

West Virginia AgrAbility

HITCHES AND POSTS

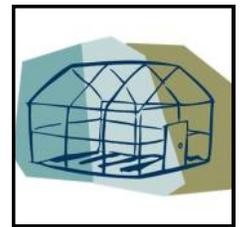


Listserv
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High Tunnels

High tunnels are structures designed for growing crops in a more controlled environment to extend the growing season. A high tunnel is heated by the sun. It usually has a metal hoop frame covered with sheets of plastic; it may have rollup sidewalls for ventilation. Consider some possible benefits of using a high tunnel:

- ◆ Extends the growing season
- ◆ Uses solar energy to raise the temperature inside the tunnel
- ◆ Provides better work conditions than an open field for doing garden tasks
- ◆ Allows a gardener to plan and spread out workload over a longer period of time
- ◆ Can speed up plant maturity and increase chances for growing succession crops
- ◆ Provides an environment to explore the use of accessible gardening methods such as raised beds, hanging plants, vertical gardens, and hydroponics
- ◆ Creates opportunities for implementing accessible design features
- ◆ Protects plants from unpredictable weather factors like temperature, wind, and rain
- ◆ Enables growth of crops that do not usually flourish in certain zones or regions
- ◆ Helps maintain soil nutrients and air quality
- ◆ Can reduce exposure to pests and farm vehicle emissions
- ◆ Can conserve water and make watering easier with the use of drip irrigation and rain barrels
- ◆ Creates a positive environment for teaching agricultural methods



To learn more about high tunnels, visit http://anr.ext.wvu.edu/commercial_horticulture/high_tunnels.

Green Thumbs, Healthy Joints at the Capitol



Charleston Culture
Center Plaza

On May 4th, Green Thumbs (GT) staff set up a tent at the 16th annual Garden Festival, sponsored by the WV Division of Culture and History in Charleston. A GT staff member provided information about ergonomic tools and accessible gardening methods. Festival goers had the opportunity to try out assistive technology, such as a portable gardening seat, ergonomic trowel, and a pot mover. The festival included a seed exchange, vendor booths, and a variety of workshops to help educate participants about the heritage and horticulture of West Virginia.

To learn more about the Garden Festival and the Culture Center, call 304-558-0220 (voice) or 304-558-3562 (tty); or visit www.wvculture.org.



High tunnel in Mineral County, WV

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Upcoming Events

May 23-27

The dandelion is the sunny little herb with a bright yellow hue. The WV Dandelion Festival in White Sulphur Springs celebrates the stubborn and versatile flowers, which are sometimes used to make medicines, foods, wine, and tea. The festival has exhibits, activities, and live music. For more information, call 304-536-5060 or visit http://greenbrierwv.com/events/detail/wv_dandelion_festival2013.



June 20

“150 Years: West Virginia Sesquicentennial Celebration!” will be held at the West Virginia Independence Hall in Wheeling, WV. The day-long event is scheduled to include WV birthday cake, historic reenactments and speeches, and the Wildcat Regiment Band. For information, call 304-238-1300 or visit www.wvculture.org.



To learn about these and other upcoming events, visit the WV AgrAbility Calendar at <http://agrability.cedwvu.org/calendar>.

What is the West Virginia AgrAbility Project?



- ◆ a program that helps farmers, their families, and farm workers find ways to continue farming after acquiring an illness, injury, or chronic health condition
- ◆ a competitive grant funded by the USDA, Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service Special Project #2009-41590-05437
- ◆ a partnership between WVU Extension Service, WV Assistive Technology System, and Northern West Virginia Center for Independent Living



Want Some Water? Refreshing Assistive Technology Ideas



When it comes to nourishing yourself, your plants, and animals, getting enough water is vital all year long. Here are some ideas for keeping the water flowing.



When you have been working in the garden all afternoon, do you remember where you left that glass of water? Consider wearing a water reservoir that goes wherever you go. There are many options made for outdoor activities—like the Aventura, a small backpack that carries a water reservoir with a drinking tube. The Flashflo LR is another kind of pack that you wear around your hips. For more information, call Camelbak at 800-767-8725 or www.camelbak.com.



The pocket hose is a compact hose with an accordion design. The hose expands with water pressure as liquid flows through the fabric and contracts again as it drains. It is tangle resistant and lightweight. For more information, visit www.pockethosedeal.com.

The Canadian Year-Round Rain Barrel is a 55-gallon container with rotational plastic molding designed so that it can handle outdoor temperatures down -40° Fahrenheit. It has an overflow spout, debris screens, and a brass spigot that can connect up to an 8 foot length of garden hose. To learn more, call Hammacher Schlemmer at 800-321-1484 or visit www.hammacher.com.



Using drip and low flow irrigation systems can be a time-saving measure for watering plants efficiently. It can also be a good watering method for a farmer or gardener who has lifting, reaching, or handling limitations. There are different watering kits available depending upon the nature of the area that needs watered—such as raised beds, deck gardens, gravity feed areas, hanging baskets, and row gardens. Lee Valley sells a variety of kits and has an “Irrigation Design Guide” on its website. To find out more, you can call Lee Valley at 800-267-8767 or visit www.leevalley.com.

Using an insulated and energy-free livestock watering system can help prevent freezing so clean drinking water is available for farm animals in cold weather. Some systems are designed to prevent algae growth in warm weather. Watering systems hold different amounts of water. Which one a farmer may need will depend on the size and amount of animals drinking from the same water source. For example, Miraco makes watering systems ranging from the Lil Spring (for a group of small animals) to the Big Spring (for large feedlots and free-stall dairy operations). For more information, call 641-236-5822 or visit www.miraco.com.



Recipes with a Splash



Cucumber, Lemon, and Mint Infused Water

Ingredients

1 medium to large cucumber

1 lemon

fresh mint (about 40 leaves)

32 ounces of water



Instructions

Wash and slice lemon and cucumber. Place in a pitcher. Wash mint, rub leaves together lightly, and then add to the pitcher. Pour water into the pitcher and cover. Refrigerate for at least an hour. Enjoy!

Recipe adapted from <http://thisthatbeauty.com>.

Watermelon Agua Fresca

Ingredients

8 cups watermelon,
cubed and seeded

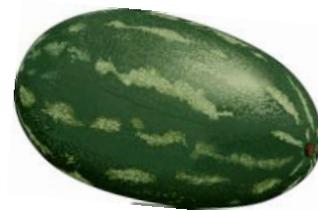
1 cup water

1/3 cup sugar

1/4 cup fresh lime
juice

1 liter chilled club soda or seltzer water

Lime slices



Instructions

In a blender, combine half the watermelon, half the water and half the sugar. Purée. Pour contents through a coarse strainer into a large pitcher. Repeat with remaining watermelon, water, and sugar. Stir in lime juice. Refrigerate for about 4 hours or until well chilled.

When serving, stir in club soda or seltzer water. Add a lime slice to garnish.

Recipe adapted from www.kitchendaily.com.



West Virginia AgrAbility is a partnership of three agencies: West Virginia University Cooperative Extension Service, Safety and Health Extension; West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS) at the Center for Excellence in Disabilities; and the Northern West Virginia Center for Independent Living (NWVCIL).



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All materials are available in Braille, electronic format, CD, and large print.
WVU is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution.

Visit WV AgrAbility at
<http://agrability.cedwvu.org>