



## In the Garden: The problem with figs this year

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(Photo: Alex H. Wagner/Poughkeepsie Journal)

Well, the end of summer is here and I hope everyone had a good garden. Some of you called to ask why your figs were not ripening this year. I have five fig trees myself and they are full of green figs. I think this summer simply wasn't warm enough. Fig trees need a lot of sun and heat. So, hopefully the end of the season will be hot, and my figs and yours will ripen over the next few weeks.

If you didn't have a big garden this year, or just herbs, you should have enough to dry and store. All herbs and some vegetables like peas, peppers, corn, and squash, are easily dried. You don't need to run out and buy a drying device. As long as you take great care, you can use your kitchen oven to dry most vegetables, fruits, and herbs. As a rule, use a low heat, especially for herbs. You may find it best to leave your oven door open a little. Use solid metal trays instead of racks to be sure nothing catches fire. You can dry herbs, apple slices, mushrooms, and peppers by stringing them together and hanging them in a dry, warm place. Or, if you prefer you can buy an inexpensive dryer. It dries herbs and vegetables using a 100 watt bulb.

You also have the option to can your food in sterilized jars. Or, you can also put vegetables in zip lock bags and freeze them. Whichever way you do it, it's very satisfying to eat all that you have planted yourself.

Happy gardening!

*This article was submitted by Mary Ann Caputo of the Lyndhurst Gardening Club. To join The Club, call 201-939-0033.*

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