



Growing Fruits & Vegetables Successfully in Thurston County

1. Plant in an area with enough sun.
 - Most vegetables need a minimum of *six* to *eight* hours of sun in order to produce a crop.
 - Increase sunlight = increase harvest.

Don't have a spot that gets six to eight hours?

- Then pick a spot that gets *morning* sun instead of afternoon/evening.
- Morning sun will dry the dew from leaves and help prevent leaf fungal diseases.
- Plant cool season crops that don't require as much sunlight.

2. Know what soil type(s) you have in your planting beds.

Blueberries like more of an acidic soil.

- pH of 4.0 to 5.0
- If you need to lower soil pH, add garden Sulphur or ammonium sulfate fertilizer.
- If the pH falls below 4.0 use lime to raise it back to the recommended range.

Have your soil tested.

- Visit the Thurston Conservation District website for directions
<https://www.thurstoncd.com/>
A \$25 basic test consists of testing for:

- pH
- Nitrogen
- Phosphorus
- Sulfur
- Extractable cations (Potassium, Magnesium, Calcium)
- Organic matter

3. Pick varieties that are proven to do well in our area. Start by knowing your planting zone.
<https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/>

Gardening Zones: A Guide to Western Climates - Sunset Magazine
<https://www.sunset.com/garden/climate-zones/sunsets-garden-climate-zones>

- Look for varieties with shorter "days until harvest" rates. Typically that is under 75 days.
- Look for seed varieties/starts provided by Pacific Northwest companies or local growers.

4. Plant varieties in the correct season.

Warm Season Crops: (Can be grown from seed inside in spring and/or planted directly from starts outside in mid-May.)

- Tomatoes
- Eggplant
- Melons
- Cucumbers
- Corn
- Peppers
- Squash & pumpkins
- Beans
- Potatoes
- Berries-strawberries, blueberries, raspberries

Cool Season Crops: (Can be planted in late summer for a winter harvest or early spring for an early summer harvest.)

- Lettuce
- Beets
- Radishes
- Cabbage
- Onions
- Swiss chard, spinach, and other greens
- Carrots
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Peas

5. Put plants out after the spring frost OR plan on taking protection measures.

- You are typically safe from spring frosts if you plant warm season crops in the ground after Memorial Day.
- If you plan on planting a cool season crop you may need to keep the seeds/starts in a protected area until the threat of frost passes. Some examples would be using a greenhouse, move the container inside the garage/next to the house, cover with cloth like material like a "floating row cover" etc.

6. Water consistently. Fruits and vegetables grow best with consistent watering.

- AM watering is best. (PM watering can increase disease and pests.)
- If possible use timers and/or drip irrigation type system.
- If hand watering, be sure to water below the leaves to minimize them getting wet.
- Group plants that require the same sun/water requirements together. That way you are not over or under watering plants.

7. Add organic materials such as mulches, manures, or compost to your home (non-commercial) garden beds. Non-recommended manures can contain pathogens that don't break down and remain in the soil during the decomposition process.

Recommended manures: chicken, rabbit, goat, alpaca, cow, horse etc.

Non-recommended manures: dog, cat, pig and human

If you have a question please email the WSU Master Gardener Question/Answer Clinic at master@co.thurston.wa.us



Best Varieties of Vegetables to Grow in a Container in Thurston County

Considering flavor, beauty, suitability

Looking for Container Varieties

When looking for container varieties in the PNW, its best to choose those that are earliest (i.e. take least number of days to grow and produce, this info usually in catalog description) and that have “mini”, “dwarf”, “baby”, “bush”, “compact”, “patio” and other diminutives in the variety name. Tomatoes, eggplant and peppers may grow best for you in containers, especially in cool summers.

Disclaimer: Variances in success rates based on home growing environments could occur

* Indicates easiest and most productive to grow in containers.

