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Bethlehem, PA
Quarterly Program Topic Report
July 1st 2023 – September 30th 2023

Issues:

AGRICULTURE/GARDENING
ELECTION & POLITICS
HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Programs:

AGRICULTURE/GARDENING

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You Bet Your Garden # 1301 The Great Garlic Debate PLUS Author Spotlight 'The Green Witches Guide to Magiacal Plants and Flowers' Saturday Sep 30, 2023

On this NEW episode of YBYG Mike McGrath continues the debate on Garlic planting times! PLUS a Double interview with Chris Young and Susan Ottaviano Co Authors of the new book; 'The Green Witches Guide to Magical Plants and Flowers' FROM WEBSITE:

'To plant? Or not to plant?' That is the question.

When I first started growing garlic some three decades ago, I followed the long-established rule to plant my cloves on what is now called Indigenous Peoples Day early in October. A few years later, the late Frank Pollock who had a huge garlic farm in the Poconos told me that he and his loosely-affiliated Pocono Garlic Group had begun planting in September instead.

"It's common sense," he asserted. "Frost and freezes start a lot earlier in the Fall up here than they do in your garden, and you get much bigger bulbs by giving the plants that extra month to grow a bigger root system."

...Which got me to thinking. Regions South of me could wait for that supposedly lucky day, but anybody North of me should buy the free insurance of planting early, which reminded me of a speaking gig early in my career. I was talking about garlic and repeated the old line that you should plant on what was then called Columbus Day. An older Italian gentleman sitting up front muttered something under his breath. I don't know exactly what he said but his wife quickly made the Sign of the Cross.

I asked, "did I say something wrong"? Having only been in the country for about 70 years, he spoke no English, but his daughter was sitting right next to him, so he whispered in her ear...

"My father says to plant your garlic on the first day kids go back to school and harvest on the last day of school."

I thought that 'the first day of school' was great advice, but that the second half was way too early in my little micro-climate, where the bulbs are typically the perfect size right around the 4th of July. I announced that I loved the 'first day of school' part and would now make it my recommendation. I would have addressed the issue of his harvest time, but his wife already had her rosary beads out and was quietly whispering Hail Marys.

I'm pretty sure that I was giving that talk in the Greater DC area, where the garlic would be ready to harvest earlier than in PA, so maybe even that advice was sound in a warmer growing zone. I had a bed available, so my first run went in the ground on September 16th. I know the exact date because my intern Sean took pictures of me with the bed for the show's Facebook page and they were posted later that day. And that's when the cloves hit the fan.

Debra posted that she wasn't going to plant until October and mentioned that she was in USDA Zone 5b in Northern Michigan. Significantly colder than me, so I felt she should have had her garlic in the ground already to ensure good root growth before the first hard freeze.

Carol was adamant: "Not until October!" she posted. 'K Zee' was just as adamant but was going to wait until between Halloween and Thanksgiving. Unfortunately, neither revealed their location. Carla posted that she is 'West of Philadelphia' (not a lot of help as that could mean anywhere between the Philly suburbs and Pittsburgh) and always waits until November. Jeff posted: "isn't it too early? I'm just outside Grand Rapids and I usually plant close to Halloween". Deb in Northern Illinois posted that she always waits until mid to late October.

There's more, but you get the idea. I found it interesting that virtually everyone who revealed their location were North of me, and espoused planting (in my opinion) too late. Real simple: The further North you live, you more you should be planting {quote} 'early'. The elderly Italian gentleman had it right--plant when the kids go back to school. There is no disadvantage to planting in September, but you could get a miserable harvest if you garden in a low USDA Growing Zone and wait until your carved pumpkins start to look like The Dog's Breakfast.

I offer as evidence this final Facebook exchange: Jeff of Newmiller Farms (an hour South of Grand Rapids) posted that they planted in September last year and had their best harvest ever. In return, a different Jeff posted that he harvested the smallest bulbs he had ever grown from last season's planting and is now a September fan.

(Yes, I realize that this show will air at the end of September, so let's keep it simple. If you're North of a line extending West from Philadelphia, don't delay. And think about being ready to plant when you see your first school bus next year.)

Oh--an unnamed worker at 'Friends Farm' in central PA posted: "Waiting until late October; the allium leaf miner is still a threat this time of year." Not

according to the Penn State Extension Service (which is located in that part of PA). They explain that the female lays her eggs on garlic leaves in the Spring, so there's no need to delay planting now.

And finally, a quick mention that the opposite is true for Spring bulbs. They have a unique growing habit, and in most regions, they should be planted between Halloween and Thanksgiving. Plant too early and they might not flower in the Spring.

