

NOTES FOR MAY 2013

ELAM GARDENS

May 2013 Available Plants

You can find us at two locations

712 S. Elam Ave, Greensboro

OR

Walker and South Elam Market

8am to 12 noon Saturday



336.543.4144

stephen@elamgardens.com

market garden & nursery

A Wet April

They say April showers bring May flowers. We should be in line for HUGE flowers this month, but the cool and wet start to May also makes growing difficult. My own experimentation has shown that the soil is still a little too cold in much of my garden. I have been much more aggressive in using a ground/compost thermometer to see if I should be planting. For some plants I have no options (they are outgrowing their pots), so in the ground they go. They might take a while to get over the shock.

Planting in shade

Folks have asked me about what they can do in a garden with many trees. For many of us, trees and fruits/vegetables don't normally mix. However, many plants can grow with 3 to 4 hours of sun a day, as long as they are not competing for nutrients and water with the trees. Tree roots are the biggest issue and you may need more supplemental feeding and water. It will also mean your beds will be invaded by the tree. You will have to be aggressive with pulling out the tree's new roots in your beds.

Marnie and I are having an "interesting" discussion about the big red maple in our backyard, and the shade it provides on areas that are ideal for intensive market beds.

You can remove some of the lower limbs of trees to let in more sunlight. You can also plant vegetables and accept lower yields, and a slightly longer growing season, mostly because soil temperatures will be lower in the shade.

Pests like slugs and snails can be more of an issue, so be prepared to deal with these critters (beer traps work wonders).

Vegetable Options for Shade

2-hours of sun

- Asian greens such as bok choy, komatasuna, and others will grow well under these conditions.
- Mesclun is ideal, and if you leave the roots in the ground (cut them off about just above ground), you should be able to get 3 to 4 harvests before you need to replant them.

3 hours of sun

- Scallions, or bunching onions, work very well under these conditions.
- Mustard greens will do well if grown for baby greens.
- Most culinary herbs such as chives, cilantro, lemon balm, mints, oregano, parsley, will usually do well.

3 to 4 hours of sun

- Arugula, lettuce, and spinach, are ideal for these spots. It will protect them from bolting and buy you additional harvest time.
- Swiss chard can be grown in these locations if you want to use the baby leaves rather than the full stems.
- Kale will produce a little less.

4 to 5 hours of sun

- Root vegetables such as beets, carrots, potatoes, radishes, and others will need some additional time to mature, or you can harvest them as baby versions.
- Peas and beans will take a little longer, and bush varieties will likely work better.

5 hours of sun

Swiss chard if you want the big, crisp stalks.



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CRESS

Type of Plant

Fast growing edible herb related to watercress and mustard, with a peppery, tangy flavor. Annual plant that reaches about 24" high, with small pinkish flowers. Great for soups and sandwiches.

When to Plant

As soon as the soil can be worked.

Where to Plant

Full sun to partial shade, though is typically less bitter if grown in partial shade or early morning sun. Water weekly and don't allow the soil to dry.

Avoid planting in places that previously had brassica's (e.g., cabbage, radish, mustard, broccoli)

How to Plant

In containers (6" deep, 6" diameter), or in the ground.

Space 4-6" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do.

Harvesting

Harvest as needed.

Seed Source: Elam Gardens

Need some ideas? stephen@elamgardens.com



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MOTHER OF THYME

Type of Plant

Perennial plant approximately 3" tall that produces light pink flowers. Flowers very early in the year. Great as container plant, edging, or ground cover. Creeping evergreen plant. Good bee attractor and ideal for sauces, soups, vinegars, and other cooking.

When to Plant

Can be planted year round. Divide in spring or fall.

Where to Plant

Full sun to partial shade in poor to average, well-drained soil. Drought tolerant, and prefers neutral soils. Can be propagated by division or cuttings.

How to Plant

In containers (6" deep), or in the ground.

Space 6" apart.

Harvesting

Harvest as required, trim from the top.

