As the summer garden wanes, a whole new garden can be planted for the fall. After the potatoes were dug, we bush hogged the weeds and ran the rebreaker through the field. Cucumbers, summer squash and sweet corn patches also got the same treatment. I don't want to grow weeds when there are so many other choices.

To care for gardens, we help them grow and develop over time. This care has a way of ordering our activities, bringing stability and a sense of place in the world. We are at home though caring; cones quently our gardens take care of us.

Buckwheat is my favorite summer crop. It sprouts quickly and covers the field, smothering out the weeds. White blossoms appear within a month and wonderful things happen undeground. Buckwheat liberates calcium, making it available for the next crop. The root system helps build soil structure, and the plant adds valuable organic matter to the soil.

Crimson clover mixed into the buckwheat seed at sowing time will sprout underneath the canopy. When the frost lays the buckwheat down the field is already growing a winter cover crop, which will bloom and be turned under the next April. Clover likes the freed up calcium, and as a legume it will bring nitrogen from the air into the soil.

Other good winter crops to sow in September are wheat and rye. These grains are good at smothering weeds and loosening the soil. They often get a legume mixed in at sowing time, too, usually hairy vetch or Austrian Peas. Legumes are mixed with the grains at about 10% by weight (5lbs per 50 lbs). A spike-tooth harrow covers the seed with a gallon of sand to make the sowing easier.

We grow a variety of Chinese vegetables in the fall. Diakon radish, Mizuna, bok choy and Napa cabbage create a beautiful fall garden. Let's not forget collards and kale, the cabbage-like greens which can last over winter under cover. I have extra kale seed if anyone needs some.

Kohlrabi, broccoli and lettuce also like the cooler days of fall. All of these vegetables can withstand frost, and will continue to supply food until the hard freezes of winter. As we yuck the garden beds under cover crops and blankets of greens, we let them know they are cared for.