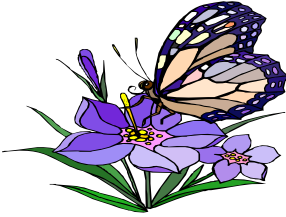


WHAT'S COMING UP?

Volume 5

May, 2009

The Newsletter of the Polk County MG Association



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PCMGA May 18, 2009 Meeting Minutes

The May meeting of the Polk County Master Gardeners Association was held at the Polk County Justice Center in Balsam Lake. The meeting was called to order at 6:50PM by Julie Kuehl. President, Fritz Coulter was absent.

Treasurers Report:

Jim West gave the treasurers report-we have deposited \$84.00 for Journals and missing \$12 for 1 journal sold. Deposit made of \$159.25 from Mothers Day Flower Sale for a balance of \$1193.79.

Old Business

“Sportsman Show”-Good turnout of attendees per Julie. “Share the Bounty” ran out of seeds at the show so will ask for more next year. Questions were asked regarding starting vegetable gardens. We are going to ask for double spot next year and include electricity for Powerpoint display.

New Business

Polk County Fair-July 30-August 2, 2009 Maggie Swiontek is in charge of getting all information to the fair. Jim West provided a check of \$105.00 to pay for booth spot outside and electricity charge. Anyone interested in working the fair needs to respond either to me via speaking to me at the meeting or at either of my [emails:home-mswiontek@lakeland.ws](mailto:home-mswiontek@lakeland.ws) or margeswiontek@doc.stw.state.mn.us. We will publish the schedule as its filled. Please try to volunteer at least a 2 hr shift during the 4 days of the fair. The booth will be manned from 10:00 AM to 6:00PM everyday. **Booth setup will be Wednesday, July 29th at 6:00PM. Deadline to register an entry for the fair is Monday, June 1st.** All entries to the fair need to be turned in by Wednesday, July 29th as judging will also be held that day. An entry fee of \$6.00 will be charged. Please also keep in mind we will be looking for pots to decorate our wagon and they will be returned to you after the fair or you can take them upon dismantling of the booth on Sunday, August 2nd. We will need at least a couple of men for both setup & teardown for the roof portions. **Door prize drawing will be held for a cedar planter made by Julie’s husband Stu.**

Past member of PCMG Georgia again has plants that need dividing. If anyone has projects we need plants for she will have available-
Also plants available by Phil Sbarra who has purchased property over off of Hwy 95 & Franconia Trail. He has no knowledge of what the plants are & more than he can handle. Free for the taking-please contact at 651-431-8609.

Polk County Museum-Again they are looking for help to spruce up the garden within the wrought iron fenced area and plant a new garden for the July 4th dedication of the new portion of the museum. New MG Nan Riegel will be working with the director of the museum. Gardeners met before the monthly meeting on Monday, May 18th to see what needed to be done and get ideas for plants for both gardens. Money is available to work with and work will begin Saturday, May 30th at 8:00 AM. The work will be coordinated with the plantings at the Balsam Lake government buildings.

Balsam Lake Government Buildings & Polk County Library sign. All need cleanup & plantings to be done. Please meet at 8:00 AM at the Polk County Government Center on Main Street, Balsam Lake. Todd Demers is in charge of this project.

Golden Age Manor Nursing Home, Amery -work needs to be done at their gardens done a couple of years ago. They also have an anniversary coming up this year so work is continual at the garden. Contact Deb Peterson to coordinate working.

Garfield Park gardens-Jackie Whitcomb, Sally Pritchard, Deb Peterson & Jim West so far have said they will clean the gardens.

Good Samaritan Nursing Home-St. Croix Falls-work will continue at these gardens Saturday morning, May 30th beginning at 8:00 AM. Maggie Swiontek has been in charge of working with a crew of Julie Kuehl, Paula Kramer & Ron Hermanson. We hopefully will have enough workers available to finish the peony garden & clean up the courtyards. We will also hopefully be adding some annuals for ongoing color. Meet at the South entry parking lot-Middle of buildings at the peony garden.

When helping with any of these projects remember your garden tools, gloves & pruning shears. We never know exactly what we will be needing. If you think you will be at a particular project you can contact the person in charge. Its helpful sometimes to know how many you have.

Wisconsin Master Gardeners Convention-October 2 & 3, 2009 at HOCHUNK Convention Center, Wisconsin Dells. Raffle tickets are on sale by Polk County MG for \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Stubs & Money will be sent by September 15th, 2009 Sauk County UW Extension Office.

EDUCATION

Growing Shiitake Mushrooms presented by Mike Bauer

Begin with an Oak(White or Red) work best cutting your log 40” in length & must be 6” in diameter. Cut your log in winter (**½ of woods has changed its color in the fall to just before buds swell in spring**) as to not cause Oak wilt and must be fresh cut in order to grow mushrooms. Make sure the logs are cut fairly close to inoculation date as moisture level needs to be at 40%. You also risk competing organisms (contaminants) getting into your log if felled too far in advance. Select live & healthy trees and if your not sure what to cut please contact a local forester. Avoid softwood logs as shiitake’s do not grow well on soft wood.

