

Create a Potager Garden

Kitchen Gardens Can Be Beautiful

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Program Contents:

- Definitions, design elements, benefits, inspiration and resources
- Do's and Don'ts
- Dramatic plants: annuals, perennials, shrubs, and trees

Definition

- The potager is where the owner grows annual vegetables and flowers. Can be structured, an enclosed space that is the permanent frame for growing annual herbs, flowers, and vegetables. Can include permanent structures, shrubs & trees as well as perennials.
- "The old French 'potager' was a cottage garden, with fruit bushes and trees cultivated alongside vegetables and mingled with herbs and flowers." from: *Creative Vegetable Gardening*, Joy Larkcom
- Other names: kitchen garden, front yard gardens, cottage garden, knot gardens, forest garden, edible landscape
- "American Potager is a garden with structures of raised beds and then let things go a bit wild in the beds." From *Groundbreaking Food Gardens*, Niki Jabbour

Resources

- *Vegetables Love Flowers*, Lisa Mason Ziegler © 2018 Cool Springs Press
- *Creative Vegetable Gardening*, Joy Larkcome©2008 Sterling Publishing Co.
- *The Kitchen Gardener's Handbook*, Jennifer Bartlety© Timber Press
- *A Garden Can be Anywhere*, Lauri Kranz © 2019 Abrams
- *Groundbreaking Food Gardens*, Niki Jabbour© StoreyPublishing
- The Learning Store of the UW-Extension at: <https://learningstore.extension.wisc.edu/>
- **This program's slides on GardenTrueNorth.com**

Design Elements: 4-6 hours of sun, Shelter from wind, Soil fertility, Pick a style, layout, pattern, Protect from pests, Paths, fences and supports, Raised, in-ground, edges, Focal points and features, Containers, Shrubs, trees, perennials, Dramatic plants ► Colorful ► Structural ► Texture, Climbers (adds vertical vs. horizontal) ► General Rule: the smaller the site, the simpler the design, i.e. a formal potager takes a lot of space.

Evolution of a potager See blog post: <http://www.gardentrueorth.com/blog/evolution-of-a-garden>

Do's & Don'ts

Don'ts ► Use pesticides ► Put everything into rows ► Till ► Be impatient (give it time) ► Forget perennials but focus on annuals ► Plant a flower here and there – plant masses

Do's ► Start with good soil (get a soil test) ► Use compost (leaves, etc.) ► Fertilize ► Protect from pests ► Close to a water source ► Mulch paths for weed control ► Always have a few spare plants to replace casualties

Garden Notes ► Put your garden in the sunniest spot on the property ► Create a garden your family can live in ► Keep away from trees, landscaping, and structures that may cause trouble for vegetables ► Raised beds: good for compromised soil, make gardening easy on the back, look good ► In the ground: least expensive, direct connection to soil flavors the food ► Container gardens: good for small spaces and

on decks, roofs, and patios ► Consider the critters ► Plan food goals ► Take your cues from nature: How will this garden add to the beauty of the buildings, trees, and shrubs that already exist there?

Garden Planting ► Squares, circles, rows, scattered are all fine ► Nice to have a defined area to pick weeds out ► Add trellis or other supports when planting ► Aim for 40% flowers, 60% veggies ► Keep flowers together that bloom at the same time ►

Seeds vs. Transplants ► Transplants: Broccoli*, brussels sprouts, cabbage*, cauliflower, collards, eggplant, kale, okra, peppers, shallots, spinach, Swiss chard*, tomatoes ► ► ►* -indicates can be Winter Sown, interested in this technique? Go to: wintersown.org ► Seeds: Beets*, carrots*, corn, cucumbers, fennel, lettuce*, melons, onions*, peas, potatoes, pumpkins, radishes*, rutabagas, squash, turnips, watermelons

Days to Maturity, Planting time ► Soil temperature ► Seed germination temperatures ► Zone 3b-4b ► Average last Spring Frost, May 24-30 ► Average Fall killing frost, September 13-19 ► Growing Season Days, about 110 days

Insectary ► Certain plants contain properties that either invite beneficial insects or repel harmful insects ► Use plants to cut down your use of insecticides and your workload ► Lemon Balm ► White Alyssum ► Fennel ► Dill ► Cosmos ► Borage ► Sunflower ► Achillea ► Lemon Verbena ► ►

Plants that Attract Beneficial Insects ► Alyssum (not edible) ► Bachelor Button ► Borage ► Cosmos (not edible) ► Dill ► Echinacea ► Fennel ► Monarda/Bee Balm ► Rudbeckia(not edible)

Crop Rotation –4 year sample

- 1.Carrot & Goosefoot: Beets, Spinach, Swiss Chard, carrots, parsley, dill, parsnips
 - 2.Cabbage: Brussels sprouts, broccoli, cabbage, kale, cauliflower, rutabagas, turnips
 - 3.Squash & Others: Beans, lettuce, peas, onion, cucumber, melon, squash
 - 4.Tomato: eggplants, peppers, potato, tomato
- Different vegetable crops tend to take varying amounts of nutrients and attract pests, diseases – rotating the placement each year can avoid these problems; ► A minimum 3-yr rotation is recommended
► Group according to family groups ► Don't worry about perfection when following this practice

