveolens* and *Apium graveolens* Rapaceum Group)

- Celeriac: A crop grown for its knobby bulbous stem. With a long growing season, 100-130 days, this crop is best started in doors from seed.

Celery: There are two types: self blanching and trenching celery. A bog and marsh plant, with a long growing season 130 days average, this crop needs constant watering.



Holy Trinity

The Southern mixture of onion, green bell pepper, and celery

Amber Onion to the Red Mountain or the Parade Bunching Onion, there are many fun varieties to choose from.

King of the North or Jupiter

Tango or Merengo Celery



Peppers in the PNW (Capsicum)

- Peppers need similar growing conditions as tomatoes. Give them as much warmth as possible.



Carrots in the PNW (Daucus carota)

- Many types of carrots grow in the PNW; they need fertile, loose soil and consistent watering.

Carrot Harvest



Forked Carrots



Photo: Mick Duggan

Questions?



Onions in the Pacific Northwest (*Allium cepa*)

Onion Sets

Long day onions grow well in the PNW. Onions can also be started from seed. Give each plant enough room to encourage good ventilation.



Onion Starts



Onions in the Pacific Northwest (*Allium cepa*)

Onion Starts

Advantages:

- Less Bolting
- Produce Bigger Bulbs
- More Variety

Disadvantages:

- More delicate when transplanting.
- Slower to mature compared to sets.



Onions in the Pacific Northwest (*Allium cepa*)

Onion Sets



Advantages:

- Easier to Plant
- More Cold Hardy
- Faster Growth
- Lower Maintenance

Disadvantages:

- Higher chance of bolting (going to seed)
- Limited variety options.
- Tend to produce smaller or less flavorful bulbs.

Onions in the Pacific Northwest

Curing Onions



- Onions can be pulled when at least half of their green tops have dried out.
- Keep dry, do not wash.
- Cure them right where they are pulled.
- Shallots grow similarly to onions and garlic.

Garlic in the Pacific Northwest (*Allium sativum*)

- Garlic is a great fall crop. Buy bulbs and put them in the ground before the first heavy frost. Harvest June, July, August.
- They often sell out early, plan accordingly.
- Chose the best type for your taste preferences and growing conditions.





Garlic in the Pacific Northwest (*Allium sativum*)

Garlic plants in the spring.



To mulch or not to mulch?



Hail!



Garlic in the Pacific Northwest (*Allium sativum*)

Hard Neck Garlic Bulb



- Hard neck garlic tends to be spicier
- Grows in colder weather
- Produces a stalk and edible scapes.

Soft Neck Garlic Bulb



- Soft neck garlic stores longer
- Has more paper leaves protecting cloves
- Has no hard stem and produces no scapes.

