

### Grow Your Own Vegetables

There are many benefits to growing your own vegetables. Fresh air, sunshine, exercise and relaxation are part of the payoff, but the best reason to grow your own vegetables is that they are far more nutritious, delicious, safe and free from pollutants. You'll find growing your own produce to be quite economical as well.

We are fortunate in Brevard County that we can grow veggies nearly all year long. Summer is the hardest time to grow many crops but there are a few that can tolerate the hot, humid weather. Fall and spring are premium planting times and there are many vegetables that thrive through our winter months.

### Recipe for a Healthy Garden Location:

Locate your garden close to the house for easy access, in a spot that has at least 6 hours of sun per day. Be sure there is a water source close by. If you have a high salt content in your well water, you will want to use city water or collected rain to water your garden. This is much easier to do close to the house.

**Soil Preparation:** The soil in Brevard County tends to be quite poor. If you are planning a garden plot, you will want to amend your soil with lots of organic matter such as manure and compost. Planting your vegetables in raised beds or containers can be much easier as you have total control of the quality of the soil. These beds and containers also make it easier to maintain your garden. If planting in containers, be sure that the pot has good drainage and that the soil mix is light and airy. There are many commercial mixes (such as **Happy Frog**) that are perfect mixes for vegetables.

Rockledge Gardens has a **custom blend for vegetable gardens** as well (this mix contains our planting mix, mushroom compost and vermiculite or perlite). Adding your own compost to the garden is also quite beneficial. Products available here

include **Mushroom Compost, Earthworm Castings, Black Kow** and **Black Hen**.

**The Right Plants:** It's important that you grow vegetables during their best season (see other side). Also, choose varieties that are known to do well in our area (and that you like the taste of!).

**Watering:** Young vegetable plants will need water every day for the first week or so as their roots get established. The same applies to seeds that are sown directly into the garden or containers. After the plants get established, 3 times a week should be sufficient watering. It is best to water early in the morning or late in the evening.

**Fertilizing:** Organic fertilizers are the best option for vegetable plants. **Espoma Garden Tone** is our personal favorite. In addition, foliar spraying with **Maxicrop Liquid Seaweed** or **Neptune's Harvest Fish and Seaweed** will make your plants healthier and stronger as well as resistant to pests and disease. We recommend a monthly application of **Garden Tone** and a weekly spraying with the liquid supplement for maximum plant health and production.

**Pest Control:** If you keep your garden well fed, watered and weeded, chances are you'll have very few problems with disease and insects. Practice integrated pest management (IPM) with your vegetable garden. Check on your garden daily (morning and afternoon if possible) and be on the lookout for insects and disease. Small infestations can be hand-picked and controlled. If needed, we recommend using the natural pest controls such as **Thuricide/Dipel, Neem Oil, Insecticidal Soap, Earth-Tone Insect Control** and **Capt. Jack's Dead Bug Brew**. Insect **sticky traps** can also be used for flying insects such as leafminers (blue) and whitefly and thrips (yellow).

**Key:****S = Seed****P = Plant****Ⓢ = Seed Potato****© = Cherry Tomatoes Only****\* Potatoes do best in North Brevard**

Plant	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Days to Harvest
Bean (bush and pole)		S	S/P	S/P					S	S/P			40-60
Beets			S/P	S/P	S/P	S/P	S/P	S/P					55-75
Broccoli		S	S/P	P	P	P							60-90
Cabbage		S	S/P	P	P	P							65-120
Cantaloupe							S	S/P	S/P				65-75
Carrots		S	S/P	S/P	S/P	S/P	S/P	S/P					70-80
Cauliflower		S	S	S/P	S/P	P							55-70
Celery		S	S	S/P	S/P	P	P	P	P				80-90
Chinese Cabbage		S	S/P	S/P	S/P	P	P	P					70-80
Collards		S/P	S/P	S/P	S/P	P	P	P					60-80
Corn	S	S/P					S/P	S/P					60-95
Cucumbers		S	S/P				S/P	S/P					50-90
Eggplant		S/P	S/P	P	P	P	P	P					85
Endive/Escarole		S/P	S/P	P		S/P	S/P						45-50
Kale		S/P	S/P	S/P	P	P	S/P	S/P	P				50-60

Kohlrabi		S/P	S/P	P	P	P	P	P					50-60
Lettuce		S	S/P	S/P	S/P	S/P	S/P	S/P	P	P			45-90
Mustards		S/P	S/P	S/P	S/P	S/P	P	P	P				50-70
Okra	P							S	S	P	P	P	50-60
Onions		S/P	S/P	S/P	P	P	P	P	P				60-115
Peas		S	S	S/P	S/P	S/P	P						60-120
Peppers	S	S/P	S/P	S/P	P	P	S/P	S/P	S/P	P			120-140
Potatoes*			Ⓟ	Ⓟ	Ⓟ	Ⓟ							85-110
Pumpkin	S	S/P					S/P	S/P					75-120
Radish				S	S/P	S/P	P						28-36
Spinach		S	S	S/P	S/P	P	P						40-65
Squash, Summer		S	S/P	P		S	S/P	P					60-75
Squash, Winter		S	S/P	P		S	S/P	P					90-120
Strawberry			P	P	P								90-100
Tomatoes	S	S/P	S/P	P	P		S/P	P	P	©	©		60-90
Turnips			S	S/P	S/P	S/P	P	P					45-60
Watermelon	S	S/P	S/P	P		S	S/P	P					80-90