



# The VMGA Report

A Voice for Virginia Master Gardeners  
vmga.net

Sept/Oct 2019

Volume 25, Number 2

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## OUR MISSION

The mission of the Virginia Master Gardener Association is to foster communication, education and fellowship among Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardener volunteers.

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## From the President

Wanda Gerard, Suffolk, President

The dog days of summer are past (thankfully), and fall will soon be here. Our gardening chores should be dwindling as we look forward to a respite in the months ahead. Are you studying your notes to see what worked well or not as you think ahead to next year? Maybe you'll decide to remove one plant for a better variety or create an area where you and a friend can sit to enjoy a cup of tea (or glass of wine)? Did a class you attended inspire you to try implementing a new gardening technique, or will you challenge yourself to step up to chairing a garden project for your MG association? If I were to answer any of those questions, I'd tell you that I'm swapping out a lot of plants, embarking on yet another style of gardening and I plan to sit back and enjoy my gardens with friends next year. But for now, I am counting down the days for the 2019 Master Gardener College being held in Norfolk. Whatever garden project needing my attention at home will just have to wait, but then again, the temperatures will be a bit cooler should they not? See you in Norfolk!

Wanda

## VMGA Officers

President-  
Wanda Gerard, Suffolk

Vice President-  
Leslie Paulson,  
Prince William County

Secretary-  
Nelda Purcell,  
Franklin County

Treasurer-  
Georgianna Hall,  
Loudoun County

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## VMGA BI-MONTHLY MEETINGS

### Save the Dates:

September 19-22	Master Gardener College, Annual Board Meeting
October	<i>No meeting</i>
Dec 14	Northern Shenandoah Valley
Feb 8, 2020	Hanover
Apr 11, 2020	Newport News

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## News and Notes

Dave Close, Extension MG Program Director

- Due to the high volume of emails received in the office, [please direct all correspondence to: EMGoffice@vt.edu](mailto:EMGoffice@vt.edu)
- **New** Extension State Master Gardener Coordinator



Kathleen Reed, former Associate Extension Agent, ANR, Roanoke, 2016-19, joined the State MG office on August 26.

Welcome Kathleen!

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## National Night Out 2019

Wanda Gerard, Suffolk

In response to asking MG units from across the state to provide a short recap of their participation in National Night Out (NNO), which was held on Tuesday, August 6<sup>th</sup>, the Norfolk and Suffolk Master Gardeners responded with enthusiasm. It was the third time both units participated in their city's event. The nationwide event is all about families coming out to have a fun evening within their city. The city's Police, Sheriff and Fire & Rescue units and numerous city, private and non-profit groups step up to share information and offer some sort of fun activity, game or maybe even food. In today's busy lifestyle, taking the family to a free community activity, away from the nonstop use of technical gadgetry, is a plus.

The Norfolk event was held in the Young Terrace community of Norfolk. They took with them some very special visitors – Monarch and Eastern Black Swallowtail caterpillars and even a few chrysalises! These little guys are always a great attraction for both children and parents. They also provided additional pollinator and plant handouts, as well as information about upcoming talks and presentations, such as Master Gardener College Public Day in September and their upcoming Master Gardener Information Session in October.

The Suffolk MGs participated at two NNO events being held across their city. In addition to having some gardening handouts to share with the public, they handed out sunflower seeds for children of all ages to plant next spring.

Five Norfolk and three Suffolk MGS braved the August temperatures to participate in this fun event. Both units reported 100 contacts.



**ABOUT VIRGINIA  
MASTER GARDENERS  
AND VIRGINIA  
COOPERATIVE  
EXTENSION (VCE)**

Virginia Master Gardeners are volunteer educators who work within their communities to encourage and promote environmentally sound horticulture practices through sustainable landscape management education and training. As an educational program of VCE, Virginia Master Gardeners bring the resources of Virginia's land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, to the people of the Commonwealth. Extension is a joint program of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state and local governments. VCE programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

**State Fair of Virginia Sept 27 - Oct 6, 2019**

Christy Brennan, Hanover

Look for our VCE-EMG booth in the Horticulture Pavilion (Bldg 2 on the map below)!

