

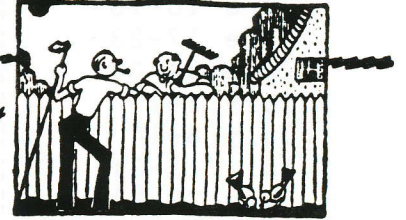


The Garden Spray

BULLETIN OF THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS, INC.

Member--Men's Garden Clubs of America • Minnesota State Horticultural Society

June 1989, Volume 47, Number 6



NEXT MGCM MEETING

TUESDAY EVENING JUNE 13th, 1989

PERSHING FIELD PARK BUILDING
4801 Chowen Avenue South

DINNER 6:00 P.M.

PRICE \$6.00

Topic: SEED SAVING THEN and NOW

Speaker: Jim Mattson, Manager Oliver Kelly Farm

The Oliver Kelly Farm is administered by the Minnesota Historical Society. It is located 2½ miles southeast of Elk River on US Hwy 10. It was established as a living history museum demonstrating the daily life of mid 19th Century Minnesotans with working fields, gardens and farm buildings. The former owner, after whom it was named, was the founder of the Grange, one of the largest farm organizations of the later 19th Century. Interesting events are scheduled several weekends during the summer.

As manager of the Kelly Farm, Jim is heavily involved in the rediscovery of farm life of the 19th Century. Gardening was a very important part of that life. Without commercial sources of seed for their gardens and fields, people were forced to save their seed.

Have you ever saved seed from an especially desirable plant in hopes of having more the next year, only to find the next year's plant something less than desirable? What do the terms Hybrid and Open Pollinated mean to the average gardener? Come to the meeting and answers will be available for the asking.

Mattson will bring us details of Kelly Farm work as it relates to seed saving. Proper saving techniques, support groups and their own seed savers exchange will be discussed. Some of the current issues related to propagation and availability of fruits, nuts and vegetables will also be discussed.

SID NYSTROM will be our mini session speaker. Did you know we have at least one Fen in the metro area? Sid will fill in the details on BOGS, FENS and RELATED TOPICS.

This will be our last regular meeting until September. Four meetings will be held during July and August.

GET YOUR RESERVATION BACK TO GENE ACKLAND AT ONCE

FRAGRANCE GARDEN SUMMER MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

(Please make a note on your calendar.)

(Sat. to Fri.)

| | | | | |
|---------------|------------------|----------|------------------|----------|
| May 21-26 | Russ Smith | 475-1878 | Stan Crist | 540-6358 |
| | Bob Redmond | 822-4109 | | |
| May 27-June 2 | Ger Rothen | 789-4873 | Duane Reynolds | 537-6512 |
| June 3-9 | Larry Bagge | 445-2438 | Doug Madsen | 822-0517 |
| June 10-16 | Merle Pulley | 822-0172 | Duane Johnson | 824-0295 |
| June 17-23 | Lloyd Wittstock | 623-7735 | Kent Petterson | 332-1821 |
| June 24-30 | Leo Grebner | 881-8187 | Herb Neby | 537-7437 |
| July 1-7 | Dale Durst | 922-6658 | Bob Churilla | 788-8958 |
| July 8-14 | Phil Peterson | 869-3730 | Ed Culbert | 823-7853 |
| July 15-21 | Gary Magrum | 888-6793 | Charlie Proctor | 893-1878 |
| July 22-28 | Chet Groger | 922-6411 | Joe Stenger | 822-5305 |
| July 29-Aug 4 | Dave Moehnke | 432-6677 | Walter Gustafson | 926-3124 |
| Aug 5-11 | Vinton Bouslough | 861-4065 | Sid Nystrom | 483-9867 |
| Aug 12-18 | Greg Smith | 591-5996 | Matt Smith | 591-5996 |
| Aug 19-25 | Lloyd Nerburn | 935-4642 | Reed Sonstegard | 866-3425 |
| Aug 26-Sept 1 | Carleton Nelson | 831-8764 | Tom C. Hanson | 881-0172 |
| Sept 2-8 | John Moon | 861-5745 | John Groos | 823-8620 |
| Sept 9-15 | Lee Gilligan | 536-9858 | Bob Olson | 920-8327 |
| Sept 16-22 | Ray Weisberg | 377-2780 | Jerry Shannon | 690-1214 |
| Sept 23-29 | John Mondati | 781-0222 | Howard Berg | 545-7290 |
| ALTERNATES: | Duane Johnson | 824-0295 | Henry Halvorson | 588-4369 |
| | Norm ter Steeg | 822-0371 | Andy Marlow | 933-5759 |
| | Dwight Stone | 588-5692 | | |

Please mark your calendars with your scheduled week of work. It is very important that each week's gardening is completed so those that follow are not burdened with extra work. If you can't keep your commitment, please contact someone from the alternate list to take your place or call Kent Petterson if you are unable to arrange a sub.

