

Tomatoes and Cucumbers Galore

Jeanne Lee

Once the blizzard had passed, and planting season arrived in Bay Village, I decided to take advantage of the small garden plot left by the previous owner. Our home was located on what had previously been a turkey farm, so the soil didn't need a lot of additional fertilizer.

The 24-inch wide space between the patio and the aluminum sided house with great sunlight appeared to be ideal for a few tomato plants. When the punch and grow plants needed to be put into the ground, they needed small twigs to hold them upright. My mother, visiting from Illinois, said, "I don't want to discourage you, but those don't look to promising!" When the end of the season came, I took pictures to send to Mom, including the plant near the back door that kept trying to send a shoot inside. I had used the wire cones to contain the plants and used a large spade to hack them down. Since my son and I don't even like to eat a tomato, I canned tomato sauce and walked up and down the street offering them to neighbors.

The garden plot had some veggies: carrots, onions, lettuce, potatoes, and cucumbers. Again, I don't like cucumbers, but I do like pickles. The cukes didn't seem to be coming along – as my grandmother would have said – but we had a few days of rain and then hot days. When I went to check again, I found a cucumber hidden under a large leaf that was 12 inch long and 12 inches in circumference. Don't remember what was finally done with it, but it got my two boys' picture in the local paper!

Wearing a post-surgical splint from repair of a torn ligament in my left thumb, I canned sweet pickles and dill spears. Again, I don't like dills, but the rest of the family did, so I canned them I did. I gave a quart to a friend, who opened the jar immediately and bit into one of the pickles. She shuddered and I wonder just how bad they were since I wasn't one to test how they tasted. When I asked her if they were that bad, she replied, "No! They are that good!!" Whew, I wouldn't be giving my family and friends food poisoning and the garlic, red pepper and vinegar combination had worked...if you liked a kick in your dill pickle spear.

Haven't had a garden since then and am so glad to live at WG where the grass is mowed, beautiful flowers planted and the grounds attended while I can enjoy it all without all the work.