

Every Monday morning, from June through October, Teresa arrives in her van to pick up our produce for Ryan's Rainbow Foodbank, which is run out of the Cliff Avenue United Church in North Burnaby.

Before partnering with BARAGA, Ryan's Rainbow was only able to provide food in cans and boxes. Now, each family receives at least one zucchini, a bag of greens, or the like from our generous gardeners.

Teresa encouraged me to visit Ryan's Rainbow, which I finally did recently. Six volunteers were busy finding orders, checking off names, organizing and flattening empty boxes, pouring oatmeal into smaller bags and - most importantly - greeting families as they came in for their scheduled grocery pickup. Boxes were lined up and ready.

Last year, Ryan's Rainbow served between 40-60 families. On this day, 115 families came in, no doubt the direct result of many people being out of work due to Covid-19.

Teresa introduced me to several families, with one woman offering many thanks and telling me that she turns the "giant zucchinis into a traditional dish from my country, Iran." When I asked how to spell the name of the dish she responded with a laugh, "Oh, it's too long."



The friendly volunteers greet each family and know their names and locate their order promptly. It's staggering to think of all the time and organization it takes to have 115 boxes and bags of food ready and waiting, not to mention drumming up the donations from stores and organizations throughout the community.

I accepted profuse thanks on behalf of all the gardeners at BARAGA who donate their lovely produce. To them, we are heroes. If we could double the number of plots contributing that would make the Ryan's Rainbow boxes even healthier. Imagine if we received donations from every plot! Please consider sharing your bounty with Ryan's Rainbow - extra zucchini, kale, greens, beans, potatoes, tomatoes, and other veggies are always welcome! We can never donate too much!

When the last box is picked up, the tables are put away and the work begins again to get everything ready for the following Thursday. For Teresa, that is a full-time volunteer job. In my book, the folks at Ryan's Rainbow are the real heroes.

August 2020

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HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2019

- Helped a single dad and his four kids with linen and beds
- Provided an expecting mother a queen bed
- Gave out 60 Christmas hampers
- Enrolled 6 youth into employment programs
- Provided local schools with breakfast weekly



VICE PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

by Dick Mackin

Greetings to all members at BARAGA, it looks like summer has finally arrived! I have heard from a large number of gardeners about tomato blight, potato blight, onion mold and garlic rust. All of these things are a result of the cool wet summer we have had so far. It's a good thing that we gardeners are optimists and are talking about how things will be different next year!

REMINDERS TO MEMBERS

SUMMER GROUNDSKEEPER – Colin Roon came aboard in early June and is doing a great job making BARAGA look its best. You can help him out by keeping the main pathways clear of all obstacles and garbage. You can also help BARAGA look its best by picking up litter and placing it in the garbage.

WATER – Water is our single largest expense and we ask you to use it wisely. Once plants have been established there is no need for constant watering. Even when the top layer of soil seems dry, your plants have roots extending 4 inches and more beneath the surface. Every gardener should have a water meter and use it to see how much moisture is available to the plants 3-4 inches below the surface before they turn on the taps. **Remember unattended watering is not permitted at BARAGA.**

COMMON COMPOST AREAS – Please, no plastic, no lumber, no cardboard. If you see someone misusing the compost – educate them!

COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS – Want to do some Community Service Hours outside of a regular work party? Here are a few choices:

Screen Some of Last Year's Compost - Put the screened soil on the pile or start a new pile. Take a before and after photo.

Pathway Improvements - Take a wheelbarrow, fill it with wood chips and use it to fill pot holes and low areas along any of the main pathways. If there is a pile of screened soil at the compost site, you may also use that material. Take a photo of your work.

Ditch Grass Trimming - Get a weed whacker and cut back the grass along our side of the ditch beside Meadow Avenue (aka South Path) or along the ditch at the east end of the garden property. Take a before and after photo.

Compost Area Maintenance - Go to either compost area and remove inappropriate material such as plastic, metal, wood, and large branches. Dispose of the items in the garbage bins. Large branches can be added to the brown material pile in the parking lot. If you are at the brown material pile, remove the same inappropriate materials. Take a photo of the items you have cleared.

When you have completed 6 hours (3 hours for half plots), print the form from the members area of the web site, complete it, and send it along with your photos to workhours@baraga.ca or put them in an envelope and slide them under the office door.

CLOSE THE GATE – Please remember, if you are the last car leaving the Meadow Avenue parking lot at night, we ask you to please close the gate. We hope this will discourage dumping and theft from plots.

Wishing you all a great Summer and Fall!

Invasive Weeds Seen at BARAGA

There are many aggressive weeds at BARAGA. They have deep roots, reproduce quickly, and form thick mats that can choke our plots. Here are a few of the most common seen at BARAGA.



LAMIUM

There are many types of Lamium which can have different shapes and colours. Most are very invasive, grow easily, and are found in shaded to partially shaded areas. Do NOT plant them at BARAGA as groundcover or decorative plants.



YELLOW FLAG IRIS

This non-native, perennial aquatic plant can grow in a variety of wetland habitats as well as BARAGA dykes and gardens. This plant colonizes and spreads quickly, displacing native plants and decreasing biodiversity.

