As I sat working at my computer today, I found myself lamenting the cold and rainy weather. I could have used another warm day to chop at more Honeysuckle, but isn't that the way with gardeners? I hope to be able to pull a few weeds after the inch plus rain we received. Last week’s freeze hit the tomatoes, squash, and cucumbers. I covered the green beans and so far, so good. A few plants wilted, but the rest are blooming and there are little green beans! I keep giving them a pep talk and hope to pick green beans the last week of October.

I decided it was a good day to catch up on my emails and found some interesting articles on gardening journals.

A garden blogger (Bless my Weeds) reminds us that keeping a journal of your gardening efforts – winter or summer- can help you remember from year to year what works well in your yard, what triumphs and mistakes you've made, and how you can learn from those ups and downs. Anyone who wants to improve their garden and be a successful grower of winter (or summer) crops should really be keeping a gardening journal. They list some specific ways keeping a gardening journal can help you.

1. **You can keep notes on new plants** – When you grow a plant you’ve never tried before, keeping notes in your journal about your experience can really help you, should you decide to grow it again in the future. Also, you can do some research online and print out the helpful tips you find about that species, so you'll always have something to refer to when questions arise.

2. **Your own Almanac** - Your garden spot will be different from anyone else’s, even in your neighborhood. Keeping track of dates of the last frost, when the soil was soft enough to till, when the weather changed, and what grows well in different spots in your garden will serve as your own gardening almanac for your particular space. Note dates, weather patterns, insect problems and how you handled them.

3. **Planting notes** – Serious gardeners use crop rotation to plant different things in different spaces. This can help keep nutrient levels even from year to year and help with disease problems. But if you can’t remember what you planted in each space you won't be able to take full advantage of this method. Keeping good records will solve this problem and many others.

4. **New Ideas** – When you run across a new winter (or summer) gardening idea in a gardening magazine or on your favorite garden show, grab your journal and write it down along with any helpful instruction that is given. No more forgetting that idea that’s escaped your mind.

It looks like I am going to add a journal to the stack by my chair. I make notes on my calendar on the fridge, but don’t transfer them to a journal. Is this my New Year’s resolution? It seems like a great idea, but the key is to have that Garden journal handy and ready to be written in!

“Keep a garden journal – Over time you’ll accumulate a picture of the very unique seasons found in your own backyard and a series of valuable reminders that when you see this happening in the natural world it’s time to do that.” (Lorene Edwards Forkner)