As of this "printing", the following time slots are available for additional volunteers. Tickets go fast. Reserve your shift now!

Friday Sept 27	10:00am-9:00pm
Monday Sept 30	4:00pm -9:00pm
Wednesday Oct 2nd	3:00pm -9:00pm
Thursday Oct 3rd	4:00pm -9:00pm
Friday Oct 4th	6:00pm -9:00pm
Saturday Oct 5	10:00am-9:00pm



We have twelve (12) FREE tickets per day reserved especially for volunteers. These tickets cover your parking and admission to the fair.

For more information email [Christy Brennan](mailto:Christy.Brennan@vt.edu).



Follow the road to Gate 2/Premium Parking Entrance

Don't forget to enter your plants and crafts to win a blue ribbon.

For more details, visit:

<https://www.statefairva.org/p/getinvolved/competitions>

**VMGA Website**

Leslie Paulson, Prince William

If you are techno-savvy and have a desire to assist with our state volunteer website, please contact Frank Reilly at:

[Frank@thereillygroup.net](mailto:Frank@thereillygroup.net)

If you are the web master for a local MG Association, please submit your link information to [webmaster@vmga.net](mailto:webmaster@vmga.net). We will include these links at no charge to your association, provided it is a bona fide organization of Virginia Master Gardeners.

Also, please submit additions, corrections or report broken links to: Leslie Paulson at: [ljp6651@comcast.net](mailto:ljp6651@comcast.net) or [webmaster@vmga.net](mailto:webmaster@vmga.net)

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## Soil Sampling For The Home Gardener

*Excerpt from VCE Publication 452-129*

Joseph R. Hunnings, Extension Specialist, Virginia Tech  
Stephen J. Donohue, Extension Specialist, Virginia Tech  
Steve Heckendorn, Laboratory Manager, Virginia Tech

A soil test can provide information on the proper amount of lime and fertilizer to apply to your lawn, garden and other areas of your landscape. When gardeners apply only as much lime and fertilizer as is necessary and at the appropriate time, nutrient runoff into surface or ground water is minimized, money is saved, and plant health is optimized. Soil testing can also be used to diagnose common nutrient deficiencies for plants that are growing poorly. The reliability of the soil test, however, can be no better than the sample you submit. For results you can depend on, it is vitally important that you take samples correctly to accurately represent the soil in your landscape. This publication explains how to obtain representative soil samples and to submit them for analysis to the Virginia Tech Soil Testing Laboratory. It is an easy-to-learn process that will benefit you, your landscape and the environment.

So Don't Guess, Soil Test!

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## Help Wanted:

VMGA Education Committee is searching for a volunteer or volunteers to team up for the benefit of offering advanced level, continuing education to our EMGs across Virginia. Some of the duties include securing outstanding speakers, reserving a venue for the events, publicizing the event and coordinating with the local EMG units to successfully conduct the event.

Please contact Wanda Gerard if you are ready, willing and able to help fill this position.

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## THE GRAINETHUMB

HOW TO BAN BAMBI  
George Graine, Fairfax County

"Dealing with these garden marauders requires a varied strategy and vigilance" ---Carole Ottensen

## In the news:

Has your unit or the members of your unit been featured in your local newspaper? Let us know!

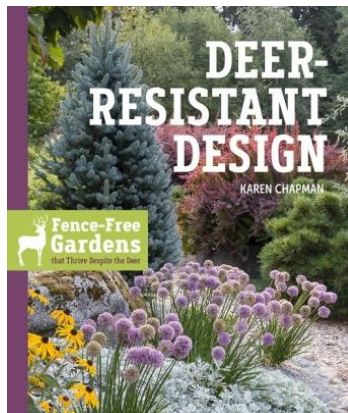
Send links to:  
**peggyfox@hotmail.com**

Got an upcoming event to publicize?