Seed Source: Elam Gardens

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BUNCHING ONION

Type of Plant

Also called Japanese Bunching Onion, Welsh Onions or Scallions. Can be grown as annuals, but leave them in the garden and allow offshoots to develop for division in the following year. Very mild flavor that can be used fresh or as a green onion.

When to Plant

Early spring is best to sow out, can be sown again in fall.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to early afternoon sun) to partial shade. Grows in almost any well-aerated soil.

Avoid planting where asparagus, garlic, leeks, and other onions have grown.

How to Plant

In containers (6" deep, 6" diameter), or in the ground.

Space 2-4" apart, depending on whether you want to grow as a perennial.

Harvesting

Harvest as desired. Gently pull up older plants allowing younger plants to remain in the soil for later harvest.

Seed Source: Elam Gardens

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MUSTARD GREEN

Type of Plant

Southern giant curled mustard resembles a headless cabbage, like kale, and has a distinct horseradish type flavor.

When to Plant

As soon as the soil can be worked.

Where to Plant

Fertile, well-drained soil with good moisture retention. Full sun to partial shade, though is typically less bitter if grown in partial shade or early morning sun. Water weekly and don't allow the soil to dry.

To maintain high production provide compost or fertilize every 1-2 weeks depending on how often it is being harvested.

Avoid planting in places that previously had brassica's (e.g., cabbage, radish, mustard, broccoli)

How to Plant

In containers (6" deep, 6" diameter), or in the ground.

Space 8-10" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do.

Harvesting

Harvest before flower stalks begin to appear. CPick leaves when they are 6" long.

Seed Source: Elam Gardens

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LEAF LETTUCES

Type of Plant

Best grown under cool, moist conditions. Leaf lettuces will tolerate some frost.

When to Plant

Late winter, early spring, and fall. Ideal temperatures are 45-65°F. Can be sown again in fall.

Where to Plant

Partial shade is ideal. Grows in almost any well-aerated, loose, fertile soil with lots of organic matter. Keep moist but not soggy. Prefers slightly acidic soil (pH 6+).

Avoid planting where radicchio, dandelion, artichoke, or escarole, have grown.

How to Plant

In containers (4" deep, 4" diameter), or in the ground.

Space 4-6" apart. Mulch to suppress weeds.

Harvesting

Harvest as desired. Younger leaves are sweeter. Harvest outer leaves and allow center to grow.

Seed Source: Elam Gardens

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YUGOSLAVIAN RED LETTUCES

Type of Plant

Heirloom plant from Yugoslavia. Large, tasty heads lettuce with apple green leaves, tinged a little red.

When to Plant

Late winter, early spring, and fall. Ideal temperatures are 45-65°F. Can be sown again in fall.

Where to Plant

Partial shade is ideal. Grows in almost any well-aerated, loose, fertile soil with lots of organic matter. Keep moist but not soggy. Prefers slightly acidic soil (pH 6+).

Avoid planting where radicchio, dandelion, artichoke, or escarole, have grown.

How to Plant

In containers (4" deep, 4" diameter), or in the ground.

Space 4-6" apart. Mulch to suppress weeds.

Harvesting

Harvest as desired.

Seed Source: Seed Savers

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SWISS CHARD

Type of Plant

Best known for vitamin rich leaves. Will last all year, and may even be overwintered. As the plant ages the leaves become a little more bitter.

When to Plant

As soon as soil can be worked.

Where to Plant

Does best in full sun (6+ hours, with morning sun the best), to partial shade. Water weekly and don't allow the soil to dry.

Avoid planting in places that previously had beet, spinach, orach.

How to Plant

In containers (6" deep, 6" diameter), or in the ground.

Space 4-6" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do.

Mulch deeply to keep weeds under control.

Water weekly, or twice weekly in hot weather. Needs more water for good leaf growth.

Harvesting

Harvest as needed. Cut off each outer stem at the base with a sharp knife when leaves are 6-9" long.

Seed Source: Elam Gardens

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CHINESE CABBAGE (NAPA)

Type of Plant

Napa style cabbage with strong flavor.