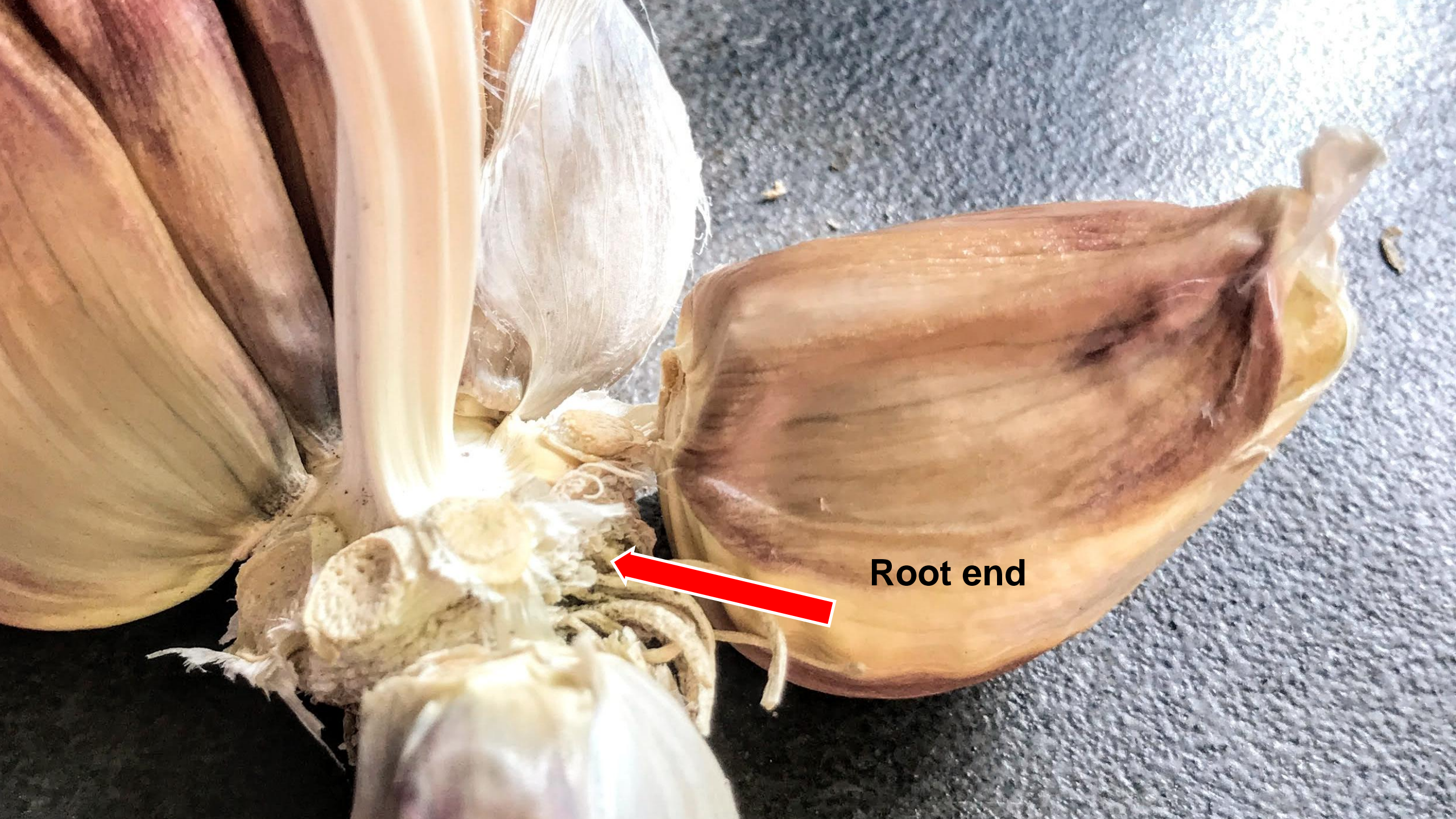
Garlic in the PNW (*Allium sativum*)

Plant each garlic clove root side down about 2-4 inches deep and 6 inches apart.
(Check your soil type before planting)

