



Food Bank Growers <fbg@foodbankgrowers.org>

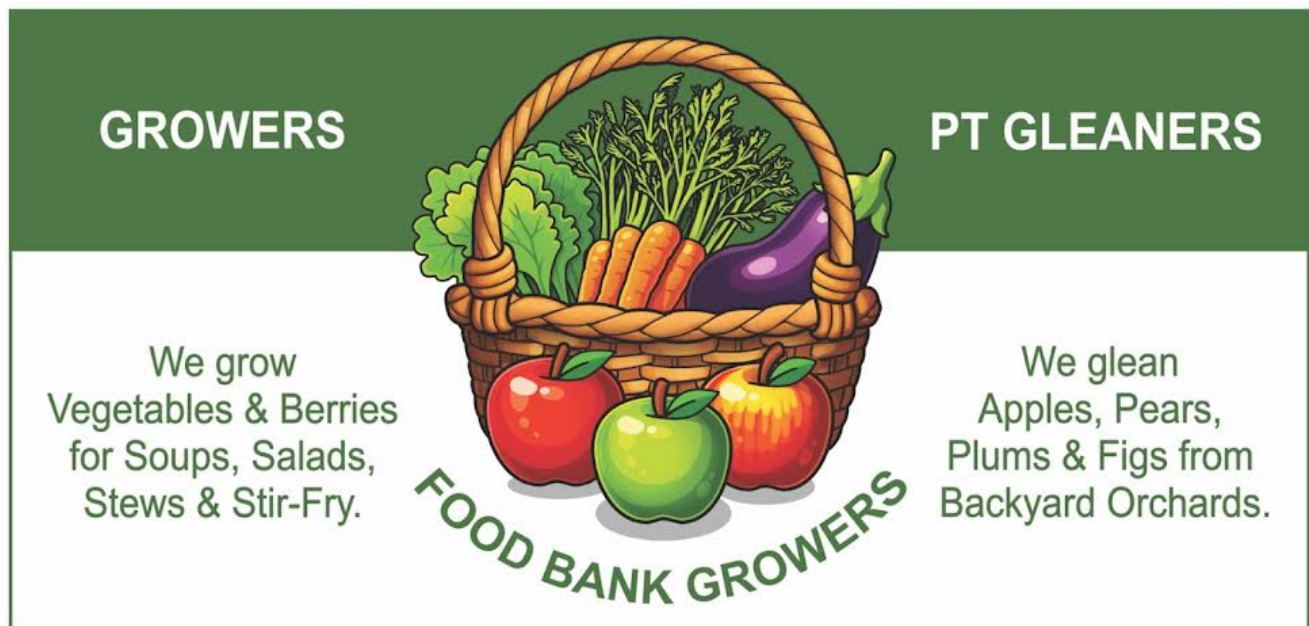
FBG Forwarding: April 2026 Food Bank Growers and PT Gleaners Newsletter

1 message

Food Bank Growers FBG <contact@foodbankgrowers.org>
To: Food Bank Growers <contact@foodbankgrowers.org>

Tue, Mar 31, 2026 at 1:00 PM

April 2026 Newsletter



In this month's newsletter...

- Year-to-Date Statistics
- Connectivity Summit
- NEW: FBG Merchandise!
- Upcoming Events
- KPTZ "In The Garden" Podcast
- "The Big Drip" Fundraising Campaign
- "Food For Thought" Lecture Series
- April 2026 "In The Garden" with Dianna



Year-to-Date Statistics

Produce Grown = 220.5 pounds!

Volunteer Time = 282 hours!

We're hard at work in FBG Gardens all
year long!



Connectivity Summit

Thanks FBG Team for representing us at
the Connectivity Summit at Fort Worden
on Saturday, March 28th!

(from left: Barbara, Mary, Mado, Milly,
Paulette)



NEW: FBG Merchandise!

FBG has recently rebranded and we have a new logo!

Order a t-shirt and show off your support for the Food
Bank Growers!