ELECTION & POLITICS

Story Title: Pa Gov Josh Shapiro stumps for President Joe Biden
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Story: PA GOV STUMPS
Aired: 9/30/2023
Reporter: TOM SHORTELL
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Elections

Pa. Gov. Josh Shapiro stumps for President Joe Biden on trip to New Hampshire
LehighValleyNews.com | By Tom Shortell
Published September 30, 2023 at 3:32 PM EDT
LehighValleyNews.Com

Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro greets supporters Saturday, Sept. 30, 2023, while stumping for President Joe Biden and down-ballot Democrats in Bedford, N.H. Shapiro, a Democrat, denied he's eyeing a run for the White House in 2028.

Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro addressed the New Hampshire Democratic Party at its annual convention Saturday
He rallied attendees to support President Joe Biden in his bid for re-election next year as well as down-ballot Democrats
Shapiro denied he's eyeing a presidential run in 2028, but political observers believe he's likely to seek the Democratic nomination
BEDFORD, N.H. — Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro received a rousing welcome from New Hampshire Democrats Saturday as he stumped for President Joe Biden and a pair of Granite State gubernatorial candidates ahead of next year's election cycle.

Speaking from a high school theater stage to a convention of about 500 party officials, volunteers and candidates, Shapiro painted political action as a moral imperative and a civic duty. Democrats need to fight against extremists who are pushing strict abortion bans, attempting to limit voting rights and denying the scientific reality of climate change, he said. And that means Democrats need to get to work to ensure Biden is elected to a second term and support whoever earns the Democratic nomination for New Hampshire's governor next year.

"It's up to each of us to get off the sidelines, to get in the game and to do our part – to stand up for our rights, to defend our democracy. It's up to all of us to break down arbitrary barriers to entry and create real opportunity for the good people of this country," Shapiro said.

Shapiro brandished his own credentials as an example of what's possible when ordinary people get involved in the political process. While talking about the need to support voting rights, he highlighted his record as attorney general when he successfully defended the state in 40 lawsuits challenging Pennsylvania's returns in the 2020 election. When speaking about creating good-paying jobs, he pointed to his executive order that removed a requirement that candidates for most state jobs require a college degree.

"When the nation's eyes were on Pennsylvania, we showed we could do big things again. That's who we are as Democrats."

Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro

Biden, he said, has also delivered. He credited the 46th president with creating more than 13 million jobs nationally since taking office and making a historic investment in the nation's infrastructure. When a tanker truck crash destroyed an overpass on Interstate 95 in Pennsylvania, the Shapiro administration found a way to reopen the highway in just 12 days. But that wouldn't have been possible without the financial support of the federal government. Biden, Shapiro said, personally checked in to make sure the state had what it needed to get the job done.

"When the nation's eyes were on Pennsylvania, we showed we could do big things again. That's who we are as Democrats," Shapiro said.

Shapiro repeated an emerging motto of his administration – a focus on "getting s*** done." He was confident that the 2024 Democratic nominee for New Hampshire governor – candidates Joyce Craig and Cinde Warmington also addressed the crowd Saturday – would carry that mindset, too. They each support building a stronger, more inclusive New Hampshire, and they'll be a better candidate than whoever emerges on the Republican ticket, he said.

"She will make New Hampshire a leader in economic development and job creation. Now, listen, you'll be second to Pennsylvania, but it's fine. It'll be good for you guys," Shapiro said, drawing good-natured laughs.

Cindy Raspiller, a Mont Vernon Democrat who graduated from Lehigh University, said she has been keeping tabs on Shapiro and the political happenings in the Keystone State. The convention was her first opportunity to see him in person and she came away impressed with how he seemed to speak from the heart, she said.

"I thought he did a great job. I was impressed before and I'm more impressed now," Raspiller said.

Security and New Hampshire Democratic Party officials close on protestors who interrupted Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro's address in Bedford, N.H., on Saturday, Sept. 30, 2023.

Listing out his own accomplishments may have been a subtle way of laying the groundwork for his own run for president. Political observers have pointed to Shapiro as one of the party's rising stars and a potential candidate in 2028. New Hampshire is an early primary state, and generations of ambitious politicians have made frequent trips to the Granite State to engage in its

unique brand of retail politics. Shapiro, however, denied he's kicking the tires on a presidential run.

"I'm just happy to be here to support the party and to share our message of progress in Pennsylvania," Shapiro said during brief remarks to reporters afterward.

It wasn't an entirely warm welcome for Shapiro. Protestors who appeared to challenge him on Pennsylvania's record on fracking and climate change attempted to interrupt the speech by chanting and shouting. Shapiro tried to speak over them, but everyone was drowned out by the booing of the large crowd who wanted to hear Shapiro. Security eventually escorted the group of about a half-dozen people out so Shapiro could deliver the bulk of his remarks.