Hoses for watering are available at the garden. You will need to bring the usual tools such as hoe, hand trowel, trimmer, plastic trash bag and sprinkler etc. Mowing once again will be handled by MSB.

The following should be a minimum list of maintenance each week.

- 1) Weeding,
 - 2) Watering - the boulevard too,
 - 3) Dead heading,
 - 4) General cleanup and debris removal - Check outside of the fence.
- If you have any questions, please call Kent Petterson.

More About Wood Ashes. Last year a columnist in Flower and Garden responding to a query seemed to question the wisdom of strewing wood ashes directly in the garden.

"Ashes are variable in their chemical composition depending upon the kind of wood burned. Ashes supply potash, and are strongly alkaline. Long-continued and excessive use can lead to overly-high alkalinity in the soil. Probably the safest use would be to add the ashes to your compost pile, where they will be diluted and should give no problems when mixed with soil. Also add plenty of shredded oak leaves and pine needles to counteract the ashes' alkalinity. After the compost has matured, run a simple pH test to see if more amendments need to be made. You can also use ashes sparingly in potting soils."

Notes from the President . . .

The musical word or term for the month of June is Poco--meaning little--Yes, for the late seeders and for the great gardens you've planted--still greater things are ahead.

Since I've been in the "Garden Club" I've kept a note pad. It was very interesting to read again the suggestions and thoughts of past speakers. Two great guys we've lost since I became a member in '82--Orin Turnquist and Leon Snyder. I revere them as knowledgeable, humble and willing to help the novice in growing in the horticulture experience.



Leon--He was very easy to talk to anytime. He willingly gave his knowledge of a particular plant and very easily gave an answer to a question at garden meetings. I remember from notes his use of the Swan River Daisy and the River Birch.--He must have given very much for others, too.

Orin--What an affable person.--He loved people--Always greeting--His Anoka potato together with vegetables, is well known.--I was particularly impressed with his talk on vegetables and his recommendations as to varieties he enjoyed. Such nice people you meet in the Men's Garden Club.--They left their mark as many have and will.

A MID TERM REPORT

When one gets involved in gardening in the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis one has lots of fun.--Lots of letters and involvement with the wide experience of horticulture in the state of Minnesota. This has been a very busy spring, Would you believe I missed the first fishing opener in 17 years? --I love working at the Garden Center--and coordinating the activities of this great club.

Where are we with our objectives for 1989?

1. Expand friendship in the club. If you were at the April meeting you know how satisfying it is to talk with lots of people about horticulture. Keep the communication flowing.
2. Bring the Center for the Blind into full partnership with MGCM in the Fragrance Garden Project. With the help of Kent Petterson and Phil Peterson this project is getting off the ground. They have been meeting with the Center people to turn the corner on getting the Center to use our Garden.
3. Allow most of the time for the top flight programs. I don't think we've had long business meetings.--Most of the meetings have been through in ample time for the subject of the night.
4. Actively recruit new members. We're on target--6 new members by mid-term.--We need another 6 to 10 by the end of the year. Call if you need a membership application. (Duane Johnson 824-0295)--DO IT!
5. Revive the Mentor Program. I hope members are using the front part of the Directory in their gardening experience. I know I've talked to several people thus increasing my horticultural experience.--Don't be afraid to call.--We're a friendly group. (over)

At mid term I'd like to recognize a guy who has been my mentor since I joined the club. He's stopped at my house on several occasions.--Advised me on how to tip roses, when to plant dahlias and what to feed them. He has also talked to me about the horticultural needs of the club. Recognizing FRED GLASOE as June MGCM PERSON OF THE MONTH is something I've wanted to do for a long time. *Note--Fred brought me into MGCM. Joining is one of the best steps I've ever taken.