Recommended Varieties (Vegetables A-L)

Artichoke: Violetto

Bean, Runner: Apricot Beauty (must trellis)

Bean, Pole: Blue Lake (must trellis)

*Bean, Bush: Dragon’s Tongue

Beets: Bull’s Blood. Grow great in containers.

Broccoli: Purple Sprouting

Brussels Sprouts: Red Rubine

Cabbage, Red Large Container: Ruby Ball

Cabbage, Green Large Container: Charmant

*Cabbage, Small: Pixie

*Cabbage, Napa: Little Jade

Cauliflower: Igloo, Cheddar (in a large container.)

Carrots: (Any), Baby Babette. Grow great in containers.

*Chard: Any variety, pick by color: Magenta, Golden Sunrise, Rainbow

Collards: Any

Corn: Precocious

*Cucumbers: Baby Persian, Lemon, Mexican Sour Gherkin (see pumpkin note)



*Edible Flowers: “dwarf” nasturtium blends, pansies, violas, calendulas, marigolds

*Eggplant: Millionaire, Fairytale (rose and white stripe)

*Novelty Greens: Any. Greens are easy in pots if kept well-watered. Most like a little afternoon shade. Try Variegated Garden Cress, Perilla, Mache, Amaranth

*Herbs: get “mounding” “patio” “slow bolt” types. Try Arp Rosemary, Gecofure Basil, any dwarf, or patio basil blend (fun), Confetti Cilantro, Tricolor sage, Lemon Thyme, Fernleaf Dill, any chives, Lemon Verbena, Variegated Pineapple Sage, Stevia, French Tarragon, Amethyst Falls or Kent Beauty Oregano, any mint, Catnip, Chervil, Salad Burnet, Lovage (celery flavored, grows like parsley)

*Kale: Dinosaur (dark green, upright), Redbor, any.

*Lettuce, Best: get a pretty mix of micro greens to cut and come again

Lettuce, romaine: Little Gem, Flashy Trout’s Back Lettuce, Batavian: Blush Batavian

Lettuce, Looseleaf: Any – find a catalog with color pics and choose the prettiest that is slow to bolt.

*Lettuce: Garden Babies



Recommended Varieties (Vegetables M-Z)

Melon: Earliest and smallest best and still may not ripen here. Can try Minnesota Midget, Tasty Bites or Lil Loupe. See pumpkin note.

*Mustards: Any. Try a mild, pretty blend.

Okra: Jambalaya, Red Burgundy (all have gorgeous cream and purple flowers.) Easy in containers but may not fruit.

Onions (in containers best are any * "bunching onions" for scallions)

*Parsley: Any (likes a deep container.)

*Peas: Sugar Snap, Little Marvel, Oregon Sugar Pod II (need trellis/some support)

*Peppers, hot: Most hot ones are easy and compact: jalapeno, Anaheim, Pasilla, any small peppered, decorative ones (these latter are usually quite hot.)

*Peppers, sweet: Mini bells, Gypsy, Alma Paprika, Corno di Torro, Any, but earliest and smaller for best production.

Pumpkins: Jack Be Little, Small Sugar, Baby Boo
Note: need space to spread over side of LARGE container and onto deck or yard. Small fruited may be trellised)

Radishes: Any. Easy but you don't get many and foliage isn't lovely.

*Spinach: Any. Olympia, Tye (compact), Bloomsdale

Squash, all: See pumpkin note

Squash, Summer: Compact Golden Scallop, Green Tiger Courgette

Squash, Winter: Bush Acorn, Bush Delicata

Squash, Zucchini: Eight Ball, Gold Rush, Bush Baby



*Tomatoes easy in Large (5 gallon plus) pots.

Tomatoes: almost any Early, determinate variety will do in large containers. Can do Indeterminate if willing to prune, can do heirloom in upside down planters like *Topsy Turvy*, full sun

Tomatoes, slicers: Stupice, Legend, Taxi (yellow, loves a container)

Tomatoes, Cherry: Sungold, Sweet Million (will require some pruning.)

