

Volunteer Gardner is a public television show on at 7:30 p.m. on Thursdays and 9:30 a.m. on Sundays. I've been appearing on it for ten years or so. It's ironic, because I don't watch tv. Each year I get a copy of the ones we've shot, but I've not watched any from the last three or four years, and there are many others I've never seen. The van pulled up at 10:00 and I shoed Greta, the director, my scribbled script. Trial and errors is the topic this time, which is how I learn. After an explanation of why I failed with raised beds (to dry and to much work), I was mentioning that the farm gets lots of visitors, who are surprised at how rocky the soil is here. A nice family from Portland happened to be visiting and ended up on the show. I wished I could have talked to them more.

The cameraman, Matt, turns out to be a CSA member, getting our produce each week. He seemed genuinely interested as I explained why we space the plants far apart. Of course he loved the cave, where I showed the potatoes that we no longer was before sending to market. (unwashed produce not only keeps better, it saves me a lot of work).

At the compost pile, I've also cut the workload by not turning it often, and I rambled a few paragraphs off of the top my head. Because I was talking to Matt, not the camera, Greta said it was much better. It's hard to act naturally when there's a T.V. camera pointed at you.

I wanted to mention that the design for the cold frames was from the 1800's but I forgot. I did get to demonstrate "mudding", an old time way of transplanting. We ended up at a woodchip pile, both fresh and well-rotted.

Greta asked me to thank the audience for their contributions to public television. That threw me for a loop. I don't contribute or watch it. I like the bumper sticker that says "kill your television". But I guess it's a good way to show organize gardening tips, so I did it. I still can't recommend watching T.V. This show airs Aug. 13, but I won't see it.

On the next show I talk about weeds, microbes, monoculture, and water. A group of young interns were picking peppers, and they became movie stars, too. I described the recent surge of interest among college-age folks for organic farming, and that they're finding farms to help out at for room and board and practical experience.

The van left, and I got on my farmall tractor. I cultivated the corn and sweep potatoes, and felt much more grounded afterwards. A threat of rain encouraged the gatherings of a truckload of red onions, and they weren't unloaded until big dark. It did rain, and I'm glad to have them in the dry. It's still hard to believe that I, of all people, should appear in your living room on your television.