

Science Based Gardening Information

JeffCo Gardener™

**CSU Extension Colorado Master Gardeners
Serving Jefferson County for 40 Years**



COLORADO MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS GARDENING AND BLOGGING IN JEFFERSON COUNTY COLORADO. WE WORK AT THE CSU EXTENSION OFFICE AT THE JEFFERSON COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS. CALL 303-271-6620 OR E-MAIL YOUR QUESTIONS TO JEFFCOGARDENER@GMAIL.COM

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MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2012

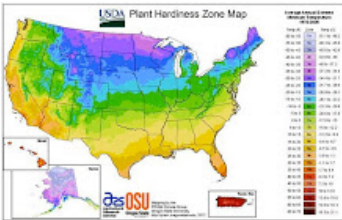
Growing Broccoli in the Fall by Jennifer Verprauskus



Photo from Urbana Extension

After a mid-summer move into our new house, I realized I had missed my opportunity for growing some of my favorite vegetables. It was far too late to start growing eggplant, tomatoes or peppers so I kept with the excellent produce from my Community Supported Agriculture. I had many conversations with my husband about transforming our front and back yards into xeric wonders hydro-zoned with abundant vegetables but I knew it wasn't going to happen this season. Adding a new landscape wasn't our summer/fall priority. As I was getting the mail one day it dawned on my I could still grow a hardy vegetable crop. Broccoli and cauliflower love cooler temperatures, 40-70 degrees, and can withstand a light frost. They are an excellent Colorado early spring crop but can be grown in the fall as well.

2012 USDA ZONE MAP



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FEATURED POST

Mid-summer Lawn Care: Watering by Donna Duffy

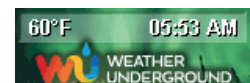
Photo courtesy Donna Duffy Here we are in the heat of July, and your lawn watering practices may need to be altered from those that w...



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SAND LILY



'Bright Lights' Swiss Chard. Photo from Park Seed

I planted, in the beginning of August, two hardy crops of broccoli and cauliflower, scattered in some beautiful 'Bright Lights' Swiss Chard along with some endive and chives. I amended my clayey soil, watered religiously, fertilized generously and then left for vacation! The latter I would not recommend. Although my neighbor graciously agreed to water something went wrong. Several weeks later I found only my broccoli, cauliflower and random Swiss chard seeds germinated. I learned that many seeds will not germinate if they encounter any periods of drought. I kept with the survivors watering often and weeding. Then one day I noticed leaf miners making their way through the fragile epidermises of my beautiful Swiss chard leaves. However, the damage they did paled in comparison to the damage done by the dreaded squirrels! The squirrels loved to eat my poor young broccoli and cauliflower leaves. Deciding not to be aggressive and do some experimenting, I chose to thin my broccoli seedlings and transplant them to the 'squirrel' area. It seemed to have work. Today I have one beautiful area of hardy vegetable crops and an adjacent area destroyed by hungry squirrels.



Remay Covering Crops. Photo from Gardeners' Supply

When the temperatures drop into the low 20's I use heavy weight remay to cover them. Remay is an airy cloth used in season extension that comes in handy for chilly nights and keeps the squirrels out.

Today my 'Bright Lights' Swiss Chard has made a beautiful addition to my dinner plate and my broccoli and cauliflower are getting taller inch by inch. I would recommend starting fall hardy vegetable crops in July because I don't quite know if mine will flower before it gets too cold. That's the thing about Colorado, you never know! As for the squirrels I believe we made a truce and they are enjoying my left over pumpkins from Halloween!

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