

Improve your home and diet with a vegetable garden

By Metro Creative Connection

Planting a garden can add aesthetic appeal and functionality to a property. Vegetable gardens can transform landscapes while putting healthy and homegrown food on the table. By growing their own fruits and vegetables, homeowners have total control over what foods can be harvested, and they can ensure sustainable, safe practices are used to care for the plants.

Vegetable gardens can be compact or expansive, depending on how much space is available to cultivate. However, first-time gardeners may want to begin small so they can hone their skills and experiment to see which plants are most likely to thrive in their gardens. Expansion is always a possibility down the road.

Choose a location

Spend some time examining your landscape. Vegetables generally need ample warmth and sunlight to thrive, so find an area of the yard that gets several hours of direct sunlight per day.

A sunny spot is good, but you also want a location with adequate drainage so your garden does not succumb to flooding or fungus during and after heavy downpours. Don't place the garden too close to rain gutters or near a pool, where splash-out may occur. Select a location that is isolated from pets so the plants are not trampled and cats and dogs do not relieve themselves nearby.

Decide what to plant

When deciding what to plant, consider what you eat and how much produce the household consumes, then choose vegetables that fit with your diet. Some vegetables, like peppers, tomatoes, eggplant, and squash, produce throughout the season. Others, such as carrots and corn, produce one crop and then expire. Plan accordingly when you purchase plants or seeds, as you want enough food but not so much that it will go to waste.

Choose three to four different vegetables and plant them in the garden. Select varieties that require similar soil conditions, so that you can adjust the pH and mix of the soil accordingly. This will serve as good practice, particularly the first year of your garden. After you have mastered the basics,



you can branch out into other produce.

Know when to plant

Many of the foods grown in vegetable gardens, including tomatoes and peppers,

are summer vegetables, which means they reach peak ripeness after the height of the summer season. Pumpkins, brussel sprouts and peas are planted to be harvested later on. These plants may be put in the ground a

little later than others.

It is less expensive to start seedlings indoors and then transplant them to a garden when the time comes. Seeds can be started three to four weeks before they would be put outdoors. Many vegetables are planted outside in April or May, but definitely after frost conditions have waned. Read seed packets to know exactly when to plant or consult with the nursery where you purchased established seedlings. You also can visit The Garden Helper at www.thegardenhelper.com/veg tips to find out when to plant, seed depth and how long it takes plants to reach maturity.

Vegetable gardens can become central components of outdoor home landscapes. Not only do gardens add aesthetic appeal, but also they produce fresh fruits and vegetables to enjoy throughout the season.

Discover why
over 17 million
homeowners
trust State Farm®.

With your new home comes new responsibilities – like protecting your new investment with the right amount of homeowners insurance. That's where we can help. Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.® CONTACT AN AGENT TODAY.



Dan Cerniga, Agent
1704 SW Frazer Ave
Pendleton, OR 97801
Bus: 541-276-3182
dan.cerniga.b739@statefarm.com



Stan Henderer, Agent
33 SE Dorion Avenue
Pendleton, OR 97801
Bus: 541-278-0880
stan.henderer.io18@statefarm.com

statefarm.com®

State Farm™