### **Submit your unit announcements to the State MG Coordinator for inclusion in the Bi-Weekly EMG Update**

Submissions via email should include:

- The title of your event
- The date of your event
- An (optional) sentence describing your event
- The location of your event
- A link or attachment providing additional information



Just the title of a new book, **“Deer-Resistant Design: Fence-Free Gardens that Thrive Despite the Deer”** by Karen Chapman (Timber Press, 2019), should excite anyone with a garden faced with the marauder of fauna. Bambi et al is not your friend in the garden! The author explains that her “book has been written to encourage and inspire homeowners just like you with stories and photographs of mature landscapes that have withstood the test of time and the taste testing of deer.”

The point of the 13 gardens included in this book is that working with a restricted assortment of plants does not mean one has to compromise on beauty or vision. If you are deer challenged, then this book is for you. Although you can find many lists of deer-resistant plants in books and state extension web sites, the question still remains. Now what? A list is still a list and it does not have color photos or any explanations. This is only a starting point. The trick is to know what to do, that is, how to *create* a deer-resistant garden design that you can install or have installed. Another way of looking at the problem is to develop not only a strategy but a reality about how to avoid a deer problem in the first place. The subtitle of the book emphasizes having a fence-free garden. For example, crisscrossing fishing line over a pond tends to keep out large birds such as herons that would make you scream if they caught one of your prized koi fish. For a landscape, a similar technique can be tried on your property by tying multiple strands of fishing line in parallel lines to trees or poles. This is a very humane way to exclude deer from your property and it is practically invisible. Hopefully, after this minimal effort and expense, you will have protected any plants that need to be protected. Of course, you can employ other ingenious methods of deer-proofing, but you need to keep in mind county and city fence ordinances and even home owner association regulations regarding fence height and materials. But...the book under discussion is all about fence-free gardens, so fencing is not a problem that should be considered.

Some plants are considered to be reliably deer-resistant but you cannot always depend on this. The deer do not read plant tags! Even your favorite plant is likely to be “sampled” or, in worst case, entirely eaten. It happens! The fact remains that no plant is absolutely deer-*proof*. If a deer is hungry enough, especially when there is a limited supply of available food, then all bets are off. Typical plant lists that refer to deer resistant plants should not be read as deer proof. These lists often include plants with fuzzy foliage, spiky or sharp thorns and aromatic types. Also note that deer-resistant plant lists are a general guideline of plants that are less tempted to be tampered with. Check out Virginia Cooperative Extension for more detailed information regarding deer. In addition, Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) website (<https://njaes.rutgers.edu/deer-resistant-plants/>) has an excellent list of deer resistant plants. Here you will find an interesting list of plants identified with four levels of deer-resistance. These are:

- A-rarely damaged,
- B-seldom severely damaged,
- C-occasionally severely damaged and
- D-frequently severely damaged.

At the top right open space of the website type: "deer resistant plants". An easy to read menu of information will be displayed. Scroll through the information that is relevant to your own landscape situation; however, as a caution, note that not all of this information is relevant to Virginia. The plant hardiness zone differences between New Jersey and the variable environments of Virginia are not in sync.

Virginia can be described as having four distinct regions. They are approximated as:

- Mountain (extreme left of the state top to bottom),
- North Piedmont (northeast),
- South Piedmont (middle of the southern region) and
- Coastal (southeast)

In order to determine which gardens in the book closely resemble your region, you also need to consider five "quick facts" that are noted for each garden. These include: location, soil type, property size, problem critters (aside from deer) and other variable challenges. This could include sun, shade, drought, plant disease and more. Each garden includes color photos and types of plants, also in color, with helpful plant descriptions as well as the A to D deer-resistant damage codes noted above.

The book takes you through a smorgasbord of garden types from all over the country and at the end are many ideas for deer-resistant container gardens. Perhaps the best way to describe this information is to say it is like reading how to design a deer-resistant garden on steroids. You will need to interpret this information to fit your own landscape design. If you own property in addition to your main home, such as a lake-house, beach place, woodland retreat, etc., then you should be able to amalgamate several examples noted in the book. As previously indicated, the garden examples cover a wide range of environmental conditions. Unlike pre-planned landscapes, often found in garden catalogs and on the internet, you can mix and match garden styles that not only fit climatic conditions but also your personality as well. Remember to consider outdoor family activities, pet considerations and anything else that is important that will make you happy and bring a well-done smile for having conquered how to ban Bambi.