More Examples of Invasive Weeds



KNOTWEED

Japanese knotweed, Giant knotweed, Bohemian knotweed, and Himalayan knotweed are all now found in BC. Knotweeds are one of the 100 worst invasive species and a top-ten invasive species for control in BC.



HOGWEED

Giant hogweed is an invasive perennial herb that has a very toxic sap that can cause result in burns, blisters, and scarring. Protective equipment (coveralls, gloves, eye protection, etc.) must be used when handling this plant.



HORSETAIL

Also called Marestalk, this native weed thrives in moist soils. It spreads through spores, rhizomes, and nodes. Its roots have been found to go as deep as 6 feet, making it very difficult to control once it becomes fully established. Because of its method of reproduction, it will be always found in our plots from time to time.

Once you find it, immediately remove as much of it as you can so it does not have the energy to grow a strong system.



AN INTRODUCTION TO COMPOSTING

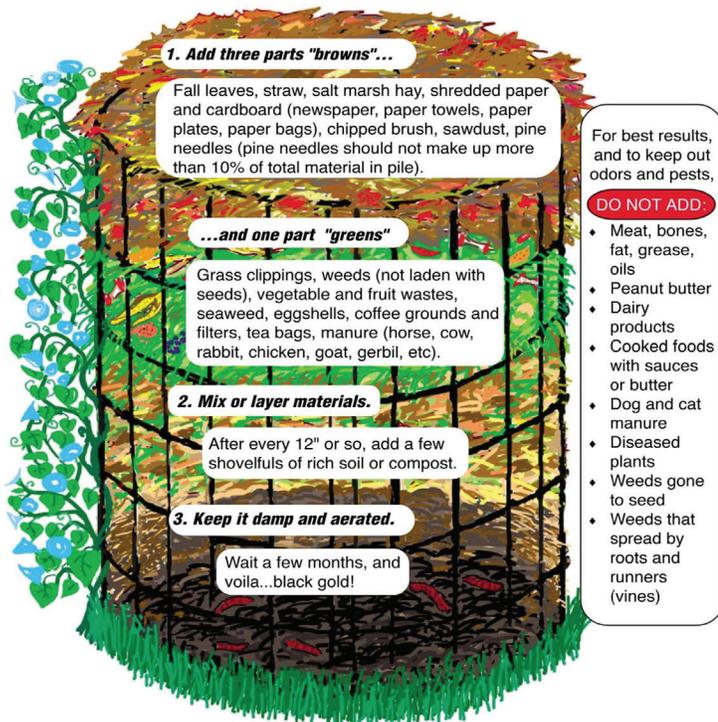
Q: CAN I COMPOST ON MY GARDEN PLOT?

A: Of course! Composting on your garden plot helps to create more nutrients for your garden soil year-round and saves BARAGA the work of maintaining community compost piles. It is a responsible way to create a sustainable garden plot.

Q: HOW DO I COMPOST ON MY PLOT?

A: You can create compost bins/boxes/cages/whatever works on your plot. Make sure to provide ventilation so that your compost can break down more quickly. Layer your green and brown matter and try to turn the compost every once in a while. Once your compost is ready, you can sift it to remove large chunks or just work it into your soil as you would any fertilizer such as manure.

Another method is to dig a large hole in your garden and bury your compost. This is often done at the end of the season. Check out this website for some tips on effective composting in the garden: <http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/solid-waste/SolidWastePublications/HeresTheDirt.pdf>



Q: WHAT ARE SOME PROBLEMS WITH COMPOSTING?

A: Smell and rodent attraction are usually the two main problems. The best way to avoid this is to make sure that only greens (no meats, grease, cooked grains) are used in the compost and that sufficient brown matter is added at all times.

Q: HOW DO I COMPOST INVASIVE WEEDS OR DISEASED PLANTS?

A: Many gardeners put their invasive weeds (such as Horsetail, Morning Glory and Creeping Buttercup) or diseased plants (blight) into large black plastic bags and leave them for a few weeks in the sun to die. The weeds and pathogens should be destroyed and ready to compost in the soil.

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BARAGA Contact Information

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www.facebook.com/groups/BARAGA

Fall & Winter Gardening Guide

 **West Coast Seeds**
Untreated Seeds for Organic Growing, non-gmo

Planting
for Great Fall and Winter Harvests

The end of summer doesn't have to be the end of gardening season! There are many varieties that you can plant now for fall and winter harvest.

Planting for fall & winter harvests has to start in the summer and fall. Just like we sow summer harvest crops in the late winter and spring – it's the same concept. Did you know that many crops can be harvested from the garden fresh, even after the end of summer? Root crops like carrots and beets, and leafy greens like kale and scallions, even lettuce!

In our mild coastal climate, we can grow some vegetables all winter without protection. The greatest challenges are low light levels, abundant rain, and temperature swings.

Winter gardening is about harvesting crops all winter that were planted in the summer and fall. Slow growing crops like Brassicas need a longer time to mature than really speedy crops like arugula and radishes.

West Coast Seeds offers a fantastic Fall and Winter Gardening Guide which includes a handy planting chart to help you know when to plant seeds for harvest in the cooler months, and what varieties are ideal for overwintering.

The 16-page guide also includes detailed growing instructions for a variety of plants ideal for fall and winter gardening.

Where to Get the Guide

You can download the guide for free from the West Coast Seeds web site at:
<https://bit.ly/3fCTOZB>