--Duane

The CHRISTMAS PARTY will NOT be held on December 12. It will be held on December 5 instead. Change your plans and your Directories accordingly. The MGCM board meeting originally scheduled for December 5 will be held on November 28.

DIRECTORY: ADDITIONS and CORRECTIONS

| NEW MEMBER | | ERROR to CORRECT | |
|-----------------------|----------|------------------|----------|
| Hans Dekker | 374-5188 | Eldon Hugelen | 431-3114 |
| 2421 Irving Ave. S. | | | 431-4334 |
| Minneapolis, MN 55417 | | | |

NOW IS THE TIME to go out and gather those dandelions in your big apron to make dandelion wine as the old-country women did where Ed Culbert grew up. Or, perhaps you'd prefer rhubarb wine. Rhubarb is at it's juiciest right now.

Rhubarb is commonly known in New England as pie plant. It is also known as the wine plant. As early as 1788, Healde's New Pharmacopoeia refers to rhubarb wine. "You can make a simple, winelike drink by adding a bit of lemon and sugar to the cooked juice; It is ready within 24 hours."

There is a true wine that can be made from rhubarb. A recipe from Farmhouse Fare, a collection of recipes from the British Farmer's Weekly reads: "Wipe and cut 2 lbs. of rhubarb, put it into a large saucepan with 1/2 lb. of lemon balm leaves, well washed, and 4 quarts of water. Bring to a boil and boil for thirty minutes. Strain, and when lukewarm add 1/2 oz. of citric acid and 1 to 1 1/2 lbs. of sugar, according to taste. Cover and let it work for 24 hours. Then carefully skim and bottle. It is ready for drinking the same day."

Whether you make wine, sauce or pies with rhubarb, don't peel the stalks if you want to retain the pink coloring.

MGCM FLOWER & VEGETABLE SHOW 1989 NATIONAL AWARDS

FLOWER - HOSTA LEAF (LEAVES)

VEGETABLE - SLICING CUCUMBER

The hosta is growing in popularity because it fills a variety of landscape needs. To help you prepare your specimens for the show, read the handout from the American Hosta Society. (see page 5)

Slicing Cucumber - Select fruits that are straight, well formed, dark green and having a blocky appearance. Diameter should be 1½ to 2 inches and the length from 6 to 10 inches. They should be uniform in size, shape and color. The stem should be attached and from ¼ to ½ inch. Cut from the vine, wipe with a soft cloth. Do not show over-ripe fruit which are dull in color.

THE AMERICAN HOSTA SOCIETY
JUDGING CUT HOSTA LEAVES
(SHOW RULES)

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|-----------|
| FORM & SIZE | 25 points | CONDITION & GROOMING | 15 points |
| COLOR & PATTERN | 25 points | SUBSTANCE. | 15 points |
| TEXTURE | 15 points | LABELING | 5 points |

COMMENTS

FORM: The overall shape of the leaf and stem. Graceful, attractive, true to variety. Fully developed -- not frail, immature. No crumpling, creasing, crimping, sagging, abnormal twisting. Skill of exhibitor in selecting, hardening and staging specimen will show here. Tears, chewed edges, malformed stem, overly short stem -- these are faults.

SIZE: Normal for well grown specimen of particular variety. If three or more leaves are shown as a multiple entry, they should be about the same size.

COLOR AND PATTERN: Pattern is a part of COLOR but is listed to emphasize its importance. Although there will always be self-colored varieties, the variegated ones are very popular and will be even more so as new patterns and colors appear. Fading, sunburn, discoloration due to disease, damage, insects, old age -- all these are faults under COLOR. Color and pattern should be typical of variety, properly grown.

TEXTURE: Surface of leaf -- includes the actual form of the surface (ribbed, puckered, waffled, fairly smooth) -- new textures may appear in time. TEXTURE also includes the appearance of the surface -- the dullness, the silken gleam, the "bloom" seen in the glaucous varieties. Any lack of normal feel or appearance should lose points for specimen.

CONDITION AND GROOMING: Health, good development, maturity without over age, firm substance -- no signs of disease or insects or damage therefrom -- all these indicate good condition. Wilting, flabbiness, disease, insects, holes, etc., are faults under condition. Dirt or other foreign matter on leaves; spray residue also faults. Much care must be taken in washing to avoid damage to bloom of some varieties or delicate surface of others. Cleanliness, neatly trimmed stem and general spruced up appearance of bottle and specimen would indicate good grooming. One dirty, wilted, etc., leaf would lose points seriously for a multiple entry, even if the other two leaves were perfect.