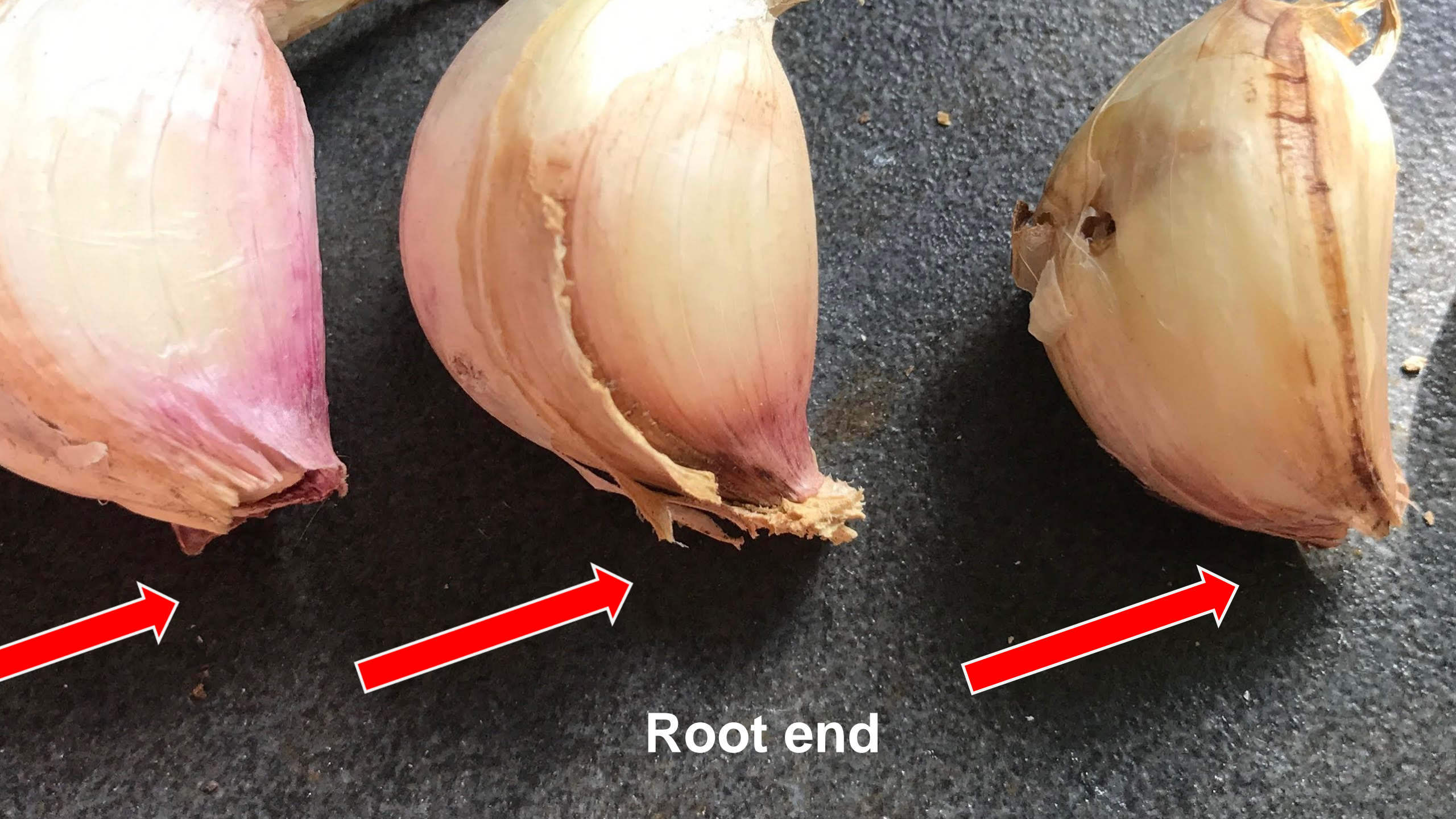


Root end





Root end



Root end

Garlic in the PNW (Allium sativum)



- Hard neck garlic produce scapes that are a culinary treat!

Garlic in the PNW (Allium sativum)

Harvest garlic when at least 50% of the green tops have turned brown. (June, July, August) Then cure in a cool, dry location, do not wash.

Garlic Harvest



Garlic Drying





Leeks (*Allium porrum*)

- Start from seeds or buy starts
- Plant 2-4 inches apart
- Mound up soil around the stalk to encourage blanching
- Leeks produce scapes
- Harvest from summer to fall
- Wash well



Garlic Chives (*Allium tuberosum*) and Chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*)