As presidential gossip grows, Gov. Josh Shapiro readies for a trip to New Hampshire

'Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro visited New Hampshire on SATURDAY [9/30/23]... as keynote speaker for the state Democratic Party's annual convention.

During a half-hour speech to about 500 people, he drummed up support for President Joe Biden and down-ballot candidates next year.

Political observers suggest Shapiro may be considering a presidential run of his own in 2028. Making an appearance at an early primary state like New Hampshire is common practice for those seeking the Oval Office.

But Shapiro says that's not the case.

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[''I'm firmly behind the president. I am going to go to Pennsylvania, New Hampshire and anywhere else they ask me to go to support the president's re-election bid.'']

Pennsylvania is a critical swing state. Shapiro carried it by 15 points last year, elevating his political profile to a national level.

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HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Story Title: Not so fast: The latest COVID booster may not be for everyone

Episode Number: 101
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Story: Not so fast: The latest COVID booster may not be for everyone

Aired: 9/14/23

Reporter: Brittany Sweeney

Category: HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Link: <https://www.lehighvalleynews.com/health-news/not-so-fast-the-latest-covid-booster-may-not-be-for-everyone>

Not so fast: The latest COVID booster may not be for everyone

LehighValleyNews.com | By Brittany Sweeney

Published September 14, 2023 at 9:00 AM EDT

Latest COVID booster

Brittany Sweeney

/

LehighValleyNews.Com

The newest COVID-19 booster was approved by the FDA and CDC this week.

The latest COVID booster was approved for people six months and older this week

A local doctor says those recently infected or otherwise healthy don't need it

Those with underlying health conditions and the elderly are recommended to get it

BETHLEHEM, Pa. — The newest COVID-19 booster was approved by the FDA and CDC this week, said to fight off the latest strain. However, a local doctor says it's not for everyone.

The shot, being released by both Pfizer and Moderna, is designed to immunize people over six months of age against the current national strain. Dr.

Jeffrey Jahre says that's not the strain in the Lehigh Valley right now.

"We know what strains are in this area and they're not the strains that the CDC says are taking over the country. The strains that are in this area are primarily the XB 1.11 type strains and we've done our own studies to show that, and we're continuing to do it to see whether it's going to evolve," said Jahre, the Senior Vice President of Medical and Academic Affairs Section Chief Emeritus of Infectious Diseases at St. Luke's University Health Network. He said St. Luke's works closely with the Pennsylvania Department of Health to conduct the local research.

"One size never fits all and so I want to make sure that people understand that there are, at least from our point of view over here at St. Luke's, certain groups of individuals that may not want to avail themselves of this new booster."

Jeffrey Jahre, the Senior Vice President of Medical and Academic Affairs Section Chief Emeritus of Infectious Diseases at St. Luke's University Health Network

"As with everything and some of the problems that we always have with the CDC recommendations and the FDA is that they have a tendency to always make it that one size fits all," he added.

"One size never fits all and so I want to make sure that people understand that there are, at least from our point of view over here at St. Luke's, certain groups of individuals that may not want to avail themselves of this new booster."

The infectious disease specialist said higher-risk groups like the elderly, those with underlying health issues and pregnant people should get the booster; otherwise, healthy people may not need it.

Those who have had COVID recently are also thought to have immunity for at least 3 months. He went on to say the booster should be available at St. Luke's next week, but the best practice is for people to talk to their doctor to see if the vaccine is a good fit.

Lehigh Valley Health Network said they expect to let patients know booster availability at their facilities by the end of this week.

This latest booster is a monovalent vaccine, as opposed to the bivalent vaccine released last fall.

Jahre also said there is a third vaccine maker, called Novavax, expected to get approval in the coming weeks for another COVID booster that does not use the mRNA technology used in the other two.

A new COVID-19 booster was approved by the F-D-A and C-D-C this week. But one local doctor says he is NOT recommending it for everyone.

WLVR Health Reporter Brittany Sweeney EXPLAINS.

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[The shot being released by both Pfizer and Moderna is said to immunize people against the current national strain. Dr. Jeffrey Jahre says that's *not* the strain in the Lehigh Valley right now. The infectious disease specialist from St. Luke's University Health Network says higher risk groups, like the elderly, those with underlying health issues, and pregnant people, should get the booster, but otherwise healthy people may not need it. JAHRE "one size never fits all and so I want to make sure that people understand that there are certain groups of individuals that may not want to avail themselves of this new booster." Jahre says St. Luke's is conducting its own studies to follow what strain is impacting people locally. He says the booster should be available locally next week but the best practice is for people to talk to their doctor to see if the vaccine is a good fit. For WLVR I'm Brittany Sweeney LehighValleyNews.com]

[HOST OUT] Jahre [sounds like Jerry] also said there is a third vaccine maker - Nova-Vax that is expected to get approval for its booster in the coming weeks.