Tomatoes, compact: Patio Hybrid, Pixie

Tomato, hanging (usu. basket): any with Tumbler in the name

Tomato, saladette: Mountain Magic (halve to put in salads, can eat like cherry toms)

Tomato, sauce/paste: Viva Italia

Turnip: any

Sources & Resources

Download FREE home vegetable information fact sheets from WSU's Gardening in Washington website <http://gardening.wsu.edu>

WSU Mount Vernon Northwestern Washington Vegetable Research & Extension: Winter Lettuce <http://agsyst.wsu.edu/WinterLettuce.html>

WSU Whatcom County Extension Plant of the Month publication.

Western Garden Book of Edibles: The Complete Guide to Growing Your Own Vegetable, Herbs and Fruits By: Sunset Magazine authors

If you have a question about container vegetables, please contact the WSU Master Gardener Question/Answer Clinic Office at

360-867-2163

or

Email us at

master@co.thurston.wa.us

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Cool Season Planting Chart for Companion, Interplanting & Square Foot Gardening

Cool Season	Companion Plants	NON-Companion Plants	Interplanting Option	Plant Spacing Category/Square
Arugula	Bush Beans, Beets, Carrots, Celery, Cucumber Dill, Lettuce, Spinach	Strawberries	In Summer plant under tall plants like pole beans	Small/16
Beets	Bush Beans, Onions, Garlic, Lettuce, Cabbage, Kohlrabi, Broccoli, Spinach	Pole Beans, Field Mustard	Kohlrabi, Garlic improves flavor	Medium/9
Broccoli	Bush Beans, Beets, Chard, Cucumbers, Onions, Potatoes, Radish, Spinach	Pole Beans, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Dill, Lettuce, Tomatoes	Aromatic herbs	Extra Large/1
Cabbage	Bush Beans, Celery, Chard, Cucumbers, Onions, Potatoes, Radish, Spinach	Lettuce, Strawberries, Tomatoes, Pole Beans/Dill	Aromatic Herbs	Extra Large/1
Carrots	Lettuce, Chives, Leeks, Peas, Radishes, Spinach, Tomatoes	Celery, Parsley,	Aromatic Herbs	Small/16
Cauliflower	Beets, Bush Beans, Chard, Kale, Onions, Radish, Spinach	Lettuce, Pole Beans, Strawberries, Tomatoes/Dill	Aromatic Herbs	Extra Large/1
Chard	Bush Beans, Cabbage Family, Kohlrabi, Onions, Radish, Tomato	Pole Beans, Cucurbits, Corn	As a Decorative plant among flowers	Large/4
Collards	Bush Beans, Beets, Chard, Cucumbers, Onions, Potatoes, Radishes, Spinach, Tomato	Grapes, Rue, Tansy	Dill, Garlic, Hyssop, Nasturtiums	Large/4
Kale	Basil, Beans, Beets, Chard, Cucumbers, Onion, Radishes, Spinach, Tomato	Grapes, Rue	Aromatic Herbs	Large/4
Kohlrabi	Beets, Bush Beans, Chard, Cucumbers, Onions, Radishes, Spinach	Pole Beans, Peppers, Strawberries, Tomatoes	Beets, Aromatic Herbs	Large/4

Lettuce, leaf	Beans, Beets, Carrots, Cucumbers, Onions, Radishes, Strawberries, Spinach	Celery, Parsley	Below tall plants that can give it shade In Summer	Small/16
Onions	Beets, Cabbage, Carrots, Celery, Cucumber, Lettuce, Pepper, Spinach, Squash, Strawberries, Tomato	Bush Beans, Pole Beans, Peas	Amongst Strawberries, Cabbage plants	Medium/9
Peas, bush	Beans, Carrots, Chard, Corn, Cucumbers, Potatoes, Radishes, Spinach, Turnips	Onions, Garlic	Aromatic Herbs	Medium/6-8
Radishes	Beans, Cabbage Family, Collards, Cucumbers, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Onion, Spinach, Squash	Hyssop	In Summer plant under tall plants like Pole Beans, Kohlrabi, Cabbage	Small/16
Spinach	Beans, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chard, Onion, Peas, Strawberries, Tomato,	NONE	In Summer plant under tall plants like Pole Beans, Kohlrabi, Cabbage	Medium/9
Turnips	Cabbage Family, Peas, Spinach	Potatoes, Radishes, Mustard	Kohlrabi	Medium/9