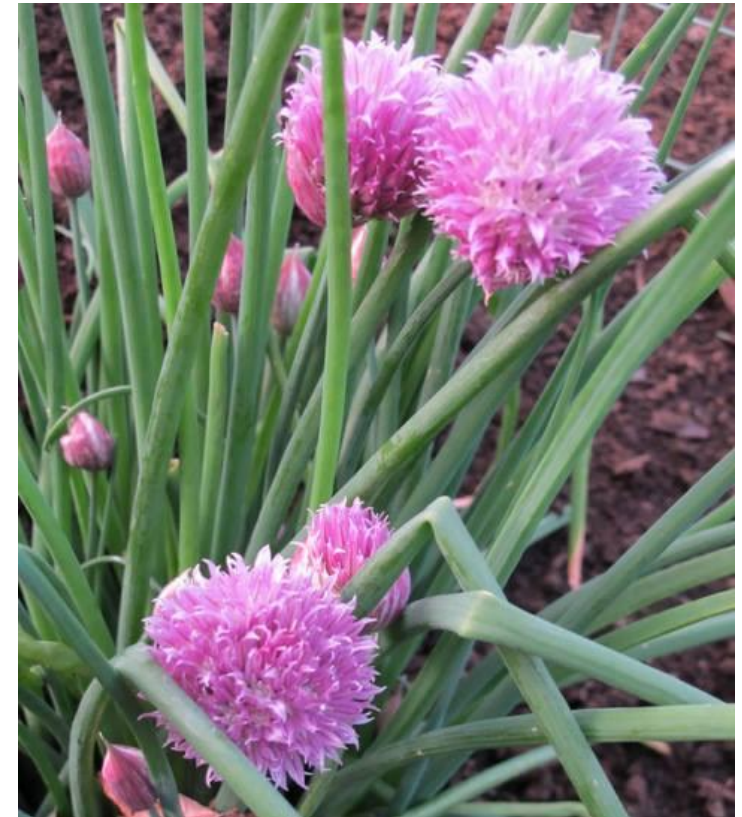
- **Garlic chives have a strong garlic flavor and flat leaf.**



- **Both are perennial and can live in one spot for many years.**
- **Divide when the clump (s) get crowded and if you want to propagate.**
- **Essential in many dishes.**
- **Flowers are loved by many pollinators.**
- **Great for children's gardens**

Photo: Mick Duggan

- **Chives have a milder onion-like flavor with a round leaf.**







Garlic
Chives



Questions?



Recaíto (ree-cai-ee-toh)

The Puerto Rican mixture of culantro and aji dulce peppers with onions, cubanelles, garlic, and cilantro

Culantro has many names and is prevalent in southeast Asian cuisines.



Aji Dulce, looks like a Scotch bonnet but not as spicy.



Cubanelle Pepper



Culantro in the PNW (Eryngium foetidum)

Culantro Plant



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Essential for an authentic phó experience



© RunAwayRice

Photo: Bonnie plants

Culantro in the PNW (Eryngium foetidum)

Culantro Plant



Photo: Bonnie plants

Essential for an authentic phó experience

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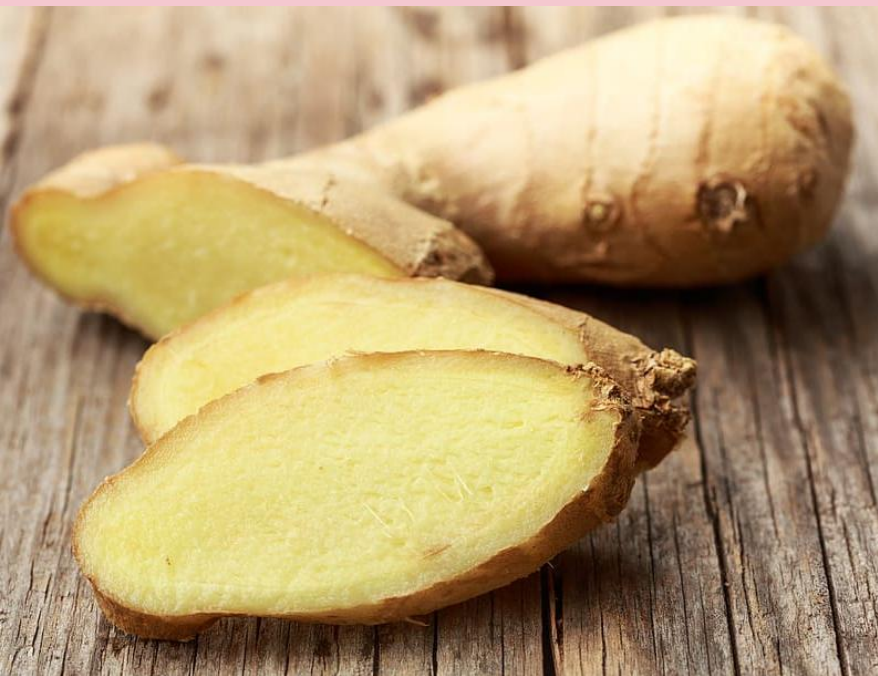


