

Spirit Newsletter – October 2018 Silver Springs Edible Garden Group

“Laughter is brightest in the place where food is.” – Irish Proverb

Fall is a beautiful time of year in Calgary! The Silver Springs Edible Garden Group gardeners are fully enjoying the fruits of their labour and the garden plots are being put to rest for winter. Although we have been able to instantly enjoy many of the items coming from our gardens over the summer, such as fresh tomatoes, peas, and beans, an important part of self-sufficient gardening also includes preserving the harvest for the winter months. Some great ways to stretch our gardens into winter include dehydrating, freezing, pickling, fermenting, as well as creating delicious jams and jellies. A quick Google search will show you how many different canning and preserving workshops are offered around Calgary!

Growing and preserving your own food is also an important part of leading a healthy and sustainable lifestyle. Growing your own food means you have more control over the environment in which your food comes from – a backyard garden does not need chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Tending to your own garden will show you how to eat in season when flavours and nutrients are at their best – not only do fresh picked fruits and vegetables taste better, they also have a higher nutritional value. Growing your own food also ensures that you have direct access to food that can be harvested, prepared, and fed to your family throughout the growing season – and beyond if you choose to preserve food for winter! If you are interested in learning more about gardening and getting your hands dirty, consider joining your local community garden. Please send an email to: silverspringsgarden@gmail.com to be put on a waitlist for 2019.

TIPS FOR PUTTING YOUR GARDEN TO BED:

- ✓ *Add* compost to your soil
- ✓ *Plant* a cover crop in your vegetable garden
- ✓ *Leave* perennials (instead of cutting them back) to collect snow for winter protection for the roots, as well as protection for the beneficial insects that live in the mulch at the base of the plants throughout the winter
- ✓ *Prune* woody trees and shrubs once dormant
- ✓ *Leave* excess fruits and berries on trees for wildlife to enjoy (and clean up!) over the winter
- ✓ *Plant* flowering plants, garlic, and rhubarb in the ground before it freezes. Early to mid-September is best to allow plants to establish roots. Consider adding straw or mulch to protect new plantings.

Next year the Edible Garden Group will continue to offer the ‘**Growing Connection**’ **Garden Speaker Series** – a collaboration with the Botanical Gardens of Silver Springs. In 2018, topics for the series included:

- Ready, Set, Grow! Beginner Gardening
- Gardening with Native Plants
- All About Roses
- Trees, Shrubs & Perennials

We are seeking input for the 2019 series and would love to hear from you! Please email us at silverspringsgarden@gmail.com with your ideas for topics and what you would most like to

learn about. Thank you!