When to Plant

One to two weeks before last frost. Typically late April in Greensboro should be fine.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to late afternoon sun). Keep moist.

Avoid planting in places that previously had kale, radish, arugula, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cress, or other brassiceae.

How to Plant

In containers (6" deep, 9" diameter), bags, or in the ground. Space 18" apart.

Keep well-watered until the head starts to form, then cut back on watering so the heads do not split.

Harvesting

When heads are firm, but not too hard. Cut just above the soil and they MAY re-sprout.

Typically ready in late May or early June.

Seed Source: Botanical Interest

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GIANT ITALIAN PARSLEY (FLAT LEAVED)

Type of Plant

Bushy, massive, thick stalked plant that can grow to 3 feet. Produces a continuous supply of large flat leaves with a strong flavor. Biennial in zone 7. Perfect for containers.

When to Plant

Anytime after from five weeks before the last frost date. This is typically from mid March in Greensboro. Can be planted in pots at any time.

Where to Plant

Full sun to partial shade. Ideally avoid strong afternoon sun.

Avoid planting in places that previously had carrots, celery, parsnips and other apiaceae.

How to Plant

In containers (6" deep, 6" diameter), bags, or in the ground.

Space 6" to 12" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil.

Keep well watered, if they dry out they become bitter and may bolt to seed in the first year.

Mulch heavily for winter harvest, and early spring growing the next year.

Harvesting

Cut outer leaves as needed. For a large harvest, cut off the entire plant slightly above tiny middle shoots.

Seed Source: Seed Savers Exchange

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HERITAGE RASPBERRY

Type of Plant

Ever bearing sweet red raspberry. Once established will fruit from June to October, maybe longer.

When to Plant

Bare root can be planted any time.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to early afternoon sun). Keep moist, especially when fruiting, but well drained. Drip irrigation is ideal.

Slightly acidic soil (pH 5.8 to 6.5) is ideal.

Perennial root. Self-supporting but works better with a trellis or other support. Slow spreader.s

How to Plant

Best in the ground in a loamy soil, in rows approximately 3' wide. Wider rows are harder to harvest from. Plant approximately 24" apart.

Prune out dead canes after second year.

Harvesting

Pick every day when fruiting, it seems to encourage more fruit. Can be easily frozen by placing the fruit loose on a tray in the freezer, then bagging the fruit up when they are frozen.

Source: Willis Orchards

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GOLD NUGGET TOMATOES

Type of Plant

Vigorous, determinate plant that produces 3/4" round golden fruit very early on in the season. Flavorful and aromatic fruit. Will grow until frost kills it. Very good for containers.

When to Plant

When soil temperature is 60°F or more, about 2 weeks after last frost date. In Greensboro this is typically late April.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to early afternoon sun). Keep moist, especially when fruiting (about 1 gallon of water twice a week per plant).

Avoid planting in places that previously had eggplants, potatoes, or peppers.

How to Plant

In large containers (24" deep, 18" diameter), bags, or in the ground. Plant as much stem as possible, it will grow more roots to help feed the plant.

Space 14" to 30" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do (closer spacing often means more pruning).

Needs to be supported to grow. Prune as desired.

Harvesting

Fruit should be firm and evenly colored. If the temperature reaches 90°F pick the fruit when it's just started to color and ripen indoors at about 70°F.

Seed Source: Peaceful Valley

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TASTY TREAT TOMATOES

Type of Plant

Cherry that provides bite-sized, flavorful and aromatic fruit. Very prolific. Fruit develops heavy, thick clusters on a strong vine. Indeterminate - will grow until frost kills it, often reaches 6 to 10'.

When to Plant

When soil temperature is 60°F or more, about 2 weeks after last frost date. In Greensboro this is typically late April.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to early afternoon sun). Keep moist, especially when fruiting (about 1 gallon of water twice a week per plant).

Avoid planting in places that previously had eggplants, potatoes, or peppers.

How to Plant

In large containers (24" deep, 18" diameter), bags, or in the ground. Plant as much stem as possible, it will grow more roots to help feed the plant.

