

Vegetable gardeners in stretch drive

By ALICE COLLINS
The long wait is on... the annual eternity it takes for that one green tomato to turn to sunny yellow, deepening shades of orange and finally red.

Some experienced vegetable gardeners in Southfield already have started pulling ripe tomatoes. But for a majority of novice or part-time gardeners, the time is close... but it's still a waiting game.

It's also a contest between man and bird.
Don't feel inadequate if your tomatoes and other vegetables are coming along a little slow this season, say vegetable experts at Michigan State University. Dr. Bob Herner, associate professor of horticulture, blames the wet spring for many getting a late start, followed by the dry summer.

Mrs. Bette MacKercher of

Southfield is a devoted housewife, mother and gardener who beat the weather conditions and claims this is "probably my best year."

SHE HAS 100 tomato plants and has picked "at least two dozen so far."
"My plants are almost shoulder high and full. Of course, I water them every day and fertilize them every 10 days. I'm going to can at least 150 quarts."

Mrs. MacKercher says she will get 10 pounds more tomatoes from each plant by not staking them up.
"They're sprawling all over the grass this year. I pick them when they're about three-fourths ripe."
"When they're red they attract birds or may get sunburned and shrivel up. I lay them on newspapers all around the house and let them ripen."

"I've been buying up and hoarding Mason jars and lids," she said, for the busy canning season. "Stores are already running out of them."

MRS. MACKERCHER has already canned 26 quarts of beans, at least that many bread and butter pickles and is in the process of canning about 100 quarts of sweets and dills.

She planted a large variety of vegetables in her backyard garden—all doing well.

A newcomer to gardening, Mrs. Sandy Gudenburf and her family, also of Southfield, are waiting for the first signs of turning tomatoes.

"We have a few that are large enough," she said.
"This is my first experience, and we planted sort of late. I decided to have a small garden this year because our children are old enough to help."
Mrs. Helen Lewis's family was once well known in the area as nursery and landscaping specialists. Her father was R. J. Coryell, once horticulture professor at Michigan State University and for 30 years ran a family nursery on Maple Road in the Birmingham area.
She now lives on Marshall in Southfield and says the secret to having early tomatoes is to use early varieties and plant them inside long before the outside soil is ready. "That gives them a good head start."
"I've had my early variety since the middle of July this year," she added, although "Weather conditions permitting, it's possible to have them by July 4th."
"This year, in addition to being just a little late, they seem to be smaller than usual."
She said she doesn't have any of the larger late varieties ripening yet.

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Bauer committed for mental exam

A 31-year-old Ohio man has been committed to Ypsilanti State Hospital for a psychiatric examination to determine if he is competent to stand trial for the murder of Melanie Fahr of Troy.

Orville L. Davis was ordered to the hospital July 31 by District Judge Joseph L. Bauer of Charlotte.

Davis has been charged with the murder of Miss Fahr, a University of Michigan coed who disappeared from the Ann Arbor campus in March 1973 and whose body was found in Eaton County's rural Sunfield Township last Nov. 16. She had been shot once in the head. Sunfield is about 20 miles west of Lansing.

Davis was arraigned on a charge of first-degree murder before Judge Bauer July 30. He stood mute, and a plea of not guilty was entered for him.

A PRELIMINARY examination on the murder charge has been scheduled for Aug. 27 in Charlotte after the psychiatric evaluation of Davis at the hospital's forensic center.

Davis was arrested March 28, 1973 by police in a Milwaukee, Wis. suburb after a brief chase. He was driving Miss Fahr's car at the time of his arrest, police said.

Miss Fahr, 20, disappeared from Sunfield March 27, the day before Davis was captured.

She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Fahr, 2567 Binbrooke, Troy.

Police investigate felonious assault

Southfield police are currently investigating a felonious assault the evening of Aug. 1 at Dymtro's Sunco Station, 29000 Telegraph Road, at Nine Mile Road.

According to the police report, officers were originally dispatched to investigate an armed robbery reported to be in progress at the gas station.

When officers arrived, they found one male with a sprained ankle sitting by the gas station entrance. Southfield officers arrested him later at Providence Hospital.

Detroit police arrested two males from Detroit believed to be involved in the incident. They also recovered one .32 caliber Smith & Wesson pistol.

IT WAS reported one suspect armed with a shot gun was seen entering the Clock Restaurant, north of the gas station.

The suspect was questioned and released when it was determined he was not involved.

The police report said no shots had been fired in the incident.

The report contains conflicting statements as to what actually happened.

All suspects have been released from custody pending the outcome of the investigation.

Coppock vs. Cooper for senate

Incumbent Daniel S. Cooper (D) and Lee Alan Coppock (R) will compete for the position of 15th District state senator in the November general election.

Both ran unopposed for their parties' nomination in Tuesday's primary election.

Cooper received 21,198 votes out of a total of 26,521 votes. Coppock received 5,323 votes.

The 15th District includes Southfield, Lathrup Village, Farmington, Farmington Township, Huntington Woods and Oak Park.

The play's the thing

Twenty handicapped children from Southfield schools put on the play "The Wizard of Oz" July 29 at the Park and Recreation building.

The children, ranging from six to 16 years old, were enrolled in the Therapeutic Recreation Program this summer in Southfield.

"The kids put the whole thing together. They made all the props and everything," said Marcia Manson, director of the program.

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