

*Just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in Plum Granny Farm. Please add us to your address list to make sure that the newsletter doesn't end up in your spam filter.*

[View this email in your browser](#)



Happy Friday, Farm Friends!

What a busy week! Thanks to so many of you that came out to our Fall Plant Sale on Sunday! We had a great time talking with you and seeing you go home with lovely transplants ready for your fall garden. Here's to a great fall crop!

We started out the week focusing on getting the blackberries ready for winter. We got the canes that fruited this year (floricanes) cut out, weeded the beds and trellised up any dangling canes. It looks so much better. A HUGE thanks go out to our terrific volunteer, Ann Zuhr, for coming out to give us a hand! We really appreciate you, Ann!



Now that the blackberries are pruned and cleaned up, we'll be adding some additional landscape fabric between the plants to keep out weeds. By adding a strip of landscape fabric (2' x 3') between each blackberry plant, we'll save a lot of time and effort in weeding -- and we are all about that! Since blackberries grow from a crown, they don't need a big open area to grow. However, this technique won't work for raspberries since they need an open area since they spread by runners and grow as a hedge so they still have to be weeded.

But first, we had to cut those 2' x 3' squares! Starting with a 4' roll of landscape fabric, Bob and Dan cut it in half using a soldering iron. That is a great way to cut this fabric because the heat from the iron seals the edges so they don't ravel. Then those strips had to be cut in 3' sections. Yes, lots of tedious cutting but it will make a big difference to the plants next year!



### **I Yam What I Yam (but I Yam not a yam...)**

Another item on the To-Do list this week was starting sweet potato harvest. We were really surprised that they were ready since it's about 1-2 weeks before their normal DTM (Days to Maturity). But the potatoes were in great shape -- the skins had set and they were the perfect size -- so it was time to dig some.



And boy, what a harvest! In the first four rows we got nearly 1,200 pounds and we anticipate getting about 3,000 pounds from the entire planting. Once the potatoes are harvested, they need to ["cure"](#) for about 7-14 days to help concentrate the sugars in the potatoes, toughen the skins, and heal over any cuts or bruises they got in harvesting. If you eat a sweet potato straight out of the field, it will be very disappointing.

We put our crates of potatoes in one of the high tunnels and are keeping it closed so it will get a bit warmer. We've also put a fan in the area to keep the air circulating more. We'll have these yummy taters in our online store in about two weeks! YUM!





## Hay There!

It was also "Get In the Fall Hay Crop" week around here too. The weather was nice and dry which gave us 4 good days to get the crop in. You have to allow 4 days at a minimum in order the the grass the dry sufficiently in order to be baled. Green hay in barns can spell disaster -- the hay can spontaneously combust and burn down a barn. Unfortunately this happens more frequently than you might think.

Since our hay is Certified Organic, we need to make sure that we manage some of the noxious weeds in our hay fields without chemicals. Like all things grown organically, it requires more labor to take care of weeds. Ray and Jonny went around the fields looking for thistle, dogbane, datura and milkweed since these plants are dangerous for livestock.



We were able to collect some milkweed pods (and a monarch caterpillar). We'll

save the seeds from the milkweed to plant in one of our pollinator gardens next year -- away from the hay fields!



### **Upcoming Workshops: Brambles and Garlic**

We've got TWO workshops coming up in October. On **Sunday, October 3 from 2-4:30**, we'll be hosting "**Growing the Jewels of the Garden**" to help you get your blackberries and raspberries ready for winter and a successful spring. We walk you through what the plants need nutritionally as well as how to prune and trellis. The workshop is hands on and will give you the opportunity to work with a variety of bramble plants. The class fee is \$35. [Click here to register](#). [NOTE: If you attended the first part of this workshop, you don't need to re-register]



Our second workshop is the popular "**Growing Great Garlic at Home**" and it

will be held on **Sunday, October 10 from 2-5.** People ask us all the time about how to grow garlic. So here's your chance to learn from our 13 years experience of growing this essential crop. If you've always wanted to grow garlic but need some advice to get going or if you want to improve your skills, this is just the ticket! Register now for this hands-on workshop that always sells out -- class size is limited to 10 people. The class fee is \$40 and includes a bag of seed garlic. [Click here to register.](#)

That's a wrap for this week's news! Don't forget that Monday is the [Harvest Moon](#) and Wednesday brings the arrival of [Autumn](#)! It's a busy astronomical week!

**Remember to please get your COVID shot, wear a mask in indoor public places, and be kind. By working together we can get past this new COVID surge!**

**Until next Friday,  
Cheryl & Ray**