Warm Season Plants Per Square Foot, Not Listed Above:

Chives 1-9 (perennial plant- depends on your use & if you keep the plant each year or dig it up)

Cucumbers 2 (preferably on trellis)

Parsley 4

Pole Beans 8, on trellis (planted 3 inches apart)

Pumpkin 2 sq. feet/ plant

Snow Peas 8, on trellis (planted 3 inches apart)

Summer Squash 2 sq. feet/ plant

Tomatoes 1

Winter Squash 2 sq. feet/ plant

Overall General Rule

Look at the planting spacing and size of grown plant. If it is:

- 3" apart (or something smaller), plant 16 per square foot [Small]
- 4" apart, plant 9 per square foot [Medium]
- 6" apart, plant 4 per square foot [Large]
- 12" apart, plant 1 per square foot [Extra Large]

Useful Intensive Planting Definitions:

Intensive gardening= a gardening practice that aims to harvest the most produce possible from a given space; plants are spaced as close together as possible; includes square foot gardening, companion planting, succession planting, crop rotation and vertical growing.

Companion planting= the close planting of different crops that enhance each other's growth or protect each other from pests.

Interplanting= planting different types of crops in close proximity to each other.

Succession planting= planting method that makes the most of a garden by obtaining a succession of plants; plant something new in spots vacated by spent plants; making the most of the three seasons.

Rotating crops= not planting the same crop in the same area of the garden each year (or after each season).

Vertical cropping= training vegetables that have vines to grow up a support (poles, fence, etc.).

Square foot planting= planting all of one crop close together in a 1ft by 1ft square while having each square foot be a different plant in the garden.

Warm Season Planting Chart for Companion, Interplanting & Square Foot Gardening

Warm Season	Companion Plant	Non-Companion Plants	Interplanting Option	Plant Spacing Category/Square
Asparagus	Tomato, Parsley, Basil	n/a	Aromatic herbs	Large/6
Beans, Bush	Irish Potato, Cucumber, Corn, Strawberry, Celery, Summer Savoury	Onions	Broccoli, Beets, Radishes	Large/4
Beans, Pole	Corn, Summer Savoury, Radish	Onions, Beets, Kohlrabi, Sunflower	Arugula, Beets, Carrots, Radishes	Large/8
Carrots	English pea, Lettuce, Rosemary, Onion family, Sage, Tomato	Dill	Lettuce, Aromatic herbs, Radishes	Small/16
Celery	Onion and Cabbage families, Tomato, Bush Beans, Nasturtiums	Bush beans, Tomatoes		Extra Large/1
Corn	Potatoes, Peas, Beans, Cucumbers, Pumpkins	Tomatoes	Beans, Squashes	Large/4-5
Cucumber	Beans, Nasturtiums, Corn, Leeks, Onions, Peas, Radishes, Sunflowers	Potatoes, Aromatic herbs	Radishes, Onions	Large/2
Eggplant*	Redroot pigweed, beans, marigolds	n/a		Extra Large/1
Lettuce	Carrot, Radish, Strawberry, Cucumber	Celery, Parsley	Tall plants for shade	Medium/4
Melons*	Corn, Pumpkin, Radish, Squash	Potatoes	Marigolds, Oregano	Extra Large/1
Okra	Bell peppers, Eggplant	n/a		Extra Large/1
Onion Family	Beets, Carrot, Lettuce, Cabbage family, Summer Savory	Beans, English peas,	Amongst Strawberries & Cabbage	Medium/9
Parsley	Tomato, Asparagus	n/a		Large/4
Pea, English	Carrots, Radish, Turnip, Cucumber, Corn, Beans	Onion family, Gladiolus, Potatoes	Aromatic herbs	Large/4
Peppers, Sweet*	Basil, Okra	n/a	Tomatoes	Extra Large/1
Potato, Irish	Beans, Corn, Cabbage family, Marigolds, Horseradish	Pumpkins, Squash, Tomato, Cucumber, Sunflower	Aromatic herbs	Large/2-3
Pumpkins*	Corn, Marigold,	Irish potatoes	Corn, Beans	Extra Large/1
Radish	English pea, Nasturtium, Lettuce, Cucumber	Hyssop	In summer under Pole beans, Kohlrabi, Cabbage	Small/16
Spinach	Strawberry, Faba Bean, Tomato, Onion, Cabbage	n/a	Tall plants for shade in summer, Radishes	Medium/9
Summer Squash*	Nasturtium, Corn, Marigold	Potatoes	Corn, Beans	Extra Large/1
Tomatillo*	Basil	n/a	Aromatic herbs	Extra Large/1
Tomato*	Asparagus, Carrots, Celery, Cucumber, Marigold, Nasturtium, Garlic, Onion family, Parsley	Potato, Fennel, Cabbage family	Basil & Aromatic herbs	Extra Large/1
Turnip	English pea	Irish potatoes	Kohlrabi	Medium/6-8

