

Episode 4: Frugal Watering and Fruitful Gardening

In Episode 4, host Meg West and her guests describe how to prepare your garden for the spring and summer growing seasons. Conducting a thorough irrigation system check-up, creating your own compost, and properly caring for fruit trees are steps you can take to help your garden grow strong all summer long.



First we visit with Cathie Paré, who is doing an irrigation system check up; checking your irrigation system for leaks and overspray can save water and money. It's important to check for sprinklers that are aimed the wrong way- the pavement doesn't need watering! Cathie describes how to fix sprinklers that aren't spraying, clogged filters, and blocked or broken piping. At the end of the episode Cathie returns to provide information on adjusting irrigation controllers and fixing damaged drip lines.

Next, Meg gives the dirt on composting. Compost helps plants stay healthy by replenishing soil nutrients and increasing water retention, while reducing the amount of waste we send to landfills. Meg explains what it takes to make great compost, including specific materials and methods like what kinds of kitchen and yard waste you should (and shouldn't) use, how to properly use a composting bin, and good compost application techniques.



You won't see this brew at the café! Mark Broomfield from SBCC describes how brewing and applying compost tea to your plants will give them nutrients, introduce beneficial fungi into the soil, and help them grow strong all spring and summer long. Mark provides a simple set of directions, using household products and your homemade compost, to make your own compost tea.

We then travel to Holy Cross Church and their SBCC co-sponsored 'food forest', the Mesa Harmony Garden, which grows fruits and nuts for the church's food bank. Larry Saltzman explains the history of the Harmony Garden and some of the 'permaculture' practices that help keep environmental impacts small and the food forest growing tall!

Have more than enough fruit growing in your yard? Lucky you! The S.B. Backyard Harvest Program provides a way to donate your unharvested or unwanted fruits to someone in need; just visit [their website](#) to find out more.



In this episode's segment of "What Tree is That?" Margie Grace of Grace Design Associates, describes the Apricot Tree, *Prunus armeniaca*. Apricots are perfectly sized for city life and are happy in full sun and a variety of soils. This tree does double duty as a beautiful landscaping tree that bears delicious fruits. Apricots are available in a few varieties that can be

grown in different areas of Santa Barbara; Margie provides some tips on care, including pruning, pesticide use, and more.

Meg raves about the Pineapple Guava in this episode's installment of "Plant Rant." The Guava is a water wise "overachiever," producing beautiful foliage and flowers, delicious fruits, and providing many landscaping roles all while using minimal water. Once you've learned about the Pineapple Guava, you'll start noticing it all around town!