*Editor's Note:* Lists of deer resistant plants can be found at:

- VCE Hort Publication  
[https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs\\_ext\\_vt\\_edu/HORT/HORT-62/HORT-62-PDF.pdf](https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/HORT/HORT-62/HORT-62-PDF.pdf)
  - NC State University  
<https://pender.ces.ncsu.edu/files/library/71/Deer%20Resistant%20Plants.pdf>
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## VMGA

Membership has its advantages:  
-Online modules  
-Unit Support  
-Scholarships  
-Newsletter  
-Advanced Training  
-Discount event fees  
-Membership Directory  
-Statewide Networking

Deadline for submitting articles for the Nov/Dec issue:  
Oct 26, 2019

Please send to:  
Peggy Fox,  
VMGA Newsletter Editor  
Newport News unit  
[peggyfox@hotmail.com](mailto:peggyfox@hotmail.com)

## Calendar 2019

### September

- 20-21 [Monticello Heritage Harvest Festival](#)  
27-29 [Virginia Native Plant Society Annual Meeting and Conference, Front Royal, VA](#)  
28 [Garden Walk—Brent and Becky’s Bulbs, Gloucester](#)

### October

- 19 [Central Shenandoah Valley Garden Symposium: Going Native](#)  
19 [Eastern Shore MG Garden Symposium](#)

### March 2020

- 21 [Annual Gardening Symposium, Loudoun County](#)

FROM THE EDITOR We’d love to feature your unit’s announcements, events or articles in the next issue.

## Victory Gardens

by Abbie and Vincent Panettiere,  
Prince William County

Reprinted with permission from [Turnip News, Sept 2019](#)

I was glad to notice that “Victory Gardens” are popular again because it means that many other people share our interests and enthusiasms. In the popular imagination, the idea started during World War I or II. In truth, military activity through-out history always created pressures on food supplies and, going back in time by reading the accounts of various wars, one can always find descriptions of how the field crops, the fruit, nut or olive trees, or other sources of food for one side would be destroyed by enemy armies as they marched through the countryside. This often left their country so attacked and weakened to the extent that starvation might well be the outcome. Sieges by an enemy, preventing the town being sieged from obtaining food were meant to have that result.

Ancient armies arranged for food for their troops most often by living off the land of the country they were fighting. The Roman administration did supply its armies with grain, with game foraged locally and, with their food, diluted wine to help reduce bacteria in the water available to them to drink. They were also supplied with olive oil. However, if supplies were unavailable, plundering the countryside was the usual course. The horde that traveled with Genghis Khan furnished themselves with locally acquired food. As countries were conquered, they became acquainted with new foods and wine, something they were unfamiliar with. They



<https://www.archives.gov/>

## **Resources**

Find out more here

[Extension Master Gardener website](#)

[VMGA.NET](#)

[VCE MG YouTube](#)

[State Office Blog](#)

[VCE—Facebook](#)

[Volunteer Management System](#)

[Online Learning Opportunities](#)

[VA EMG Bi-weekly Update](#)

[Marketing and Branding Resources](#)

traveled with their herds of cows and sheep when they went to war but when these were unavailable they would hunt or live on dried milk curd, cured meat and fresh or fermented mare's milk.

What ultimately led to a "Victory Garden" is mentioned in a North Dakota government history site discussing problems faced by military posts in 1868 in keeping their soldiers well during the long, cold winters where vegetables of any kind would be almost impossible to find. Attempts were made to trade with the Indians for wild onion, wild artichokes, or salsify for the enlisted men. When steamboats came with supplies for the posts, officers might be able to buy potatoes and onions and possibly canned vegetables to add vital nutrients to their diet, but these were not available to troops, whose health suffered badly as a result.

The commanding officer of Fort Stevenson noted that during the winter of 1868, "one man had died of scurvy, thirty-two were sick in the hospital with scurvy, and thirteen more were sick in quarters." (The disease even then was known to be caused by lack of eating vegetables or fruits containing vitamin C). In June, 1865, reports from Fort Rice indicated that thirty-six soldiers had died of scurvy over a period of several months.

