

Chickering GROWS

THIS WEEK IN THE GARDEN

October 5, 2020

WHAT'S GROWING

We are excited to GROW with you!

TIP OF THE WEEK

Let's learn something NEW!

WORD OF THE WEEK

Horticulture has its own lingo!

DIY PROJECT

Want to try a gardening experiment?



"You can learn new things at any time in your life if you're willing to be a beginner. If you actually learn to like being a beginner, the whole world opens up to you."

-Barbara Sher

WHAT'S GROWING: ZINNIAS

Zinnia garden kits are here, your kit has been assembled and seeds are planted. Great job! Now what? Your plant requires at least 6 hours of sunlight every day. If you do not have a sunny spot, consider using a grow lamp. Remember to keep the coco pith moist. If it seems dry, spray with water. Your zinnias should sprout in 5-10 days. It is important to add nutrients to your water as soon as your seedlings sprout. Show us how your garden is growing on our Padlet!

HAPPY GROWING!

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TIP OF THE WEEK: WATER QUALITY

Water is the moving force behind **hydroponics**. In the absence of soil, it is water that delivers nutrients to your plants. So, if you can drink it you can water your plant with it, right? Wrong! The quality of your water plays a key role in the success of your hydroponic garden. The best water for your garden is filtered or distilled water.

Public Utility: If you live in a city or the suburbs, your water most likely comes from a public utility that treats it to kill off microbes that cause illnesses in people. Pure water is pH neutral, but chlorine and other chemicals used to treat water change pH levels. The right pH for your nutrient solution is essential for your plants.

Well: Rural homes typically get tap water from underground wells. Minerals, such as calcium, are common in well water, and they, too, alter the pH level. If your home has well water that's high in mineral content, you may notice a crusty white buildup around fixtures and drains. These deposits in your hydroponic system can impair plant growth. Filtering the water can help reduce the problem.

Filtered: No matter where your tap water comes from, it will be better for your crops if it's filtered before you use it. There are many methods, from simple carbon-based filters to more complex reverse-osmosis systems. Whichever you choose, the results are nearly the same - water that is close to its pure state.

Rain: Crops growing outside get the real thing: rainwater. Even if you grow under lights, you can capture rain in a plastic barrel attached to an outdoor downspout to use for your indoor crop. Rainwater is free of additives and low in minerals, though you should avoid collecting it from roofs with materials containing lead or asbestos. Still, unless you live in a very wet climate, you aren't likely to collect enough rainwater to meet your watering needs.

Distilled: The distillation process of turning water into steam then collecting the condensation purifies the water, removing all chemicals, heavy metals, bacteria, and waste. The result is the colorless, odorless, tasteless, and pH neutral fluid that's best for your garden. You can buy distilled water in bottles — or make your own with a steam distiller.

This information is from: <https://www.saferbrand.com/articles/best-water-for-hydroponics>



WORD OF THE WEEK: GERMINATION



Germination is the process of a seed becoming a plant. In traditional gardening you plant seeds directly in the soil. In hydroponics, we use a grow medium, like the coco pith in our self-watering bell jar garden. The coco pith is a spongy material that binds the coconut fiber in a coconut husk. It is naturally antifungal, and an excellent choice to **germinate** seeds as it retains moisture and releases it slowly to plant roots. With warmth, light and water you should expect to see your seedlings **germinate** in just a few days!



Learn more at Gardening Know How
<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/special/children/grow-carrot-tops.htm>



DIY: CARROT TOPS

Carrot tops make pretty houseplants for a sunny window and their fern-like foliage is beautiful in an outdoor container garden. Eventually, white lacy flowers will bloom. Growing carrot tops from carrots takes no special equipment and results will be seen in a matter of days!

WATER METHOD

Cut the top from a grocery store carrot. You'll need about 1-inch of the root. Stick a toothpick into either side of the carrot stump and balance it on top of a small glass. Fill the glass with water up to and barely touching the bottom edge of the stump. Set the glass in a light, but not sunny window. Add water to keep it touching the edge and watch the roots sprout.

PIE PLATE METHOD

You will need a glass or ceramic pie plate and marbles. Fill the plate with a single layer of marbles and set the 1-inch stubs of the veggie right on top. You're still going to grow carrots in water, but the level is determined by the tops of the marbles. Set the plate in a light, but not sunny window. Add water and watch the roots sprout. You can sprout six or seven stumps when sprouting carrot tops this way. When planted together in a single pot, they make a spectacular display.



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ANY QUESTIONS? ASK US

JAMIE GODFREY
CHICKERING GROWS COORDINATOR
JAMIEDGODFREY@GMAIL.COM

KIM B. HALL
COMMUNITY OUTREACH, DOVER PTO
2020-2021
COMMUNITY@DOVERPTO.ORG

RENEE GRADY
CHICKERING GROWS TEACHER LIASON
GRADYR@DOVERSHORBORN.ORG