

Fall Syrup to Cider: A year of eating and growing locally.

September 12 - October 31. Tuesday afternoons, 2 sections. 12:15 - 3:00. 3:15 - 6:00

Harvest Fest September 23, 24.

Age. Kindergarten - 12th grade, under 12 parent required.

So much more than gardening. This will be a hands on, grow it, make it, eat it, take it home class. Activities at the home garden and local field trips.

We will start with planning the garden in February, grow our own vegetable and flower starts in March and April, Plant the main gardens in May and care for and harvest into the summer. Students will help grow and harvest the crops. Process for storage by canning, drying and pickling and take home a portion of the results. The class will continue into June with the opportunity to take the class again in the fall to continue with the summer crops and into the bounty of fall in SW Michigan.

The fall is the main harvest and processing season. Potatoes, sauerkraut, apples, pears, grapes and more all need to be harvested and put away for winter. This is festival season. A busy, enjoyable time of family, friends, food shared work with a purpose.

Crops and activities will include

Potatoes, onions, tomatoes, peppers, lettuce, squash, pumpkins, maple syrup, pickles, cabbage, broccoli, carrots, eggplant, pears, apples, grapes, cherries, cilantro, dill, kale, chard, basil and more.

Canning fruit and vegetable, boiling maple syrup, fermented and brine pickles, juices, cider, fruit leathers, microgreen salads, cooking with in season crops.

Location: Sodus, Michigan, In the heart of the vegetable patch..

Timing: Classes will meet on Tuesday afternoons from 2:00 - 5:00. Every other week in February increasing to weekly starting in mid April. Schedules may need to adjust with weather but we will stick with the Tuesday afternoon time slot. Other times will be available.

Expectations: This is a hands on class. Students will get dirty. Available harvested food will be shared with class participants as equally as possible. In cooking activities we will follow food safety rules. Students must comply. Proper footwear, hairnets, clean hands, knife and heat safety etc. We will be age appropriate in assignments. You will need to provide some of your own containers to bring home the harvest. Extra food and containers may be available at our cost. Especially syrup, cider, pickles and juices.

Age. All ages are welcome, Under 10 parent must stay. We encourage parent participation. Teens must stay on task.

Class size: Minimum of 15 students.

Your Instructors: Colleen and Tom Hurst. Many years of growing and putting up our own food. We have a large organic CSA type garden for our own use and provide food to friends and folks in need. This is not a commercial operation. We grow our own food, build stuff, explore and spend as much time outside as possible. We love what we do and are glad to share our knowledge and veggies.

Proposed schedule.

Week One. Sept. 12. The late summer garden. Tomatoes, onions, squash. Harvesting and preserving. We will make tomato sauce, salsa and introduce the drying process with available fruits. At this meeting the program will be presented. Food safety, tool use and behavior expecting. Discussion of fall broiler project.

Week Two. Root crops, carrots, potatoes, onions, beets, celeriac and more. Continuation of tomato products, setting up and using food dehydrator, making fruit leathers, assessing maturity of crops. Planning for the harvest festival.

Week Three. Freezing garden bounty. Preparing products for freezing, harvesting, cleaning and blanching product, using food sealers and freezer bags, preparing mixed foods and meals in advance.

Week Five. Pickles, cabbage and lacto fermentation. Making dill Pickles by canning and crock fermentation. Sauerkraut pounding and preservation. We'll experience several methods of preserving the harvest that does not require refrigeration and develops hi pro biotic foods.

Harvest Festival. Will be offered on Saturday and Sunday. September 23, 24. Come to either day. Apple harvest, cider making, dried apples, applesauce. A true community event revolving around apples. We have the equipment to produce apple products in large volumes. This is a don't miss activity. We will start at 10 am and continue throughout the day. Activities will be diverse and continuous. Expect to go home with cider, sauce and dried apples. This is an event for the whole family.

Week Six, extending the harvest, fall greenhouse production. The cold frame extends the season by at least 6 weeks in our region. Fall crops include, greens, carrots, peas, radishes, herbs and more. Activities will include, planting, harvesting and maintaining fall crops.

Week Seven. Enjoying the bounty. By this class the sauerkraut, fermented pickles and winter carrots should be ready. We will prepare addition batches as stocks allow. Winter squash and pumpkins will be harvested, popcorn and broom corn ready for preservation and display.

Week Eight. Putting the gardens to bed. Removing irrigation systems, mulch and straw applications, discussion of root cellars and canning storage, winter cooking, pumpkin and squash soup. Planning for next year. A year of eating locally.