By 1873, gardens were in place on Dakota Territory army posts (North Dakota later achieved statehood Feb. 22, 1889), to provide fresh vegetables to both enlisted men and officers. Enlisted men were generally put to work keeping the gardens growing.

The idea of securing food for a civilian population during time of war became widespread during World War I when Charles Lathrop Pack in 1917 developed the concept of increasing the food supply by means of private, civilian efforts to take the pressure off of commercial farm produce which needed to be transported to military bases and also overseas to Europe. Europeans in particular had suffered: farmers were pressed into armies and deserted their farms, or lost them to the devastation of war. Blockades interfered with international shipping and, to add insult to injury, in 1916 there were worldwide crop failures, particularly of cereals, thought to have been caused by poor weather conditions.

During both world wars, war gardens, or as they came to be known, victory gardens, were planted with the same objectives Mr. Pack had in mind. Besides the United States, they were grown in the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and Germany. Germany, in particular, had suffered from the crop failures of 1916/17 and were reduced for a time to living on turnips and rutabagas when their potato crops failed. The winter of 1916/1917 became known as the "Turnip Winter" and for many, Swedish rutabagas and turnips became their only food.

Just weeks before the United States entered into the conflict, Mr. Pack organized the "National War Garden Commission." Among the Commission's members were Luther Burbank, the president of the





Links to places of interest around the state:

**Virginia Is For Lovers**

**Blandy Experimental Farm**

**Hahn Hort Garden**

**Norfolk Botanical Garden**

**Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden**

**Maymont**

**Williamsburg Botanical Garden**

**Meadowlark Botanical Gardens**

**Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at JMU**

**I Love Gardens.com**

**Virginia Gardening Greenspring Gardens**

**Southern Virginia Botanical Gardens, South Boston, VA**

**US National Arboretum**

General Federation of Women's Clubs, and representatives of several major universities. Their successful PR strategy included publicizing pamphlets for the gardens, printed material for newspaper distribution and colorful posters with wording such as "Sow the seeds of victory" to popularize the idea. Children were even enlisted in this effort. The federal Bureau of Education started a "U.S. School Garden Army" (USSGA) and children were encouraged to join as "soldiers of the soil". During World War I, "war gardens" as they were known, were intended to answer the need for fruits and vegetables for the civilian public, but also to provide relief of troops overseas and to feed the starving population in Europe as mentioned above. He urged the use of all idle grounds: parks, backyards, school grounds, the unused property around companies, and of course, vacant lots.

The agricultural population in this country was a much greater percentage of the populace in this time but, for those who lacked experience or wanted help, quantities of information on when and how to plant, what plants to sow, and how to prevent disease and insect problems were made available. Results were so successful that the government then provided written help so that people could can or dry their surplus crops. For food being sent overseas, sun-drying was a particular benefit since fruit and vegetables thus treated took up a great deal less space and weight than the canned item.

As a result of Pack's efforts, over five million gardens were producing in the United States by the end of World War I and Laura Schumm, writing in "America's Patriotic Victory Gardens" states that the gardens "...generated an estimated 1.45 million quarts of canned fruits and vegetables". The campaign ended with the end of World War I, but people continued to grow their own produce. When the US was drawn into World War II, these gardens reappeared, by this time being renamed as 'victory gardens'. The arguments were the same: commercial farm produce had to be shipped to feed troops here and overseas, making it very difficult to also supply the civilian population. Another incentive toward self-sufficiency was food rationing, which was introduced to the American population in 1942. Again, any sort of unused land was suggested: if nothing else, planting in small flower boxes or on apartment rooftops, very sunny places which, when I lived in an apartment, were called "tar beach" for their use as a sunbathing place if you didn't have access to the ocean or beach. George Washington Carver promoted the use of the term "Victory Garden" in writing an agricultural essay on the subject. Even Eleanor Roosevelt planted a victory garden on the White House lawn, over protests from the Department of Agriculture.