Inoculation:

Inoculate as early in the spring as practical. Temps can fall below freezing at night but daytime highs should be above 40 degrees. You can successfully inoculate in late spring as long as the log is protected from drying out.

To “plant” the spawn, drill holes into a bedlog 1” deep. Use either a 5/16” drill bit or 7/16”. For rapid shiitake colonization it is recommended using the diamond drilling pattern(drill holes 6-8” within a row along the length of the log. Space rows 1-2” apart and offset them to create a diamond pattern.

Repeat this pattern over the entire log, then insert spawn(mushroom spores) immediately using a dowel spawn. Dowel spawn is easily driven in with a few taps of a hammer & spawn is inserted using an inoculation tool but can also be done with clean fingers. Pack each ole until the spawn is level with the bark surface.

Waxing & Labeling Logs:

Seal the spawn-filled holes immediately. Recommended way is using cheese wax melted to a temperature of about 300 degrees or plug wax right from the tub.

**DO NO OVERHEAT WAX & if smoking begins please turn heat down.
FLASHPOINT ON WAX is 450 degrees.**

Apply a thin layer of hot wax over the spawn with a wax dauber or wax baster, making sure the surface is sealed. Use aluminum tags to label the logs with shitake strain you are using, the date of inoculation & any other information your require for your record keeping.

Incubating Or “Laying” the Logs

After inoculatin place your logs in a shaded area and try to maintain summertime temps of 60-80 degrees w/relative humidity of 80-85%. You will have to experiment with different log stacking arrangements to compensate for climactic & site variations. This is the **most critical factor in successful colonization: LOGS ABSOLUTELY MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO DRY BELOW 30% MOISTURE CONTENT(MC).**

Irrigate, soak, or lay the logs nearly horizontal to slow moisture loss & keep MC above 30%-35%(preferable). If logs get too wet stack them upright to increase air flow

around log surfaces. You will have to keep an eye on your logs and make adjustments as conditions change.

Fruiting Your Logs

Expect to see your first mushrooms sporadically late in the season of the inoculation year. Look for them again during the growing season following the 1st anniversary of inoculation. Depending on log diameter & other variables you can expect a fruiting for an additional 2-6 yrs.

Rainfall and/or temperature change can induce fruiting or you can “force” fruiting by soaking logs in cold water 8-24 hours, then restocking them in a fashion that allows room for mushrooms to form & easy access for harvesting.

Mushrooms will show within 1-2 weeks after soaking (depending again on strain & conditions), and are easily harvested by grasping firmly at the base of the stem, then twisting them off the log. The ideal time to harvest is when the cap edges are still well inroad but about 80% of the gill area is visible.

After most of the log is decayed, (outdoors this will take 3-6 yrs or longer) shiitake will cease to fruit. Leave these depleted logs to decompose on the forest floor or add them to your compost pile. They will usually be too punchy to burn.

Cultivating shiitake successfully, as with any crop, is dependent on a wide variety of factors. We wish you good luck & if you have any questions contact us at 800-792-6220. Office hours are Monday-Friday 8-5PM. CST.

For complete selection of high quality shiitake & other specialty mushroom spawn, along with a wide variety of mushroom cultivation tools, reference books & mushroom related products ask for our educational catalog.

Email at our [address: ffp@field-and-forest.com](mailto:ffp@field-and-forest.com)

SHIITAKE RESOURCES:

Sohn's Forest Mushrooms-617 South Main Street, Westfield, WI 63964 or 608-296-2456

Field & Forest Products-N3296 Kozuzek Road, Peshtigo, WI 54157 1-800-792-6620

Mushroompeople-PO BOX 220 560 Farm Road, Summertown, TN 38483-0220

Mushroom Growers Association-SHII-GAW Shiitake Growers Assoc of WI
PO Box 99 Birchwood, WI 54817 715-354-3803

Plant Sales: Clear Lake Public Library-June 25 & 26, 2009

Library located at 350 4th Avenue, Clear Lake, WI

Contact Gloria M. Greschner, 715-263-2550

Benefit large print reading & summer school reading materials

**Next meeting: Monday, June 15th, 2009 at Polk County Justice Center at 6:45 PM.
Praire Restorations, Scandia, MN will be educating us on rain barrels, ecology,
Native Plants.**



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

See notes in Minutes of May meeting.



THERE IS STILL PLENTY OF ROOM FOR ADDITIONAL HELP ON COMMITTEES. THIS GROUP IS ONLY AS GOOD AS ITS VOLUNTEERS. WE WILL BE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO HELP WITH CLASS IF THERE IS ENOUGH INTEREST.

Club Volunteer Opportunities.

If you are looking for volunteer opportunities think about hitting one of the project gardens we have done and do a little weeding. If you don't know where they are, send a quick email and we will let you know. A couple to remember: Golden Age Manor in Amery, the Polk County Fair Grounds, the Polk County Government Center and Garfield Park on Lake Wapo and Good Samaritan Nursing Home in St. Croix.