Space 14" to 30" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do (closer spacing often means more pruning).

Needs to be supported to grow. Prune as desired.

Harvesting

Fruit should be firm and evenly colored. If the temperature reaches 90°F pick the fruit when it's just started to color and ripen indoors at about 70°F.

Seed Source: Burpee Organic Seeds

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ROMA TOMATOES

Type of Plant

Paste tomato that provides a dense, meaty flesh. Ideal for canning and cooking. Very prolific. Indeterminate - will grow until frost kills it, often reaches 6 to 10'.

When to Plant

When soil temperature is 60°F or more, about 2 weeks after last frost date. In Greensboro this is typically late April.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to early afternoon sun). Keep moist, especially when fruiting (about 1 gallon of water twice a week per plant).

Avoid planting in places that previously had eggplants, potatoes, or peppers.

How to Plant

In large containers (24" deep, 12" diameter), bags, or in the ground. Plant as much stem as possible, it will grow more roots to help feed the plant.

Space 14" to 20" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do (closer spacing often means more pruning).

Needs to be supported to grow. Prune as desired.

Harvesting

Firm and evenly colored. If the temperature reaches 90°F pick the fruit when it's just started to color to ripen indoors at about 70°F. Can be picked green and ripened indoors in a bag at about 60°F.

Seed Source: Burpee Organic Seeds

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GERMAN PINK TOMATOES

Type of Plant

Produces large meaty fruits with very few seeds. Full, sweet flavor. Ideal for canning and freezing. Indeterminate - will grow until frost kills it, often reaches 6 to 10'.

When to Plant

When soil temperature is 60°F or more, about 2 weeks after last frost date. In Greensboro this is typically late April.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to early afternoon sun). Keep moist, especially when fruiting (about 1 gallon of water twice a week per plant).

Avoid planting in places that previously had eggplants, potatoes, or peppers.

How to Plant

In large containers (24" deep, 12" diameter), bags, or in the ground. Plant as much stem as possible, it will grow more roots to help feed the plant.

Space 14" to 20" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do (closer spacing often means more pruning).

Needs to be supported to grow. Prune as desired.

Harvesting

Firm and evenly colored. If the temperature reaches 90°F pick the fruit when it's just started to color to ripen indoors at about 70°F. Can be picked green and ripened indoors in a bag at about 60°F.

Seed Source: Seed Savers Exchange

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MAMMOTH BASIL

Type of Plant

Lettuce leaf basil variety, originally from Italy. Cultivar of sweet basil. Grows to approximately 18" tall, and produces large ruffled leaves. Slightly stronger flavor than Genovese basil

When to Plant

Tender annual planted after all danger of frost is past. The plant does best once temperatures are consistently above 50°F. In Greensboro this is typically late April or early May.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to early afternoon sun) in rich, well-drained soil. Fertilize 2 to 3 times during active growth. Water plants weekly during dry spells. Keep water off the leaves to avoid fungal problems, and mulch 1".

How to Plant

In containers (12-18" deep, 12" diameter), bags, or in the ground.

Space 12" to 18" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do (closer spacing often means more cutting).

Harvesting

Begin when there are six or more sets of leaves formed to promote branching. remove flower spikes to ensure leaf production. Cut about 1/3 of any branching at a leaf node.

Seed Source: Southern Exposure Seeds

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LETTUCE LEAF BASIL

Type of Plant

Large leaved variety of sweet basil. Grows to approximately 18" tall, and produces large ruffled leaves. Not as strong a flavor as other sweet basil so ideal for salads.

When to Plant

Tender annual planted after all danger of frost is past. The plant does best once temperatures are consistently above 50°F. In Greensboro this is typically late April or early May.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to early afternoon sun) in rich, well-drained soil. Fertilize 2 to 3 times during active growth. Water plants weekly during dry spells. Keep water off the leaves to avoid fungal problems, and mulch 1".

How to Plant

In containers (12-18" deep, 12" diameter), bags, or in the ground.

Space 12" to 18" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do (closer spacing often means more cutting).