Asian Trinities

In the vast culinary landscape of Asia, there is a common blend of ginger, garlic, and green onions.

Or the Indian Holy Trinity of ginger, garlic, and onion.

Ginger



Garlic



Green Onions



Ginger in the PNW (Zingiber officinale)

- Yes, it can be done!



- Chit your ginger root
- Plant your roots in moist but not wet soil.
- Place your roots above the soil level.
- Roots take up to 6 months to form rhizomes.
- Give dappled shade
- Plant in containers in colder areas



Photo: Sharon O'Grady

African Trinities

In the vast culinary landscape of Africa, there are regional differences:

West: onions, tomatoes, ginger, chili peppers, and peanuts

South: onion, garlic, chili peppers

North: cumin, garlic, mint

Cumin



Peanuts



Mint



Peanuts in the PNW? (*Arachis hypogaea*)

Peanuts are part of the legume family, Fabaceae with 130-160 day growing season. It takes just 3.2 gallons of water to produce an ounce of peanuts, compared to 28.7 gallons for an ounce of almonds.

Peanut Starts



Harvested Peanuts



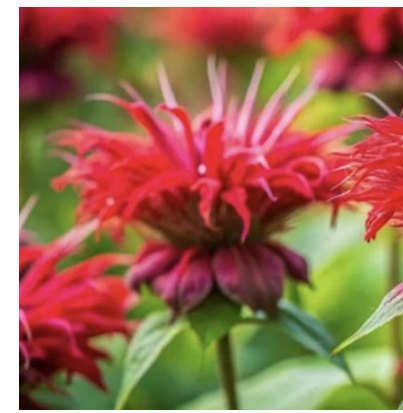


peanut
pegs

Three Sisters (Sunflowers and Bee Balm)

Native Americans had their own distinct tribes, each with their own horticultural traditions.

The Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) coined the term The Three Sisters, although they weren't the only tribe to use the method.



Beans

Corn

Squash



Corn in the PNW

- Corn can grow in the PNW! Plants in blocks not rows and water consistently. Beware of pests and they like corn too.



← This photo: Darien Payne

Questions?



Other Aromatic Herbs and Spices



Other Aromatic Herbs and Spices

The pantry in your garden



What a Kick!

- Wasabi (*Eutrema japonicum*): perennial, essential in sushi, high value plant, needs specific growing conditions
- Horseradish (*Armoracia rusticana*): perennial, can be invasive, very long tap root.



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What a Kick!

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Shiso and Perilla (*Perilla frutescens*)

- Native to China and India
- Annual in the PNW
- Used in many cuisines
- Can be used in tempura, as a wrap, as a flavoring, and as a garnish.
- They can be purple, green, flat leafed or ruffled.



Cilantro and Parsley (*Coriandrum sativum*) and (*Petroselinum crispum*)

- Both are grown for their leaves although their stems are useful in the kitchen in stocks.
 - They both like it warm but not hot or they bolt.
 - Absolutely indispensable in the kitchen.
- Cilantro two types of aldehydes.
 - People with a specific variation of the OR6A2 gene are more sensitive to these aldehydes.



Japanese and Vietnamese Coriander

(*Houttuynia cordata*) and (*Persicaria odorata*)

- Perennial
- Can be invasive if not controlled
- Some say it smells of fish
- Used in many dishes



- Annual
- Spicy notes
- Flavors soups, stews, and salads

Chamomile and Rue (*Matricaria recutita*) and (*Ruta graveolens*)



- Rue is an annual.
- Used in coffee in Ethiopia.