[Buy FBG Merchandise!](#)



Stay Involved *in the community*

JCFM Farmers Market

April 25th from 9am -
2pm
in Port Townsend



In the Garden *on KPTZ radio*

Listen Here

Join Julia Cordz, Barbara Faurot, Mary Beth Haralovich and Dianna Wiklund weekly on Thursdays from 6-6:30 pm.



The Big Drip *Fundraising Campaign*

Donate to the Big Drip F...

Little drops of cash add up so that we can support our volunteers, gardens and schools that feed our local community.



From Field to Tortilla: How PNW Grain Becomes the Food We Eat

*A talk with Cassandra and
Chef Lissette Garay of La Cocina*

**Sunday, April 12th at 3:30
pm**

The Grange is at located at
1219 Corona Avenue in Port
Townsend.

Doors open at 3:15 pm.

Join in for a conversation about how locally grown grains become one of the world's most essential foods – the tortilla. Owners of La Cocina, Cassandra and Chef Lissette Garay, will share the journey from field to tortilla and how regional agriculture can shape the food we eat every day. This talk will explore:

- The history and cultural significance of tortillas
- How heritage corn and wheat are grown in the Pacific Northwest
- The process of turning grain into masa and tortillas
- Why local grain systems matter for farmers, restaurants, and communities
- How La Cocina is working with regional growers and millers
- The future of grain-to-table food systems in our region
- The new expansion and tortilla production program in Port Townsend

***TORTILLAS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR
PURCHASE***

at this event by Cash, Phone, Venmo, Square

"In The Garden" with Dianna

April Weather

April's weather forecast seems to be settling on a cool, wet beginning then warming

April's weather forecast seems to be settling on a cool, wet beginning then warming up and drying out later in the month. Port Townsend averages are between 52° / 43° F. This year's forecast is for a high of around 50° and a low around 39° F. It may not seem like much, but it matters to our seeds when direct sown in the garden. Soil temperature is important for germination as well as transplanting. Taking a seedling from a warm place and putting it in the cold ground could send it into transplant shock, even with season extenders. Try to warm the soil before you transplant by covering it with your chosen season extender for a couple of sunny days before transplanting. And watch for the last day of frost as frost is hard on transplants.

Perennials

This month I would like to talk about perennials. Perennials are plants that live more than one or two years. It seems to be true the longer you garden the more perennials you plant. I have found that once my beds are established, I tend to put in more and more perennials as they are less yearly work than most annuals. Also, I plant annuals alongside perennials and they grow well together with little maintenance.

Perennials are also a great choice for the garden as they continue to produce year after year. My neighbor just brought me some Welsh Scallions; she uses them like green onions, harvesting the leaves as needed. They do need to be thinned or separated every year or so.

Berries

Strawberries last about 3 years, but they put out runners that will become next year's plants. The same type of strawberry can be harvested for many years without rebuying plants. They are acid-loving plants with shallow roots and are easy to plant just about anywhere.

(There are native strawberries in the area that are known as the "Jewels of the Forest" - very small but big flavor.)

Raspberries are a cane plant that put out a "Prima Cane" the first year which turns into a "Flora Cane" the second year. The flora cane flowers and has berries. From its base, a raspberry plant will continue to put out Prima canes year after year; all except the best two to four canes should be cut back every fall. Raspberry plants also need support to keep them from falling over and being eaten by slugs and other ground pests.

Blueberries are a shrub that can produce for many years. They also like very acidic soil; wood chips make great mulch. They are loved by our local birds and need to be grown in a way that the birds don't get them first. Many gardens have a reverse aviary (a fenced-in cage with wire on all sides and the top) that keeps birds out but allows sunlight and rain in. Blueberries also need to be pruned every year.

Other berries are similar — Marionberry, Boysenberry, Evergreen Huckleberry (which is native), Gooseberries (also native), Cranberries (both low growing and high bush), and many more.

Herbs

Herbs make a great perennial garden. I have seen several gardens growing herbs in rockeries or stylized beds. Note that several types of herbs can get out of hand if allowed to go to seed. There are culinary herbs, medical herbs, and herbs grown just for their scent.