*Starts, not from Seed

Recommended Fruit Trees for the Puget Sound

G.A. Moulton & J. King

WSU-NWREC, 16650 State Route 536, Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Varieties are listed in approximate ripening order. Tastes in fruit vary with the individual, so these varieties include some of the best from our trials but many others can be grown successfully in our Puget Sound climate.

APPLES

Zestar

Sunrise

Silken

Gravenstein/Red Gravenstein

Akane

Alkmene

Marshall Mac

Honeycrisp

Jonamac

Sansa

Tsugaru Homei

Regal Gala (Fulford)

Cox's Orange Pippin

Elstar/Elista (red Elstar)

Karmijn de Sonnaville

Spartan

Jonagold strains

RubINETTE

Beni Shogun Fuji

September Wonder Fuji

Melrose

Redcort

Empire, Royal

Boskoop, Red

Ashmead's Kernel

Shizuka

Millenium (NY 460)

Mutsu

Braeburn, Hillwell

SCAB-IMMUNE APPLES

Pristine

Williams' Pride

Prima

Dayton

Releika

Rajka

Liberty

Belmac

Goldstar

PEARS

Stuttgarter Gieshirtle

Clapp's Favorite/Red Clapp's

Orcas

Rescue

Bartlett

Seckel

Blake's Pride

Honeysweet

Comice

Concorde

Conference

Bosc

ASIAN PEARS (NASHI)

Hamese

Shinseiki

Kosui

Mishirasu

Chojuro

Yoinashi

Atago

PEACHES

Harken

Redhaven

Starfire

Frost

HW 272

Blazingstar

Redstar

Contender

NECTARINES

Hardired

PLUMS

Methley

Beauty

Shiro

Early Laxton

Imperial Epineuse

Obilnaja

Hollywood

Richards' Early Italian

Seneca

Mirabelle

Victoria

Longjohn

Victory

Valor

Stanley

Schoolhouse

Vision

CHERRIES

Early Burlat

Hartland

BlackGold [SF]

WhiteGold [SF]

Kristin

Angela

Bing

Rainier

Lapins [SF]

Vandalay [SF]

Sweetheart [SF]

Tehranivee [SF]

Hudson

Surefire (tart pie cherry, [SF])

Montmorency (tart pie cherry,[SF])

[SF = self fruitful, needs no pollinator]

APRICOTS

Puget Gold

Westley