

# Valentine Community Garden



## Education Sessions

- July 17- 9:00am Painting the shed & weed control
- July 24- 10am How to prepare for Farmers Market
- July 31 – 10am Prepping vegetables and produce for the Fair
- August 9-11 ALL DAY Come visit our booth at the County Fair!
- August 14- 10 am Washing, Prepping and Enjoying your produce



## Farmers Market

The regular Valentine Farmers Market will begin **Saturday August 3rd** at Henderson's IGA. The market will be open from 8am-noon every Saturday through October.

VCG participants can take part and sell their produce at the Saturday morning farmers market, and the VCG will be selling the produce from the gardens' boxes. We are also going to try to have another Farmers market day on Wednesdays at the garden. The first VCG market will be **Wednesday August 14th from 11-1** at the garden.

In lieu of a fee for the boxes, plants and seeds and as part of your VCG member responsibility you are required to donate 25% of your box's produce for the farmers market. However you may also sell additional produce for personal profit at either of the markets. You are not required to be at the markets; however volunteers to help at the farmers market are needed and always welcome!

Contact Michelle Garwood if you would like to sell additional produce or know anyone that would like to sell their produce or homemade goods at the farmers markets. Phone: 402 389-1655 or [michellejeangarwood@gmail.com](mailto:michellejeangarwood@gmail.com)

## Cherry County Fair

The Valentine Community Garden will have a booth in the Exhibit Hall during this year's fair. During that time you can sign up to reserve a garden box for next year, register for a drawing for free produce from the Farmers Market, sample garden-fresh recipes, and learn about leadership opportunities on the VCG Board. We hope to see you August 9-11!



## Growing and Harvesting Tomatoes

For optimal flavor, tomato fruits should be allowed to ripen fully on the vine but be harvested before they begin to soften. Tomato color and flavor are optimal when average daily temperatures are about 75 degrees F. High temperatures-greater than 92 degrees F-during ripening reduce flavor, textures and color. Fruit exposed to high temperatures develops internal white tissue and yellow color on the fruit surfaces. Thus it is important to have good vine growth, which partially shades the fruit from intense sunlight. Do not refrigerate tomatoes after harvest. Flavor and quality are preserved by holding the fruit at room temperature.

Mature green fruits can be harvested in the fall and held for later use. Select fruits free of disease, wrap them in paper and store them at about 60-65 degrees F. They will ripen slowly and provide good tomatoes for several weeks.

### Things to watch for:

**Cracking:** fruit cracking varies by variety, cracking is usually a problem when soil moisture fluctuates

**Cloudy spots:** irregular whitish spots just under the skin, this is a result of stink bugs feeding on the fruit at some stage in its development

**Sunscald:** high temperatures retard the development of good color; fruits exposed to high temperatures will scald and develop uneven color.

*Adapted from Growing Home Garden Tomatoes -University of Missouri Extension*

## How to enjoy fresh Tomato

Enjoy your fresh tomatoes with Salsa Fresca or Tomato Salads! Fresh tomatoes can be diced with a variety of other vegetables like red onion and avocado. Add cilantro and a dash of lime juice and you have a delicious fresh dip or a topping for chicken or tacos!

Slice tomatoes and pair with layers of fresh mozzarella and chopped basil. Drizzle with Extra Virgin Olive Oil and balsamic vinegar, season with salt and pepper and enjoy alone or paired with warm baguettes!