SUBSTANCE: The quality of firmness and rigidity of the leaf, which enables it to retain its characteristic form, overall freshness, and color. Strong, firm, crisp. Substance varies with varieties and species within a plant family.

LABELING: Correct and complete (use Entry Tags). As names are still rather mixed up, some tolerance will have to be shown here but this situation will improve.

A GREEN LAWN - WHAT MAKES IT WORK?

by John L. Kolb

I have been asked to clarify some of the questions regarding the best seed varieties and cultivars to be used in the State of Minnesota or in the Twin Cities area for lawn use. The subject sounds rather simple and with one of the larger grass seed companies located in this area you expect a great resource of information.

To background some of the problems:

1. Try to avoid what is called Monocultures. That means you seldom like to see someone plant all bluegrass to the exclusion of fescues and perennial ryegrasses.
2. Try to select grass seeds that are adapted to the area or have a high rating in the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP).
3. Whether newly seeding or "overseeding" an existing turf area, the seed grows best when inserted, in contact with, or buried in the soil.
4. Level of maintenance can be variable which makes a cultivar look good in one instance and poor in another.

MONOCULTURE vs POLYCULTURE: In making a broad recommendation for seeding any particular area it is best to consider a mixture of compatible fine-leaved turf species. This will protect against a season such as 1988, or a disease endemic to one species, or changes in management of the area brought on by a change in supervisors or budget. It is, therefore, considered prudent to plant Kentucky Bluegrasses mixed with Fine Fescues and Perennial Ryegrasses as the complete plant population.

Many question this recommendation by pointing to the "turf sod business" which uses Kentucky Bluegrasses in a monoculture. Growing a crop and harvesting it in the shortest possible time is the reason these grass nurseries use only bluegrass species.

SELECT SPECIES & VARIETIES OF SEED RECOMMENDED FOR THE REGION: This is the original question that Ed Culbert wanted answered. The key to persistence of a particular turfgrass species or cultivar within a turf community is its ability to compete. Individual grass plants compete for light, water, nutrients and carbon dioxide, which are required for survival. Competition occurs among plants of the same cultivar, among cultivars of the same species and among different species. This competition can be altered by different management such as height of cut, fertility level, moisture levels and soil types.

WHAT DO WE RECOMMEND FOR MINNESOTA? The National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) is designed to develop and coordinate uniform trials of turfgrass varieties and promising selections in the United States and Canada. The program can be used to determine whether a cultivar is adapted to a particular location or region. The University of Minnesota, College of Agriculture, did the testing for this area. The test plots are of silty clay loam, full sun, mowed 1.6 - 2.0 inches, pH of soil was 7.1 - 7.5.

Results were as follows with these seeds rating highest in the Minnesota test:

| <u>Bluegrass Seed</u> | | | <u>Ryegrass Seed</u> | | |
|-----------------------|------------|--|----------------------|--------------|--|
| 1. Cheri | 6. Glade | | 1. Delray | 6. Premier | |
| 2. Rugby | 7. Trenton | | 2. Barry | 7. All Star | |
| 3. A-34 | 8. Aspen | | 3. Palmer | 8. Ranger | |
| 4. Enmundi | 9. Parade | | 4. Prelude | 9. Birdie II | |
| 5. Adelphi | 10. Baron | | 5. Manhattan II | 10. Fiesta | |

DRIFT FROM THE SPRAYER
BY Ed Culbert

The last half of April Barbara and I went with a Minneapolis Municipal Hiking Club group on a two week trip through the South. It could well have been a Garden club trip for a great deal of our hiking and much more of our looking dealt with gardens.

It was too late for the azaleas at the famed Bellingrath Gardens near Mobile. When the MGCA convention was held in Mobile in 1984 we were taken there. We thought nothing could ever surpass that garden. I felt let down this year--not so much because the azalea bloom was over but because the other plantings were not up to 1984. The entire place appeared to have gone down hill.

The Middleton Place gardens at Charleston, South Carolina were a marked contrast. The rose garden there was spectacular. Though I'm not much of a rose fancier I lingered at length despite the heat. The Cypress Gardens maintained by the Charleston Parks was a delight. Azaleas there were on the wane but azaleas weren't their big item.