- Chamomile
- Annual depending on the type
- Used in teas



Chinese 5 and 7 Spice Mixes

- Szechuan peppercorns
- star anise
- fennel seeds
- cinnamon
- coriander seeds
- ginger powder
- cloves





Grow Some of Your Own Pickling Spices

- Ingredients: allspice berries, coriander seeds, fennel seeds, dill seeds, dried ginger, cloves, black peppercorns, green peppercorns, bay leaves, red chili flakes, cardamom pods, brown mustard seeds, yellow mustard seeds, cinnamon sticks



Mustard Plants in the PNW

- "Brassica", most commonly
- "Brassica juncea" for brown mustard seeds
- "Sinapis alba" for white mustard seeds

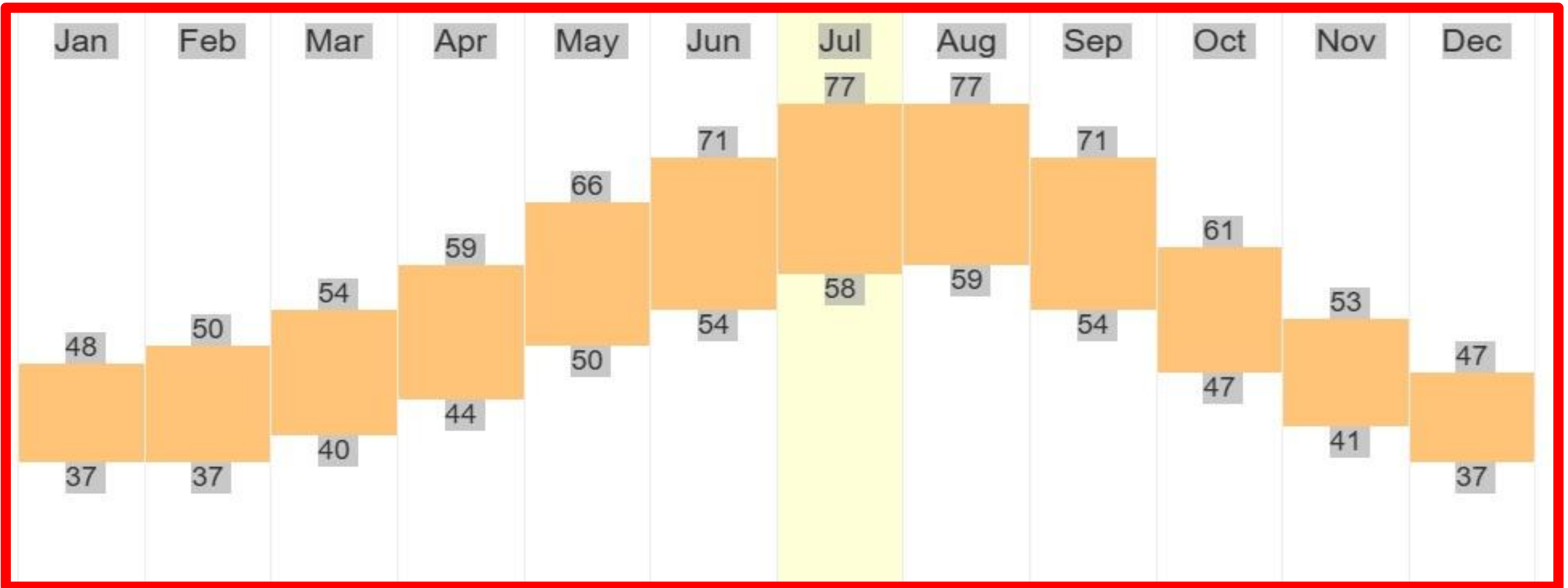


Herb Seeds



We live on the 47th parallel on the globe. We share length of days with other cities but enjoy the moderating temperatures of the warm Pacific Ocean.

