

## Personal Message

It's been raining for two days now. Actually, we needed some rain. Our gardens were getting so dry that Melissa was spending part of every evening with a hose in her hand, watering the new plant material.

However, now that we're into the second straight day of rain, I'm getting depressed. And scared. Remember last fall when it rained for weeks at a time? I sure hope that pattern of weather doesn't happen again.

One thing is for sure... all this rain has helped many of our vegetables. The lettuce is as pretty as I've ever seen. Tasty, too.

We grew mustard and collard greens for the first time this year. There's also a row of spinach that we planted for the first time. Everything is ready to pick. as soon as I can get back outside.

Melissa and I are both suffering from spring colds. We managed to avoid most illnesses this winter, but we've been sidelined by the sniffles this month. I think the stock in Kleenex brand tissues just went up a notch.

Despite our stuffy noses, we've managed to spend quite a bit of time at our tiny trailer in Ocean City. I've tried fishing with several different kinds of bait in several different spots. I became disheartened and almost gave up when TADAH! I caught a taug fish off the Bay.

It was long, it was lean and it was delicious. I caught this fresh water fish using green peeler crabs as bait. (Every time I use these tiny whole crabs for bait, I end up wanting to eat a soft crab sandwich. That's a story for another time.)

Taug have a large set of teeth and can bite your finger in half. The taug that I kept was fat enough to make a meal for both of us. Their flesh is firm and white, similar to flounder.

I smoked my fish whole on the grill with apple wood. It was a beautiful thing to see. We picked the fish from the bone and there was plenty for a delicious meal for two.

Although I've reeled in several more, they haven't been long enough for me to keep. I can't wait to catch the next keeper and start a stockpile for the freezer. They'll taste mighty good next winter.

While in Ocean City, we also do a little gardening. We have a strip of garden about two feet wide and twelve feet long where we cram vegetables and flowers. Our screened in porch hosts lots of planters full of herbs and vegetables. It's always more fun to work at the beach. it doesn't seem much like work there.

Thanks for reading!

## June Garden Tips

- After your vegetable garden is well established, it's best to water it thoroughly once a week rather than giving it a light watering everyday. That way, a deeper root system is encouraged to develop. This will help plants tolerate dry weather during the warmer months.
- Strawberries came early this year. The flavor is the best we've tasted in years, probably due to all the rainy weather. Try one of the u-pick places and freeze some of your excess. The best way to freeze berries is to lay them on a single baking sheet. Once they're frozen, you can bag them for future use.
- We planted flowers specifically for cutting this year. What a wonderful extravagance! By trial and error, we found that the best time to pick flowers is early morning. They last longer. Longevity also increases when you use a clean container, change the water daily and cut the tip off stems every few days. We've tried food coloring in the water for a different look. The pretty water lasts about a day, then starts to get cloudy.