The nature trail in Edisto Memorial Gardens in Orangeburg, South Carolina was intriguing because it was right in town. In the rose garden big blocks like paving stones encircled each bed. One stone on the long side of each bed bore the name of the rose therein. That beats the markers we use. Here as elsewhere the roses were heavily mulched with pine needles. A parks supervisor who happened along told me pine needles raked up by home owners were the cheapest mulch available. The soil pH is tested regularly and lime is added "about every 5 years".

The gardens at the Biltmore-Estate in Ashville, North Carolina were superb though the house (castle) gets most of the tourist interest. P. T. Barnum would have run out of superlatives talking about the house.

Beginning before Ashville and on through Kentucky the dogwood was at its peak of blossom. Nothing quite compares with the scene unfolding as one travels through low mountains peppered with the white of dogwood blossoms showing from under the foliage of larger trees just leafing out. We were even able to discern a few pink specimens from our bus windows as we passed close by.

Didn't Andy Marlow do a superb job on that May issue of the SPRAY? He omitted only one thing--a credit line to show he did the editing et al. Thanks Andy.

GLEANINGS FROM OTHER CLUB'S BULLETINS

Japanese researchers have found that sodium bicarbonate is good treatment for powdery mildew. Mixing 1/4 ounce in a gallon of water and spraying weekly on cucumbers, egg plants, and strawberries was found to be very effective, not only in preventing mildew from developing, but in controlling it when the spores were already in place.

Add banana and orange peels to the backyard compost. Compost both fertilizes and adds organic matter to make the humusy soil that plants love. Waste material is loaded with nitrogen (coffee grounds, 2%), phosphate (grapefruit skins, 3½%), and potash (peanut shells, 6%). Discarding organic matter into the garbage can instead of the compost pile is a tragic loss!

Plastic pots should have more drainage material in the bottom than clay pots.

DIFFERENT HIBISCUS THIS YEAR

By Bill Hull

For years I've been growing Southern Belle hybrid hibiscus, getting my seed for many years direct from Sakata in Japan. I had known Mr. Sakata while he was still alive. In one bed at our house I have some plants which are twenty years old, naturalized in Minnesota. Many MGCA conventioners saw them last year just before they bloomed in mid July and local men have seen them for years.

I did something quite differently this year. Instead of growing more plants from purchased seed, I decided to save seed from my F-1 hybrids and see what my F-2 seed would bring. Yes, I know, that's a big gamble because results could be interesting. So I gathered and saved some seeds last fall in 1988, keeping those from pink varieties separated because they are usually scarce.

I divided the seeds into several groups, some solely pinks, and some mixed. Thinking hibiscus to be a tropical plant I expected them to germinate without stratification, as had the seeds I obtained from Japan. But just to be safe I did stratify some in sand in a refrigerator. For four months, October 1 - February 1 they were being stratified.

On February 1 I planted 36 of those seeds plus another 36 of the control group, not stratified. At 23 days I had only one sprouted seed. One of seventy-two is 1.39%, whereas I usually had nearly 100%. So stratification didn't change the results.

I discussed the situation with two MGC Minneapolis club members, Fred Glasoe and Dale Durst and we three independently reached the same conclusion. Since this variety is hardy outside in Minnesota maybe the seeds need to be frozen. Ye Gods! Frozen!

Still having a reserve supply, I submitted them to the freezer for 48 hours, after which they went into boiling water for 24 hours, and then were planted as before.

Results? Within four days they had germinated and were crowding each other in the medium. Probably at least 90% germination. I treated with Benomyl and selected the fifty strongest appearing plants for individual potting, on March 3. Now on May 5 they are happy under lights and anxious to get outside.

What'll I get? That's the question. A geneticist tells me I'll get twenty-five per cent of each parent and the remaining fifty per cent of anything imaginable. Instead of giving away plants this year, as I usually have done, no way, Jose. I'll have them labelled in the vegetable garden as follows:

- Group A: Mixed, frozen.....22 plants
- Group C: Pink, frozen..... 4 plants
- Group E: Mixed, not frozen..... 3 plants (A few 1988 F-1 seed I had)
- Group F: Pink, frozen20 plants
- Group G: Pink, neither frozen/strat1_plant
- Total:.....50 plants

FRAGRANCE GARDEN

After a rainout on April 29th, thirteen men gathered Saturday May 6th for three hours of work to prepare this year's garden. Phil Peterson, Duane Reynolds, Jer Rothen, Len Brenny, Dave Moenke, Merle Pulley, Duane Johnson, Lloyd Nerburn, Tom Hanson, Howard Berg, Kent Petterson, and our two newest members Bob Redmond and Lee Gilligan all pitched in to make short work of cleanup, lawn mowing, trimming and tilling. Your Fragrance Garden is well on it's way to another lovely year.

