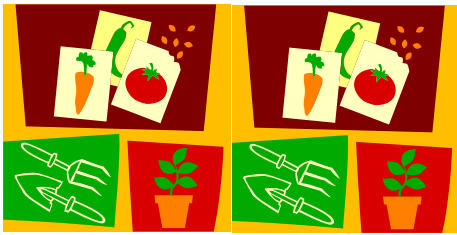


## Crows Woods Gardens: Tips for New Gardeners



### KATHI STOKES - Plot #46

**Start a compost bin** in the corner of your plot. Throw crushed leaves, garbage from home, grass clippings, and all your weeds. I pull the weeds without shaking the soil off. It saves time and it's all going back to the plot anyway. The pile will continue to decrease in time as it composts. When one bin is full, start another and let the first one cook. You may need to stir up the pile once in a while, and water it when you water your crops. After a few months, you can spread this wonderful organic material, of your making, over your plot.

**Grow radishes.** They're easy to germinate and mature quickly. Fun to bring home as your first success. Walt Saladik, founder of the community gardens, had my preschoolers grow radishes when we first got started. They loved seeing them grow.



### PAUL ECKMAN - Plot #36

**Mulch** to keep down the weeds and save time on routine garden

maintenance.

### LAURA ANDERSON - Plot #53

**I always design my garden** before stepping foot into it. It's a creative endeavor. My enthusiasm for the coming season grows during the planning process. If your aim is to have your children join you, be sure to ask them what they would like to grow.

**Plant flowers:** Sunflowers, zinnias, cosmos. They attract birds, bees and good bugs. Marigolds, nasturtiums and herbs keep predatory insects and little critters at bay.

It's an incredible experience when a Hummingbird is within an arms length. Keep a look out for the Gold Finches; they have arrived already! They will dine on your sunflowers all summer!

Don't hesitate to **ask fellow gardeners for help.** We have a wealth of experience and passion for Crows Woods Gardens.

**Take pride in your garden,** keep it clean, as weed-free as possible and enjoy the harvest!

## Tips for New Gardeners *continued*

### **BILL KOELLING - Plot #39**

If you're building a **boxed raised bed, fill it with Mel's Mix** -- equal parts by volume of compost, peat moss and coarse vermiculite. It's great stuff! In fact, I recommend you read "**All New Square Foot Gardening**" by Mel Bartholomew. **Need mulch for the base of your tomato plants?** Rake some from the soccer fields when they mow.

### **ANTHONY CALABRETTA - Plot # 10**

**Use cover crops.** They greatly improve the soil.

**Start most seeds indoors.** That's more reliable. **Use shop lights to raise seedlings.** They give better results than the windowsill.

### **VETTI THOMAS - Plot #48**

**Don't plant seeds too deeply.** Follow package instructions. Remember, half an inch is not two inches.

### **STANLEY PRAISS - Plot #58**

**Keep scissors handy.** Buy four pairs of scissors. I got mine at the Dollar Store. Keep them in your car,

in your pocket, or in a rain-proof box in your plot. I'm always needing scissors.

### **MARY PREVITE - Plot #21**

**Don't use pesticides.** Pesticides aren't selective, so the pesticide you use kills off the good bugs and insects -- like bees, butterflies, and lady bugs -- as well as the bad guys.

**Make a bee-friendly garden.** Bees pollinate your crops. Create a tiny place in your garden for flowers that attract bees. I plant a zillion zinnias every year at the entrance to our gardens so the bees and butterflies feel welcome. Flower colors that attract bees are **blue, purple, violet, white,** and **yellow.** Flowers planted in clumps attract more pollinators than single plants.

**Make garden friends.** Bless my soul! That's half the fun of gardening at Crows Woods. Talk to people. Ask questions. Swap stories about your successes and your failures. Alert people about your sightings of unfriendly pests -- like Colorado potato beetles or -- horrors! -- harlequin beetles (of the stink bug tribe). #