Average temperatures by month in PNW.





Know your first frost dates.

- *Last 36°*
 - *May 24* 10%
 - *May 18* 20%
 - *May 14* 30%
 - *May 11* 40%
-
- Oct 28th to Nov 30th is average for PNW





Questions?



Resources

- <https://www.seriousseats.com/all-about-mirepoix>
- <https://www.chilipeppermadness.com/chili-pepper-types/sweet-mild-chili-peppers/cubanelle-chili-peppers/>
- <https://northcircleseeds.com/products/aji-dulce?srsIid=AfmBOopSo-RM9uMB7i4k32FPMd8Cm7gCXqQOdZU2F83vbyfrDVrYBebB>
- <https://www.seriousseats.com/what-is-culantro>
- <https://rodaleinstitute.org/blog/the-three-sistersand-that-fourth-sister-no-one-really-talks-about/>
- <https://www.seriousseats.com/creole-succotash-from-treme-cookbook>
- <https://krghospitality.com/2023/04/17/kitchen-doctrine-the-holy-trinity/>
- <https://commischefchris.medium.com/your-passport-to-global-cuisine-variations-of-mirepoix-around-the-world-ff3ccc426fb8>
- The Flavor Bible
- <https://nationalpeanutboard.org/news/how-to-grow-peanuts-at-home/>
- <https://seedtofork.com/gardening-resources/2019/04/08/2019-grow-peanuts-59hyf>
- Youtube.com (Hector Grows Veg)
- <https://www.alisorganics.com/products/italian-flat-leaf-parsley>
- <https://www.britannica.com/plant/fennel>
- <https://theyummyclub.com/2018/11/13/make-you-own-bouquet-garni/>
- <https://bostonspice.com/>
- <https://www.fuelingwithflavour.com/2017/03/chinese-seventh-heaven-spice-seasoning.html>
- <https://www.lindenlanefarms.ca/product/horseradish/>
- <https://trueloveseeds.com/products/recao-culantro>
- <https://www.johnnyseeds.com/vegetables/onions/onion-plants-sets/candy-f1-onion-plants-2750.html>
- <https://kelloggsgarden.com/blog/gardening/best-ways-to-plant-onion-bulbs-and-sets/>
- <https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/blog/2021/12/09/mustard-plant-jet-fuel-could-reduce-emissions-68-percent>



Upcoming Presentations



Growing Groceries

2025 Cool Season Series
Wednesdays 7:00pm-8:30pm



Date	Class
Wed, February 19	Essential Culinary Combinations
Wed, March 5	All About Brassicas
Wed, March 19	What's a Garden Without Tomatoes?
Wed, April 2	Beacon Food Forest: Seattle's Communal, Edible Landscape

PNW Garden Savvy

2025 Series 1
Saturdays 9:30am-10:30am



Date	Class
Sat, February 22	Wildlife Friendly Gardening for Natural Pest Control
Sat, March 8	Best but Unusual Companion Plants for Rhododendrons
Sat, March 22	Mastering Mason Bees: Essential Insights for Successful Spring Pollination

More info: <https://kingcounty.mastergardenerfoundation.org/education>

Ask a Master Gardener

Visit: [https://extension.wsu.edu/king/
ask-a-master-gardener](https://extension.wsu.edu/king/ask-a-master-gardener)

Become a Master Gardener

For information on King County Master Gardener training (including signing up for the email notification list), visit:
[https://extension.wsu.edu/king/
gardening/become-a-master-gardener](https://extension.wsu.edu/king/gardening/become-a-master-gardener)

Applications for the 2026 class will open in
September 2025

Thank you!

Growing Groceries

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King County Master Gardener Program

<https://extension.wsu.edu/king/gardening>

- Demonstration Gardens
- Plant Clinics
- Education Outreach
- Science-based Publications



Master Gardener Foundation of King County

<http://www.mgfk.org>

- Fundraising for these programs

More information about growing groceries:

<https://kingcounty.mastergardenerfoundation.org/education/gg/>