Harvesting

Begin when there are six or more sets of leaves formed to promote branching. remove flower spikes to ensure leaf production. Cut about 1/3 of any branching at a leaf node.

Seed Source: Southern Exposure Seeds

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SWEET BASIL

Type of Plant

Everyone's favorite pesto basil, and ideal for fresh salads and sandwiches. Slow to bolt (flower), this basil has dark green, broad leaves.

When to Plant

Tender annual planted after all danger of frost is past. The plant does best once temperatures are consistently above 50°F. In Greensboro this is typically late April or early May.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to early afternoon sun) in rich, well-drained soil. Fertilize 2 to 3 times during active growth. Water plants weekly during dry spells. Keep water off the leaves to avoid fungal problems, and mulch 1".

How to Plant

In containers (12-18" deep, 12" diameter), bags, or in the ground.

Space 12" to 18" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do (closer spacing often means more cutting).

Harvesting

Begin when there are six or more sets of leaves formed to promote branching. Remove flower spikes to ensure leaf production. Cut about 1/3 of any branching at a leaf node.

Seed Source: Peaceful Valley

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GENOVESE BASIL

Type of Plant

A cultivar of sweet basil, this plant has very tender, extra-large dark green leaves.

When to Plant

Tender annual planted after all danger of frost is past. The plant does best once temperatures are consistently above 50°F. In Greensboro this is typically late April or early May.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to early afternoon sun) in rich, well-drained soil. Fertilize 2 to 3 times during active growth. Water plants weekly during dry spells. Keep water off the leaves to avoid fungal problems, and mulch 1”.

How to Plant

In containers (12-18” deep, 12” diameter), bags, or in the ground.

Space 12” to 18” apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do (closer spacing often means more cutting).

Harvesting

Begin when there are six or more sets of leaves formed to promote branching. Remove flower spikes to ensure leaf production. Cut about 1/3 of any branching at a leaf node.

Seed Source: Nordic Naturals

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RED RUBIN BASIL

Type of Plant

A red colored leaf and stem provides visual color to salads and the garden. This is a compact plant with smooth, flat leaves that have a slightly spicy flavor to them.

When to Plant

Tender annual planted after all danger of frost is past. The plant does best once temperatures are consistently above 50°F. In Greensboro this is typically late April or early May.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to early afternoon sun) in rich, well-drained soil. Fertilize 2 to 3 times during active growth. Water plants weekly during dry spells. Keep water off the leaves to avoid fungal problems, and mulch 1”.

How to Plant

In containers (12-18” deep, 12” diameter), bags, or in the ground.

Space 12” to 18” apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do (closer spacing often means more cutting).

Harvesting

Begin when there are six or more sets of leaves formed to promote branching. Remove flower spikes to ensure leaf production. Cut about 1/3 of any branching at a leaf node.

Seed Source: Burpee Organic

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CANDLELIGHT PEPPERS

Type of Plant

Ornamental bushy plant, less than 16" tall. Large number of 1" peppers borne in clusters. Fruits can be eaten and used in canning and cooking. Ripen from green to yellow to orange to brilliant red. Perfect for containers.

When to Plant

When soil temperature is 60°F or more, about 2 weeks after last frost date. In Greensboro this is typically late April.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to early afternoon sun). Avoid planting in places that previously had eggplants, potatoes, and tomatoes.

How to Plant

In containers (12" deep, 9" diameter), bags, or in the ground. Space 12" to 18" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do (closer spacing often means more pruning).

Peppers are somewhat fragile and need support as they grow.

Harvesting

Pick as the color pleases you. The longer you leave them on the plant, the deeper colors.

Carefully cut the fruit (don't pull - you may break the stem). The longer the stem you cut off, the longer it will keep.

Seed Source: Seed Savers Exchange

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CALIFORNIA SWEET PEPPERS

Type of Plant

Heirloom bell pepper. Large, blocky, thick walled, tender and flavorful bells that make an ideal stuffing pepper or for salads.

