



NEWS AND INFORMATION
Helping You Put Knowledge to Work

Master Gardeners at
Cook County/North Suburban Unit
(847) 818-2901 or (847) 437-6449
www.extension.uiuc.edu/cooknorth/mg



Ask A Master Gardener Q & A Broccoli

- Q. I've successfully grown broccoli for many years. The first head is usually good-sized and I'm able to harvest side shoots the rest of the season. This year I have tough, bitter broccoli. I've been watering it regularly. Is the weather to blame?
- A. The weather this year is challenging to many long-time gardeners. We never received our normal rainfall in April and May and have been in a drought ever since.

Broccoli thrives in cool weather with sufficient rainfall. When broccoli was planted in early spring gardeners were counting on normal rainfall and may not have watered sufficiently in April and May. This may have resulted in the smaller than usual first heads of broccoli on the plants. In June and July the drought continued coupled with temperatures in the 90s. Both conditions could result in the tough bitter broccoli shoots you are harvesting now. Continue to water the plants. You might find that the quality of the shoots improves when cool temperatures return in September and October.

For more home, yard, garden and insect related information, visit our website at www.extension.uiuc.edu/cooknorth/mg or call the Cook County/North Suburban Extension Master Gardeners at (847) 818-2901 or (847) 298-3502. Office Hours are reduced during the fall and winter months.