

# KITCHEN GARDENS MAKE A COMEBACK



■ Seven different kinds of vegetables picked by chefs from The Bernards Inn.

ED PAGLIARIN/Staff photographer

Local chefs,  
homeowners  
dig in  
to grow  
their own  
vegetables



By JANET LEONARDI  
CORRESPONDENT

As food and fuel prices continue to soar this summer, it's no surprise the home vegetable garden is experiencing a bountiful rebirth.

More and more Central Jersey chefs and residents are planting and tending kitchen gardens, modern-day versions of the once-famous victory gardens created in backyards out of necessity by the food and fuel shortages of World War II.

Bruce Crawford, director of Rutgers Gardens in New Brunswick, acknowledges the trend and awakened interest in once again growing our own.

"We noticed an increased demand for vegetable plants at our sale last May and sold out early," he says. "Home-grown vegetables, as well as those produced locally and sold at farmers' markets, are once again gaining in popularity."

Crawford attributes this in part to the rising cost of fuel but points out there's now a better understanding of the environmental effects of shipping food around the world, saying, "Home and locally grown produce provides improved taste and freshness."

Corey Heyer, executive chef at the highly acclaimed Bernards Inn in Bernardsville long has been an advocate of using fresh, locally grown produce in his dishes. But this season,



■ Executive chef Corey Heyer of The Bernards Inn inspects the garden in Far Hills where the restaurant gets its vegetables.