Some **culinary herb annuals** can grow as a ground cover (like Thyme) or as a small bush (like Rosemary). Perennial culinary herbs are less picky about their soil types than annual herbs and can grow under many different conditions. Oregano is actually very hard to kill-off, as is Lemon Balm; both will spread throughout your garden if left to seed. My neighbor is using Chervil as a cover crop to suppress weeds over the winter, and then cuts it down in the spring.

Medicinal herbs are a specialty crop and require a lot of study to be used safely. Growing them can be fun, but seek expert advice if you actually want to use them, as dosage can be tricky. Everyone reacts differently so I recommend caution.

Scent herbs (like Lavender) are also perennial and fun to grow. They need to be cut back each winter, but otherwise tend to grow happily in any sunny location that is not too wet.

Vegetable Perennials

Vegetable perennials can be picky about their soil conditions and often require specific soil types to grow well. Most want very nutrient rich soil that has been well worked. Top dress with compost or manure annually.

Artichokes and asparagus are two examples of vegetables that are commonly grown in local gardens. Both want lots of sunlight and really good soil. Read up on them in seed catalogs and follow the instructions carefully.

Kale and sprouting broccoli can both become long-lived and produce abundantly for several years under the right conditions. Keep picking the florets and they will keep producing. I have kept broccoli producing for three years and have talked with people who have kept it for longer. Kale can be harvested a little at a time, harvesting the lower leaves and leaving enough to keep the plant growing.

Runner beans can be grown as a perennial. They die back to a tuberous root each year. Mulch well so the root does not freeze in the winter.

Elephant Garlic (which is a leek) can be grown as a perennial just by not harvesting all the small side bulbs. Walking onions will also continue without help if allowed to

all the small side bulbs. walking onions will also continue without help if allowed to walk about your garden.

Potatoes can act like perennials if you do not harvest all the small ones. They will grow back next year and the year after that and the year after that...

Fruit Trees

Fruit trees are a whole other topic, but they are perennials as well. I will save them for another time.

Planting

April is a busy time for planting, whether it is annuals or perennials. Once our soils warm a bit (look for soil temperatures in the mid 40's), we can sow many of our root crops and transplant brassicas.

Direct Sow or Transplant Out:

- Root vegetables like carrots, beets and radishes.
- Salad greens like lettuce, spinach and sorrel.
- Brassicas can be either direct sown or transplanted out. Remember to cover them with a row cover or cloche. Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Kale, etc... (not Brussel Sprouts, yet.)
- Peas can still be sown but hold off on the beans until next month.
- Herbs - so very many herbs - both annuals and perennials - can be transplanted or direct sown now. This is a great time to start an herb garden.
- Flowers, many of them, can also be started or put out now. Nasturtium, calendula and sunflower to name just a few.

Starts:

This is also a time to start some warm seed crops to get an earlier harvest. If you have a heat mat and grow lights or a very warm south facing window... tomatillo, cucumber, melons, and squashes (both summer and winter).

Garden Work

So much to do this month - here is a partial list:

Bed preparation (we need somewhere to put all those transplants)

- Remove weeds or cut down cover crops.
- Top dress with compost and amendments. Don't worry about any left over mulch, it will just decompose back into the soil.
- Set-up irrigation. Forecasts are calling for a very dry summer.

Pathway Maintenance

- Remove weeds.
- Add cover material like hogfuel, wood chips or sand.
- If you are just starting out, cover pathways with overlapped cardboard to kill/suppress the weeds. Then add cover material.

Fence Maintenance

- Check your fences for winter damage, both high and low, depending on what tends to get into your garden.

Conclusion

April is a busy month in the garden but also a happy one, seeing all the winter covered and left over plants cleared away. Cover crops should be cut down or turned in. A new year of growing has begun. It is a time of new beginning and hope for the future. A chance to refresh our perennials and start new ones. New possibilities and new chances to try something different. It is a time to place our bets on a new season's growth and do the best we can to help it along.

I wish you all Joy and Happy Gardening,
Dianna

Everyone is Welcome!

We're so grateful for our volunteers! Feel free to join us and explore opportunities to grow, glean, or help remotely. Just let us know what interests you, and we'd love to get you involved!

[Volunteer Sign-Up](#)

Thank you FBG Community!

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