Give It A Try? From: *Vegetables to Flowers* ► Placing water in the garden will train birds and other creatures to drink from the vessel instead of pecking tomatoes & fruits ► Garden stakes & trellises—a place for birds to land while seeking insect pests ► Have something blooming continuous from spring through fall to encourage beneficial insects & pollinators ► Pollinator Friendly: Pansies, violas, nasturtiums, borage & calendulas ► Enjoyed for bright flowers ► Lure pollinators ► Blooms are edible

Perennials to form Foundation ► Rhubarb ► Asparagus ► Raspberries ► Herbs: (not mint!), chives, oregano, Hyssop, borage, sage ► Flowers: Alliums, daffodils (later cover with hostas), flowering trees & shrubs (elderberries, chokeberry, blueberries, apples)

Small Fruits ► Blackberries ► Currants ► Gooseberries ► Elderberry ► Strawberry ► Juneberry ► Grapes ► Lingonberries

Espalier ► Best used on plants that have flexible woody branches. ► Often used with apple trees ► Want to know more about this technique –go to this Master Gardener article: <https://wimastergardener.org/article/espalier/>

Add Containers ► To provide attractive elements to the garden ► To contain aggressive plants like mints ► To have some spare plants to move to perennial beds elsewhere ► To provide succession plantings

How Deep should the pots be?

- 7-8" Herbs such as thyme, oregano, sage, mint
- 12" Vegetables and herbs such as: kale, Swiss chard, peas, cucumbers, lettuce, arugula, basil, radishes, spinach, chives, parsley, cilantro, rosemary
- 18" vegetables including: tomatoes, peppers, broccoli, cauliflower, beets, eggplant, onions, leeks.

Plant for dramatic effect 11 Backbone plants 22 ► Cruciferae –cabbage family ► Allium ► Beet Family
► Self-seeding flowers: borage, calendula, evening primrose, pansies, nasturtiums ► Cut and come again: lettuces, pakchoi, chard, kales, dills, spinach 33 Climbers 44 ► Beans ► Squashes ► Cucumbers ► Peas

Cool Season Hardy Annuals ► Prefer cool to cold temperatures, some can even survive below-freezing temperatures: ► Pansies ► Sweet peas ► Snapdragons ► Spinach ► kale

Warm-season Tender Annuals ► Prefer warm to hot temperatures, frost kills most of them ► Zinnias ► Sunflowers ► Tomatoes ► Basil ► Peppers ► ► (It's the nighttime temperature that dictates, usually meaning that it stays above 50°)

Cutting Garden in the Potager

Springtime Bouquet ► Spring Bulbs (Daffodils, Tulips, Alliums, etc.) ► Spring flowering trees & shrubs (Lilac, Viburnum, Crabapple, Elderberry) ► Peonies, Columbine, Bleeding Hearts, Lupine, Globe Flower, Iris, Lady's Mantle, Dianthus ► Hosta ► Chives, Parsley ► ►

Summer Bouquet ► Annuals: Cosmos, Snapdragons, Celosia, Gomphrena, Marigold, Zinnias, Sunflowers, Nasturtium, Gladiolas ► Shrubs: False Spirea (*Sorbariasorbifolia*'Sem'), Viburnum, Hydrangea, Ninebark, Elderberry, Dogwood, Weigela ► Delphinium, Phlox, Lilies, Yarrow, Rose, Sedum, Daises, Bee Balm, Astillbe, Cone Flower, Blanket Flower, ► Basil, Parsley, Dill, Mint

Autumn Bouquet ► Dahlia, Aster, Zinnia, Sunflowers, ► Hydrangea, Black-eyed Susan, Sedum, Obedient Plant, Hosta ► Cabbages, Kale, Parsley ► Grapes, Rose Hips, Hops, Clematis ► Ornamental Grasses, Millet ► Seed Heads ►

Winter Bouquets ► Evergreen branches ► Forced Bulbs ► Forced branches ► Dried & Preserved Flowers

If you only have a shady spot ► Leafy vegetables can tolerate 3-4 hours of sunshine: kales, spinach, leaf lettuce, chard, beans, peas, Chinese cabbage ► Shade tolerant edible fruit: elderberry, black chokeberry, clove current, serviceberry ► Site next to a white wall to reflect light or light color stones for a path ► Trim trees to provide more light ► Make sure soil is well-amended to give as good conditions as possible

High Return Plants ► Pole Beans ► Raspberries ► Indeterminate tomatoes ► Zucchini ► Swiss Chard ► Cut & Come Again lettuces ► Self-seeders: dill, borage, calendula, violas,

Harvest Regularly & Often ► Beans, cucumbers, tomatoes will provide more if you harvest regularly ► Flowers ► Lettuces ► Remove plants that are done and compost them to keep it all attractive

Spooner Research Station Teaching and Display Garden

Go to: www.northcountrymgv.org for events and educational programs

Thank You

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Blog: www.GardenTrueNorth.com

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