

# AOVS URBAN FARM NEWSLETTER

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## Farm Update

### MARCH

We have been preparing for spring for the past month, but the weather seems to have decided otherwise. We are dutifully keeping the greenhouse warm around the clock to protect the dozens of seed trays we have germinating.

A few of the trays have seedlings that are ready to be transplanted into the fields. We will be planting those cold hardy plants in the field in the next couple of weeks.

We hope to have our first spring crops ready for Alpha Omega residents and chefs in early April. But as always, this is dependent on the weather. The last frost date around here is not until April 15th!

### *DID YOU KNOW?*

Carrot seeds are tiny! About 2,000 seeds fit in one teaspoon. Seed companies coat the seeds in clay to make them easier to plant- otherwise the seeds would just blow away in the wind!

### Germination of a Bean Sprout



## Lessons from Seeds

Every season I am still astonished when the seeds I plant in the greenhouse sprout. There is always a moment of doubt that makes me question how this growth thing is even possible. And yet, more often than not, seeds germinate when they are tended to properly. They emerge from the soil as seedlings- growing into plants that will feed the bellies of many.

When a seed germinates, and the sprout breaks out of its protective coating, it immediately becomes vulnerable to the surrounding elements. There is an uncertainty that must be faced in order for a seed to become a tomato plant or a flower or whatever it is ultimately destined to be. There is no growth without vulnerability.

As the seedling is sprouting and establishing it's true leaves, it reaches towards the light. You'll sometimes notice that plants grown indoors have a peculiar bend to them. This is because they are growing towards the sunlight which provides the necessary nourishment plants need to thrive. Grow towards the things, and people, that bring light into your life.

Plants don't grow over night. Well- they actually do- but often the process is not perceptible to the human eye. Patience is key in the growth process. It is often difficult to see the progress your seedlings are making until all of a sudden they are big enough to be transplanted into the field. Being patient with yourself and with others is transformative.



# Featured Vegetable

## CARROTS →

Almost all vegetables are more nutritious when they are eaten raw, but not the carrot! The cell walls of carrots are particularly tough but cooking breaks down these cell walls, making carrot nutrients more easily digestible.

Carrots are packed with vitamins and minerals. In fact, just 9 carrots contain the same amount of calcium as one glass of milk. Carrots also contain significant values of beta-carotene and vitamin A which are important for eye and skin health, immune support, and cell growth.

Half of the antioxidants a carrot contains resides in the outer layer, so it is actually best not to peel carrots. Instead, try washing them thoroughly with warm water before you prepare them.



## Featured Recipe

### ROAST CARROTS

- 3-4 lbs AOVS Urban Farm Carrots
- 4 tbsp unsalted butter
- 4 tbsp grapeseed oil
- 1 tbsp light brown sugar mixed with 2 tbsp cayenne
- 2 tbsp honey

Pre-heat oven to 375. Place all your carrots in a cast iron skillet or an over-safe roasting dish. Drizzle or place all ingredients listed above evenly on and around carrots in your skillet. Place in the oven and cook for ~30 minutes. Serve warm in your cast iron but make sure to wrap a towel of an oven mitt around your cast iron handle so you don't burn anybody's hands up.

Save those tops! Carrot tops are delicious and full of tons of nutrients like all the greens of root vegetables. Rough chop the carrot greens with some parsley, garlic, onions, lemon juice and zest and a big drizzle of extra virgin olive oil. This is called a gremolata in Italy and delicious on top of just about everything.

**Yum yum gimme some! -Dusty Faron Levesque, Community Kitchen Coordinator**

Memphis Tilth has partnered with AOVS to build an urban farm and garden project in an effort to serve, educate, and empower AOVS residents. Memphis Tilth is a nonprofit collective housing like-missioned initiatives for land, food, people, and place.  
[memphistilth.org](http://memphistilth.org)

**Questions about the AOVS Urban Farm?**  
 Contact Becca Hart, Community Garden Organizer  
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