When to Plant

When soil temperature is 60°F or more, about 2 weeks after last frost date. In Greensboro this is typically late April.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to late afternoon sun). Avoid planting in places that previously had eggplants, potatoes, and tomatoes.

How to Plant

In containers (12" deep, 9" diameter), bags, or in the ground.

Space 12" to 24" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do (closer spacing often means more pruning).

Peppers are somewhat fragile and need support as they grow.

Harvesting

Pick as the color pleases you. The longer you leave them on the plant, the deeper the colors, and the sweeter.

Carefully cut the fruit (don't pull - you may break the stem). The longer the stem you cut off the longer it will keep.

Seed Source: Burpee Organic

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HOT PEPPERS (JALAPENO)

Type of Plant

Dark green, medium-hot, thick-walled peppers about 3" long. Matures to dark red.

When to Plant

When soil temperature is 60°F or more, about 2 weeks after last frost date. In Greensboro this is typically late April.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to late afternoon sun). Avoid planting in places that previously had eggplants, potatoes, and tomatoes.

How to Plant

In containers (12" deep, 9" diameter), bags, or in the ground.

Space 12" to 24" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil. Peppers are somewhat fragile and need support as they grow.

Harvesting

Pick as the color pleases you. The longer you leave them on the plant, the deeper the colors, and the hotter they become.

Carefully cut the fruit (don't pull - you may break the stem). The longer the stem you cut off the longer it will keep.

Use care when cleaning and using to avoid pepper juice.

Seed Source: Burpee Organic

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ASHE COUNTY PIMENTO PEPPERS

Type of Plant

Produces 3-4" sweet, bright red thick fleshed pimento peppers. Produces early in the season. Ideal for roasting, canning and cooking, as well as eaten raw.

When to Plant

When soil temperature is 60°F or more, about 2 weeks after last frost date. In Greensboro this is typically late April.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to early afternoon sun). Avoid planting in places that previously had eggplants, potatoes, and tomatoes.

How to Plant

In containers (12" deep, 9" diameter), bags, or in the ground. Space 12" to 18" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do (closer spacing often means more pruning).

Peppers are somewhat fragile and need support as they grow.

Harvesting

Pick as the color pleases you. The longer you leave them on the plant, the deeper colors.

Carefully cut the fruit (don't pull - you may break the stem). The longer the stem you cut off, the longer it will keep.

Seed Source: Southern Exposure Seeds

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BULLNOSE SWEET PEPPERS

Type of Plant

An early maturing bell pepper that produces 3-3" fruit that s both sweet and has a little heat. Matures very early.

When to Plant

When soil temperature is 60°F or more, about 2 weeks after last frost date. In Greensboro this is typically late April.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to late afternoon sun). Avoid planting in places that previously had eggplants, potatoes, and tomatoes.

How to Plant

In containers (12" deep, 9" diameter), bags, or in the ground.

Space 12" to 24" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do (closer spacing often means more pruning).

Peppers are somewhat fragile and need support as they grow.

Harvesting

Pick as the color pleases you. The longer you leave them on the plant, the deeper the colors, and the sweeter.

Carefully cut the fruit (don't pull - you may break the stem). The longer the stem you cut off the longer it will keep.

Seed Source: Southern Exposure Seeds

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CALIFORNIA WONDER SWEET PEPPER

Type of Plant

Dark green, medium-hot, thick-walled peppers about 3" long. Matures to dark red. This is a variety of the standard California Sweet but is tobacco mosaic resistant.

When to Plant

When soil temperature is 60°F or more, about 2 weeks after last frost date. In Greensboro this is typically late April.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to late afternoon sun). Avoid planting in places that previously had eggplants, potatoes, and tomatoes.

How to Plant

In containers (12" deep, 9" diameter), bags, or in the ground.

Space 12" to 24" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil. Peppers are somewhat fragile and need support as they grow.

Harvesting

Pick as the color pleases you. The longer you leave them on the plant, the deeper the colors, and the hotter they become.

Carefully cut the fruit (don't pull - you may break the stem). The longer the stem you cut off the longer it will keep.

