



# TWINTOWNS GARDENERS' MARKET

## WAHPETON, ND / BRECKENRIDGE, MN

### Local Foods Cookout



2013 Local Foods Cookout

Pictures on this page by Emily Blazek

The Twin Towns Gardeners' Market will hold its Fifth Annual Local Foods Cookout on Thursday, August 14, beginning at 5:00 pm.

This year's menu will be a choice of a burger or brat, potato salad, coleslaw, sweet bread, beverage, and cookie or bar. Fixings will include onions, pickles and tomatoes. Food is provided by our vendors.

We are asking for a \$5.00 donation to help with the cost of food. However, with a purchase from one of our vendors you will receive a coupon for

\$2.00 off your meal.

AM1450 KBMW Radio will be on air at the market. Southern Valley Health Watch of Breckenridge and Wahpeton and Fat Matt's Ring of Smoke will help cook and serve the meal.

Join us at the Family Dollar Store parking lot at the corner of 8th Street and 2nd Avenue North from 4:00 pm-7:00 pm for all your favorites: produce, eggs, meats, jams and jellies, breads, crafts, plants, treats, and more!

Also mark your calendars for Children's Day on September 11.



### August 2014

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#### We're on the Web!

[www.twintownsmarket.org](http://www.twintownsmarket.org)



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# Container Gardening

By Amy Sand,

North Dakota Master Gardener Intern

Have you always wanted to try a little gardening, but don't know where or how to start? Maybe you don't have a spot for a garden. Maybe you don't like to bend over, or can't bend over. Here is an idea you might like. It is a container garden made from a storage tote. The idea is not mine. I first heard about it during the 2014 Spring Gardening Forum presented by NDSU. I searched for the idea online and found a PowerPoint presentation from the Master Gardener program in James City, Virginia. I followed the instructions and made my own self-watering container garden.

## Suggested Supply List

- 1 18-gallon container (tote) with lid
- 1 plant tray – the kind used to hold round pots at the greenhouse
- 1 20" piece of 1" PVC pipe
- 3'x2.5' of weed blocking fabric
- Potting soil
- Utility knife
- Saw

## Making the Reservoir

The reservoir is the space in the bottom of the container that will hold the water. Using the utility knife, cut the plant tray to fit the bottom of the container, and then place it upside down in the bottom of the container. Choose one upside down plant holder to be used for the watering tube in one corner of the container. Use the utility knife to cut a hole in the plant tray the size of the PVC watering tube. In the center of the plant tray, cut 2 holes about 4" in diameter in the bottoms of the plant trays to create water wicking areas.

## The Reservoir Cover

The cover of the reservoir, made out of weed blocking fabric, allows water to wick to and from the reservoir beneath. This fabric is available from garden centers. I got a small piece from the local Soil Conservation Service at a very reasonable price. Center the fabric in the tote. Force the fabric down into the 4" wick holes. These holes will be filled with potting soil when the container is finished. Tuck the cloth all the way around the reservoir so it will be hard for the potting soil to get into the reservoir. Cut a hole in the fabric for the watering tube.

## The Top of the Container

The lid of the tote will have an area around the edge that stiffens the lid. Using a utility knife, cut just inside the stiffened area. This will be a rectangle about 10"x14". When this piece of the lid is put back on the tote, it will be structurally

sound and prevent the sides of the tote from bowing in. Place the lid on the tote and mark the spot on the lid where the watering tube will be placed. Remove the lid from the tote and cut a circle out of the lid the size of the watering tube. At this time you can also cut small holes in each corner of the lid that can be used for plant stakes.

## Installing the Fill Tube

Place the lid back on the tote. Using the saw, cut one end of the PVC pipe at a 45 degree angle. This will allow the water to easily flow into the reservoir from the fill tube. Insert the fill tube thru the hole in the lid and thru the hole prepared in the fabric and the plant pot. The 45 degree end of the tube should touch the bottom of the tote.

## The Weep Hole

The weep hole will ensure that your plants will not be over-watered. Cut a hole in the side of the tote exactly the height of the reservoir. For example; if the plant tray is 3.5" in height, the weep hole should be 3.5" from the bottom of the container. Make the hole on the same side of the tote that the fill tube is on. I did not follow the directions for this step, and when I water my container, I have to run around to the other side to see if the reservoir is full and water is coming out of the weep hole. I used 2" PVC pipe because I had a piece that size. I like the bigger size because the tip of my watering can fits inside the pipe and I don't have to hold the watering can steady to hit the hole when I water.

## Filling the Container

Now it is time to add the soil to the container. I used potting soil straight out of the bag. I usually mix in a little garden soil in my containers to save a little money, but this time I splurged and used unadulterated potting soil. Start with a few handfuls of potting soil and fill the wick holes. Next, go around the edges a little carefully to make sure the potting soil is not getting into the reservoir. When I had a good layer, about 3" of potting soil, on the bottom, I filled the container to within 1" of the top, tucking it under the lid all the way to the edge.

