

Vegetable Gardening

A vegetable garden is a rewarding source of food for you and your family. Your vegetable garden can be small or large, depending on the size of your property and how much time you have available to care for and harvest from it.



For best results a vegetable garden should be well planned. Locate the entire garden in as much sun as possible. Plan your rows to run North-South. Decide what vegetable you want to grow and plan how much space each takes up.

How do I Prepare the Soil?

Soil preparation is the key to a successful vegetable garden, be sure to prepare the soil well. When starting a new vegetable garden apply 10-15 cm (three inches) of well-rotted mushroom or steer manure in early March. Add lime to the entire vegetable garden to provide calcium and neutralize the pH. It is also a good idea to add some granular fertilizer to the soil prior to seeding. Till the soil using a spade or fork so that the soil, manure, lime and fertilizer are evenly mixed.

Fertilizer for Your Vegetable Garden

While manure and compost provide excellent soil conditions, they usually lack some nutrients. Elements like Nitrogen, Phosphorus, and Potash (N-P-K) as well as minor elements like Boron, Manganese, Iron, etc. should be supplemented by adding a granular fertilizer. There are many choices of organic and other fertilizers that provide these nutrients. Some examples include Evergro Tomato and Vegetable 10-15-19, or the organic Gaia All Purpose 4-4-4. It is a good idea to add some of this to the soil every 6 to 8 weeks during the growing season.

When Can I Start Planting?

You can plant your vegetable gardens in March, April, and May depending on the weather. To get an early start you can use a greenhouse, cold frame, or row covers to protect young plantings from cold or insects. Move them outside or uncover them after the chance of frost has past.



What can I Grow?

When choosing vegetable seeds consider whether you would prefer to eat them fresh, cook them, or store them for later use. Most seed packages indicate the best use for each variety.



Cool Weather Crops - are the first ones to be sown or planted, usually in March or April. These include; cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, spinach, lettuce, carrots, radishes, peas, broad beans, potatoes, onions, garlic, and turnips.

Warm Weather Crops - are usually planted in May when all danger of frost has past. At this time you can sow: beans, corn, cucumbers, peppers, squash, and tomatoes.

Late Crop Vegetables - are usually planted in June or July. At this time you can plant; cabbage, broccoli, brussel sprouts, parsnips, and leeks. You can also start fall crops of lettuce.

Caring for Your Vegetable Garden

Caring for your garden after you plant the seeds includes; providing adequate water and fertilizer as well as regular cultivation. Cultivation of the soil prevents weeds from growing and allows air, water, and fertilizer to reach the roots. Good soil preparation and regular maintenance helps prevent most problems in the garden. The right balance of light, water, and nutrients reduces the need to apply pesticides during the season. If you develop disease or pest problems bring in a few leaves in a sealed bag and consult with one of our qualified employees.

Some Tips

Cucumbers - Plant in a warm sunny location. Grow up a stake to save space, prevent mildew, and encourage the fruit to grow straight.

Garlic - Plant in the fall for harvest the following fall. They need a warm sunny location with well-drained soil. Remove flower stalks to allow bulb to develop more. Harvest when leafy tops fall over and die back. Allow to dry in a cool place.

Lettuce - Plant new plants every few weeks to stage the harvest. Protect from slugs with copper tape or slug bait.

Onions - Grow similar to garlic. Plant in fall or early spring for harvest the following year.

Potatoes - You can cut each seed potato into two or three pieces, allow to dry before planting. Pick a sunny, well drained location. Hill the soil up around the plants as they grow. Harvest when they begin to flower.

Tomatoes - Plant them deeper to develop more roots. Cover for the first few weeks to keep them warm. Add lime once a month to prevent blight and fertilizer them monthly

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