Use care when cleaning and using to avoid pepper juice.

Seed Source: Southern Exposure Seeds

Need some ideas? stephen@elamgardens.com



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ROSA BIANCA EGGPLANT

Type of Plant

Sicilian heirloom variety with light pink fruits, streaked with white and violet. Fruits are 5-6" long. Mild creamy taste with a low number of seeds. Grows to 24-36" tall.

When to Plant

When soil temperature is 60°F or more, about 2 weeks after last frost date. In Greensboro this is typically late April.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to early afternoon sun). Water weekly and don't allow the soil to dry.

Avoid planting in places that previously had tomatoes, potatoes, or peppers.

How to Plant

In containers (12" deep, 12" diameter), bags, or in the ground.

Space 18-24" apart, depending on the fertility of the soil, and how much work you want to do.

Branches and need support as they grow.

Harvesting

Fruit should be firm and evenly colored, feels firm and the skin is glossy. Cut the fruit from the plant with a knife or pruning shears.

Seed Source: Gurney's

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CHOCOLATE MINT

Type of Plant

A very strong mint, that is great dried or fresh. Easy to grow, and like all mints will spread. Will die back come first frost, and spring back to life. Loves morning sun and relatively drought tolerant when established. Blooms in late summer with lavender flowers that are also a good pollinator attractor.

When to Plant

When soil temperature is 60°F or more, about 2 weeks after last frost date. In Greensboro this is typically late April.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to early afternoon sun) to part shade. Water weekly and when trying to establish.

How to Plant

In containers (4" deep, 4" diameter), bags, or in the ground.

Harvesting

As desired, cut and either dry, freeze or use the leaves. The more you pick, the more it will thrive!

Seed Source: Elam Gardens

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HILL COUNTRY RED OKRA

Type of Plant

A tall (6') plant, red stemmed and produces red okra pods, with a green tinge. Excellent pickling variety. Beautiful pale yellow blooms.

When to Plant

When soil temperature is 60°F or more, about 2 weeks after last frost date. In Greensboro this is typically late April.

Where to Plant

Full sun (ideally 6 or more hours of morning to early afternoon sun). Tolerant of heat and drought.

How to Plant

In the ground.

Harvesting

The more you pick the pods, the more pods will be produced. Pods are ideal around 4-6" long.

Seed Source: Seed Savers

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MUSKMELON AKA CANTALOUPE

Type of Plant

Heirloom variety (Hale's Best), that produces sweet, thick walled fruit about 4-5 lbs each. Grows in a wide variety of situations. Somewhat drought tolerant.

When to Plant

After last chance of spring frost when soil temperatures are over 60°F, typically early May in our region.

Where to Plant

Six or more hours of sun a day is ideal. The plants need fertile soil kept evenly moist. Mulch well.

Avoid planting in places that previously had pumpkins, squashes, or similar crops.

How to Plant

Containers or in the ground work well for this fruit. Trellising helps protect the crop. If trellising can plant closer together (12"), or space 4-6 feet apart in mounds. Keep the fruit from direct soil contact to help avoid rot and bug damage.

Harvesting

To check for ripeness: 1) The color between the surface netting should be brown, not green; 2) A ripe melon will have a pleasant, fruity aroma at the blossom end; and 3) A crack will form on the stem right near the point of attachment. The melon should detach from the vine with little effort and pressure. If it is somewhat difficult to detach, the melon is not ready yet. Do not allow to over-ripen.

Seed Source: Botanical Interests

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TABLE QUEEN SQUASH

Type of Plant

A member of the Acorn Squash family, this heirloom variety produces a ridged fruit with deep-orange fleshed, sweet, dry flesh. Fruits are about 1-2 lbs and are an early producer. Vining plant that grows 6-8 feet long, with good drought tolerance, and an ideal storage fruit.

When to Plant

After last chance of spring frost when soil temperatures are over 60°F, typically early May in our region. Can be repeat planted through June and July.