Ed Culbert donated three floribunda roses from Jackson & Perkins - Intrigue 1984 AA. These were planted near the entry gate.

For those who have wondered how the plantings of last year survived the drought, we're glad to report that with one exception, all plants survived in fine shape. One Rhododendron 'Impeditum' was replaced under warrenty last fall. Go and check out the new PJM Rhododendron, Japanese Shrub Lilac, Forcythia, and Snowdrift and Pink Spire Crabs.

As of this writing, we are still looking forward to our main planting day on May 20th. After this planting day, the summer maintenance schedule takes effect. Our thanks to Reed Sonstegard and Jer Rothen for their work in preparing the schedule and to all those who volunteered to help maintain the garden. Check elsewhere in this issue for details of the schedule.

Kent Petterson

For the FIGS

Juel Shefland's widow, Loretta, recently passed on a note to MMGC with the following. "Enclosed please find a check in the amount of \$100.00 to be used in the fragrance garden in memory of Juel C. Shefland. Juel did enjoy his association with the Men's Garden Club and had great relaxation in his little garden." We have extended our thanks to Loretta. An appropriate use for the money will be discussed and an announcement will be made in the future.

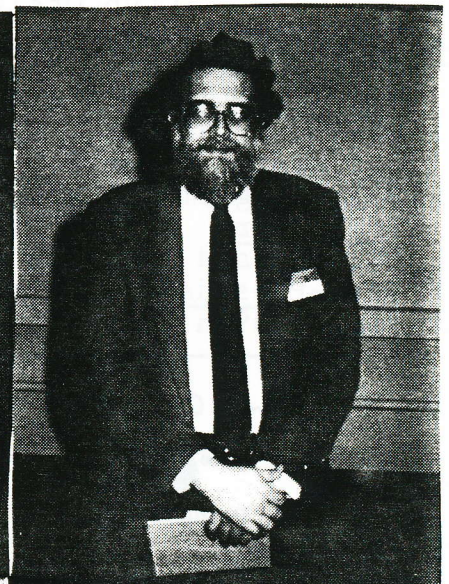
PERSONS OF THE MONTH



Phil Peterson--March



Joe Stenger--February



Andy Marlow--April

MORE GLEANINGS

Bathe your indoor house plants daily. Into a medium size window sprayer bottle, place three drops of liquid dish soap, three drops of household ammonia and one drop of mouthwash. Now fill the bottle with tepid, weak tea and then proceed to spray the foliage of your shiny green plants on both the tops and bottoms of the leaves.

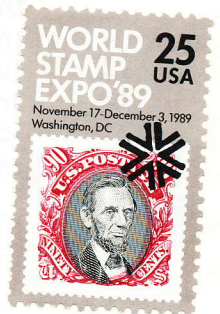
The soap washes off the dust, dirt, smoke and cooking oils covering the leaves. The tannic acid in the tea helps plants digest sugars and starches and the mouthwash discourages disease formation.

Contrary to former opinions, tuberous begonia tubers should be covered, for most of the developing roots are formed on the sides and top. Use 1/2 peat moss and 1/2 perlite, vermiculite or coarse sand as a starting mix. Place a little mound of this material on top of each tuber and water around each mound to prevent filling the indentation in the top of the sprouting tuber.

When buying onion sets, look for the small ones. Those 1/2 to 3/4 inches in diameter are best size to plant. Sets 1" or larger won't form green stalks, but will send up a seed spike and will be too tough to eat.

* * * * *

Dedication - the gardener who wears a medic alert bracelet with an inscription which reads: "In case of accident, call my wife and tell her to water the plants tonight."



Return to
THE GARDEN SPRAY of MGCM, Inc.
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* * * * *

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August 16-19, 1989

**Attention Postmaster:
Dated Material. Please do not delay.**