## Planting the Container

I chose pepper plants for my container. They are heat loving and I thought the soil in the container would be warmer than garden soil. In my first container I planted bell peppers that I had started in the house. In the second container I planted hot peppers from the local green house. I planted four peppers in each tote. I cut the bottom off of a gallon milk jug and put one over each pepper, mounding the soil around the outside so the wind would not blow the jug off the pepper. The tote seemed a little empty at this point and not wanting to waste all that effort, I planted onion sets down the middle of the peppers. I removed the milk jugs when the top leaves of the peppers started to touch the top of the milk jug.

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## Container Gardening (Cont.)

### Is it Working?

I planted the peppers about May 20. They were about 4" to 5" tall at the time. Today, August 6, the bell peppers in the container are 18" tall and there is one pepper that is 5" long and one that is 3" long and several small ones coming. The ones I planted in the garden are 12" tall and are just starting to bloom.

The hot peppers are Sahuaro Peppers. They are an Anaheim variety and supposed to get 9" long. The ones in the container are 30" tall and each plant has about 10 peppers. 6 of these peppers are currently between 5" and 8" long and the plants are still blooming.

I used three or four of the onions as scallions. The rest I pulled when the peppers began to shade them. They were tennis and baseball sized. Onions planted in the regular garden at the same time were marble to ping pong ball sized.

### Other Ideas

I did not put support stakes in the corners. I am kind of sorry that I did not take time to do this. I could have crisscrossed them over the top of the container. This

would have allowed me to cover the container with a tarp in the event of hail or serious wind. This would also allow me to easily cover the container and not damage the plants when that first frost comes. You could use the stakes to support netting to keep critters out of your plants.

Stakes installed straight up would also make the container suitable for cucumbers or pole beans, and make it easy to support tomatoes. Just tie them together at the top.

The containers could also be put on a platform with wheels. Then they could be moved to shelter as needed.

### Conclusion

I am pretty excited about these containers. They have worked well for peppers. I am excited to try them with other vegetables. I think next year I will try eggplant, or maybe watermelon, or maybe. . .



Pepper tote

Picture by Amy Sand



Peppers in tote

Picture by Amy Sand

## Workshops

### So Easy to Preserve, Food Preservation Series

Tuesdays, Aug. 12, Aug. 19 & Aug. 26  
Law Enforcement Community Room, Wahpeton, ND  
5:15-6:15 pm  
Taught by Colleen Svingen, Extension Agent  
Includes publications, food samples, and beverages  
Cost: \$3.00 per class

- ◇ Aug. 12 — Preserving Fruits
- ◇ Aug. 19 — Salsa Making
- ◇ Aug. 26 — Pickling

Contact the Richland County Extension Office at 701-642-7793 or email at [debra.evenson@ndsu.edu](mailto:debra.evenson@ndsu.edu) with questions or to register.

### Creative Kitchen CAN IT! Expo

Friday and Saturday, August 22-23, 2014  
Creative Kitchen at West Acres, Fargo, ND  
10:00 am—2:00 pm

Join Creative Kitchen in canning, fermenting, dehydrating, and exploring all the ways to preserve your fresh garden foods!

NDSU Food & Nutrition Specialist, Julie Garden-Robinson will be in the store on Saturday to give expert tips and techniques on canning and food preservation.

## Yard & Garden Report

Each week during the growing season, the Horticulture/Forestry team of NDSU meets online to talk about common problems gardeners in our state are facing that week. These conversations lead to the **NDSU Yard & Garden Report**. You can view the current and past issues at [www.ag.ndsu.edu/yardandgardenreport/](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/yardandgardenreport/).

If you have not already done so, click on the “Free subscription” link on the left side of the web page. This will put you on a list to receive this report in your email account.

The August 4 issue included articles on aronia, summer lawn care, potter wasp, an illustrated survey of 18 common diseases/insect pests/weeds faced by gardeners, and a summary of temperatures, rainfall amounts, and growing degree days for gardens across the state.

## Why go to the gardeners’ market?

- Support a strong local economy and help circulate your dollar in the community. Money stays in the community and stimulates other businesses as market shoppers also visit nearby stores.
- Buy portions that match your needs and control the quality you are getting.
- Enjoy a pleasant community experience and interact directly with the growers.
- Learn how to prepare new foods and add some flair to your meals.
- Know where your food comes from.
- Get connected with and help protect the environment.
- Find produce to try that is fresh and continue to purchase it at a grocery store when it is not in season locally.
- Buy produce that helps you meet current fruit and vegetables recommendations for good health.
- Get free exercise.

This information is from **Twin Town Gardeners’ Market | Consumer Guide** by Megan Piper and Colleen Svingen of Richland County Extension. To view the entire publication, go to our web page at <http://www.twintownsmarket.org/> and click on “market consumer” under **Your guides to the market**.

## Gardening on the Web

For timely information about gardening in our area, check out **Dakota Gardener** at <http://www.dakotagardener.com>. This online magazine has links to articles on a variety of topics like attracting song birds and deer repellents.

While you are there check the “**Dakota Growing**” link to view video presentations on flowers, fruits and vegetables, landscapes, tips, and trees and shrubs.

If you missed the **Spring Fever Garden Forum**, you can still view YouTube videos by clicking on sessions on the left side, then click on the YouTube icon next to session you want to view: [www.ag.ndsu.edu/springfever](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/springfever)