An article on History.com stated that "Some of the most popular produce grown included beans, beets, cabbage, carrots, kale, kohlrabi, lettuce, peas, tomatoes, turnips, squash and Swiss chard". As a child, I had my own experience with a victory garden. My parents had patriotically torn up the back yard at our house in Baltimore and planted many of those popular vegetables to help with the war effort. I must have been something like four or five years old at the time and, while Mom took her afternoon nap, I did what kids did at that time: played outside with

<p><b>ABOUT VIRGINIA MASTER GARDENERS AND VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION (VCE)</b></p> <p>Virginia Master Gardeners are volunteer educators who work within their communities to encourage and promote environmentally sound horticulture practices through sustainable landscape management education and training. As an educational program of VCE, Virginia Master Gardeners bring the resources of Virginia's land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, to the people of the Commonwealth. Extension is a joint program of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state and local governments. VCE programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.</p>	<p>whoever was in the neighborhood until being called for dinner.</p> <p>One day, the neighborhood kids descended on our yard to play and someone among them discovered mom and dad's effort and had the great idea that a good mud soup really needed the addition of lots of cute little veggies to be complete. Now, in my defense, I was just four or five and could not have stopped these kids, who were all much bigger. Also, I was barely aware of what a "garden" was, having not had any part in planting this one. However, full disclosure, I thought it was a pretty neat idea too. Mother, when she awoke from her nap, had other thoughts, but they need not be repeated here.</p> <p>The government put in the same effort in educating the public in gardening and on how to preserve what had been grown and again, at the end of the war, their participation in the effort ended. But such a good idea never did go away because it's so enjoyable to watch your very own produce sprout and then flourish to provide as a delicious reward, healthy, chemical-free food. And it literally can be there, right in your own back yard.</p> <p>Victory Garden Sources:</p> <p><a href="https://www.history.com/news/americas-patriotic-victory-gardens">https://www.history.com/news/americas-patriotic-victory-gardens</a> History.com America's Patriotic Victory Gardens May 29, 2014 Laura Schumm</p> <p><a href="https://livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe40s/crops_02.html">https://livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe40s/crops_02.html</a> Wessels Living History Farm Farming in the 1940s Victory Gardens Buying Victory Garden seeds</p> <p><a href="https://ext.vt.edu/content/dam/ext_vt_edu/topics/4h-youth/makers/files/ww1-history-behind-it-war-gardens.pdf">https://ext.vt.edu/content/dam/ext_vt_edu/topics/4h-youth/makers/files/ww1-history-behind-it-war-gardens.pdf</a> The History Behind it, War Gardens - Virginia Cooperative Extension Short history of Victory Gardens since World War I</p> <p><a href="https://www.history.nd.gov/exhibits/gardening/militaryevents7.html">https://www.history.nd.gov/exhibits/gardening/militaryevents7.html</a> How Does your Garden Grow? Military Events and Gardening</p> <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turnip_Winter">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turnip_Winter</a> Turnip Winter Wikipedia</p> <p><a href="https://www.britannica.com/science/scurvy">https://www.britannica.com/science/scurvy</a> Encyclopaedia Britannica Scurvy</p> <p><a href="https://www.hobbyfarms.com/victory-gardens-asalute-to-self-sufficiency-3/">https://www.hobbyfarms.com/victory-gardens-asalute-to-self-sufficiency-3/</a> Permaculture Research Institute Permaculture News Victory Gardens: An Independence Day Salute to Self-Sufficiency</p> <p>Turnip News <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victory_garden">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victory_garden</a> Victory garden Wikipedia</p> <p><a href="https://www.history.com/news/soldier-wartimefood-rations-battle-napoleon-vietnam">https://www.history.com/news/soldier-wartimefood-rations-battle-napoleon-vietnam</a> History.com</p> <p><a href="https://www.foodrepublic.com/2012/01/11/a-briefhistory-of-food-war/">https://www.foodrepublic.com/2012/01/11/a-briefhistory-of-food-war/</a> Food Republic A Brief History of Food &amp; War When food becomes a catalyst for violence by Michel Nischan Week</p> <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_logistics">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_logistics</a> Military logistics Wikipedia</p>
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