



Grow Your Own Food

STARTING A VEGETABLE GARDEN

Would you like to eat fresh food that's better for you and the planet? Then why not start a vegetable garden in your own backyard.

Much of the food we buy from shops and consume has travelled hundreds, possibly thousands of kilometres to reach us. The carbon emissions from transport and refrigerated storage are a significant contributor to global warming. Creating a food garden at home or in your local community is a simple and effective way to reduce your impact on the environment.

Eight easy to follow steps to help get you on your way:

- 1. Select a sunny site** - Fruit and vegetables need about 6hrs of sunlight per day. Try to find a place that is shaded from the westerly sun.
- 2. Add lots of organic materials to the garden** - Produce gardens are hungry and require additional organic matter. Try adding compost, worm casting or cow manure a few weeks before planting.
- 3. Set up an irrigation system** - Drip systems and water tanks will save water.
- 4. Select seeds and companion plants** - Remember that diversity is the key to a healthy garden. Try planting several vegetable and fruit crops and interplant them with lots of beneficial herbs and flowering plants.
- 5. Sow your seeds** - You can sow seeds straight to the garden by following the instructions on the packet. However, it is best to sow seeds in a seed bed first.
- 6. Transplant** - When sowing seeds in a seed bed, transplant the healthiest looking ones once the leaves emerge. Place

seedlings in small pots in a warm, sunny location and leave until they are about 15cm high. They are then ready to be planted directly into the garden bed.

7. Mulch - Straw or lucerne is ideal for fruit and vegetable gardens.

8. Maintain - Check on your garden regularly, looking for signs of insect damage or disease.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

Joining a local community garden group can help you connect with likeminded people and share useful tips and tricks on how best to grow food and vegetables.

BUY LOCAL

Locally produced food grown to coincide with the seasons is fresher and requires less energy to produce and transport to you. It also allows for more seasonal eating, allowing a lifestyle of eating fruits and vegetables that are in season. Seasonal eating is a more sustainable way of eating.

Changing our eating habits is a simple way to reduce our impact on the environment and support local communities and farmers

How can you contact us?

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