



Wichita and Affiliated Tribes *Community Garden*

Hello Everybody!

Toilet paper wasn't the only thing in short supply in recent weeks. Potatoes were hard to come by in the grocery store, and canned and frozen vegetables were sparse, not to mention the bare bread aisle. The pandemic proves scarcities are possible for nearly everyone, and it's no surprise home vegetable gardening is suddenly viewed with great interest. There are many benefits to growing your own garden. Some of them include:

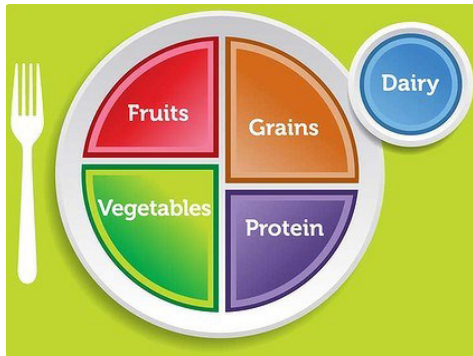
- Improve your health. Consuming more fresh fruits and vegetables is one of the most important things you can do to stay healthy.
- Save money on groceries. One of the benefits of enjoying garden vegetables is a reduced monthly food bill.
- Get outdoor exercise.
- Gardening is a natural stress reliever.
- Considering the pandemic, now might be the time to kick Victory Gardens into high gear.

Following is a guideline for growing a vegetable garden the traditional way, with a plot of ground. Many of these tips also apply to the raised gardens.

Garden location: Full, all-day sun is required for most vegetables. Leafy vegetables such as lettuce, spinach, kale and herbs will tolerate some partial shade, but vegetables that produce fruits or underground structures require eight hours of direct sunshine, including tomatoes, potatoes, squash, cucumbers, beans and others.

Decide what to plant: Focus on vegetables you or your family like. For winter storage, plant potatoes, squash, onions and carrots. For canning, freezing and pickling, plant tomatoes, corn, beets, peas, beans, cucumbers, broccoli and cauliflower.





When to start: Don't start too early, as frost still occurs most years during the first half of May. The 10-day window that is most successful for **widespread garden planting is during May 15–25.**

Cool crops and warm crops: If you'd like to split your gardening task and plant some vegetables early, "cool season" crops can tolerate frosts between 28 and 32 degrees. Broccoli, cabbage, carrots, lettuce, onions, peas, radishes and potatoes can be planted in late April through early May. "Warm sea-

son" vegetables easily damaged by frost include tomato, pepper, eggplant, beans, corn, cucumber, melons, pumpkin and squash. **Wait to plant until May 20 or 25,** as they also require warm soil for growth.

Tools you'll need: If you don't own a rototiller, you can rent one. Small gardens can be worked with a spading fork. A heavy-duty garden rake to smooth soil before planting. Two wooden stakes with twine to create rows. A yardstick or wooden lath marked at 6-inch intervals to determine spacing between rows. A hoe to dig and cover furrows. Stakes to mark where rows are seeded. (Plastic milk jugs cut into 8-inch strips make weatherproof row markers.)

Seeds versus transplants: Vegetables that are usually seeded directly into garden soil include carrot, beet, bean, pea, lettuce, radish, spinach and sweet corn. Vegetables best planted from pre-started transplants include tomato, pepper, eggplant, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli and melons. They require a season too long for direct seeding. Squash, pumpkin, and cucumber can be direct seeded, or use started transplants for earlier crops. (If seeded into peat pots in early May, they'll be ready for garden planting about May 25.)

How to plant: After the garden has been tilled or dug and raked level, mark the first row by stretching twine between stakes from one side of the garden to the other. Using the twine as a guide, pull the hoe along, making a trench in the soil.

Depth depends on seed size. Check the seed packet for recommended planting depth. Plant large seeds like peas and beans about an inch deep and an inch apart. Small seeds like carrot, lettuce, and radish are sprinkled in a shallow trench only ¼-inch deep. Packets usually tell how many feet of row the packet is expected to plant.

Using a hoe or rake, lightly pull soil back into the trench, covering seeds to the proper depth. Then go back over the row, tamping the soil lightly with the flat side of the hoe blade. Mark each row so you know where seedlings are expected to emerge, which helps with weeding since weeds often sprout about the same time as the vegetables.

Next, move stakes and twine to the next row. Most seeded rows are best spaced at least 18 inches apart. Space rows of vegetable transplants like tomatoes and cabbage 24 to 36 inches apart.

For more information or would like some seeds, contact

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