Where to Plant

Six or more hours of sun a day is ideal. The plants need fertile soil kept evenly moist. Mulch well. Avoid planting in places that previously had pumpkins, squashes, or similar crops.

How to Plant

In the ground work well for this fruit, about 3 feet apart. Can be container planted if trellised.

Harvesting

Harvest often when the fruits are small. Cut with 1-2" of stem attached and cure in a warm, dry location for a week. Store in a cool, dry location for winter use.

Seed Source: Seed Savers Exchange

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SUMMER SQUASH - ZUCCHINI

Type of Plant

Cylindrical, smooth, dark green fruit with creamy, white flesh. Bush-like plant that are vigorous and can be harvest within 57 days. Plants need to be spaced only 18" apart, and grow to about 30" in height. Flowers are also edible if cooked when slightly open, and help with the sometimes abundant fruits. Use the fruits for breads, casseroles, soups, etc..

When to Plant

After last chance of spring frost when soil temperatures are over 60°F, typically early May in our region. Can be repeat planted through June and July.

Where to Plant

Six or more hours of sun a day is ideal. The plants need fertile soil kept evenly moist. Mulch well. Like their close relatives, cucumbers and melons, they produce male and female flowers on the same plant.

Avoid planting in places that previously had pumpkins, squashes, or similar crops.

How to Plant

Containers or in the ground work well for this fruit. Trellising makes harvesting avoiding missing the fruits a breeze.

Harvesting

Harvest often when the fruits are small. Cut with 1-2" of stem attached and cure in a warm, dry location for a week. Store in a cool, dry location for winter use. Use the flowers!

Seed Source: Burpee

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STRAIGHT EIGHT CUCUMBERS

Type of Plant

Heirloom variety, produces long fruit best picked when 8" long. Can be easily trellised.

When to Plant

After last chance of spring frost when soil temperatures are over 60°F, typically early May in our region.

Where to Plant

Six or more hours of sun a day is ideal. The plants need fertile soil kept evenly moist, a drip irrigation system works. Deep watering is best. Mulch well.

Avoid planting in places that previously had pumpkins, squashes, or similar crops.

How to Plant

Containers or in the ground work well for this fruit. Trellising helps protect the crop. If trellising can plant closer together (12"), or space 36" apart in mounds. Keep the fruit from direct soil contact to help avoid rot and bug damage.

Harvesting

Harvest young for best flavor, the riper the fruit the larger the seeds, and the more bitter they become. Frequent picking will encourage more fruit.

Seed Source: Burpee

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SUGAR BABY WATERMELON

Type of Plant

Heirloom variety watermelon. Produces sweet, round fruits about 8" in diameter, dark green in color. Good producer and the flesh is a deep red with small brown seeds. Each plant produces 4 to 6 melons.

When to Plant

After last chance of spring frost when soil temperatures are over 60°F, typically early May in our region. I've had success with repeated planting through June.

Where to Plant

Six or more hours of sun a day is ideal. The plants need fertile soil kept evenly moist. Mulch well. Avoid planting in places that previously had pumpkins, squashes, or similar crops.

How to Plant

In the ground work well for this fruit, about 3 feet apart. Turning the fruit helps to avoid problems with rot or uneven ripening.

Harvesting

The fruit is ready when the stem become dead or brown. If there is a white patch on the side on the ground, that is a good sign. Finally, a thump on the melon should provide a deep, low pitch sound. Will keep for 2 to 3 weeks unrefrigerated, or longer in a cool basement.

Seed Source: Seed Savers Exchange

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SUGAR PIE PUMPKIN

Type of Plant

A winter squash family, this heirloom variety produces 6-7 lb fruits. Known for its sweet flavor and smooth texture, fruit are great for homemade pies, but also ideal for soups, muffins, casseroles, etc.. Excellent for storage.

When to Plant

After last chance of spring frost when soil temperatures are over 60°F, typically mid May in our region.

Where to Plant

Six or more hours of sun a day is ideal. The plants need plenty of water throughout their long growing season. Like their close relatives, cucumbers and melons, they produce male and female flowers on the same plant.

Avoid planting in places that previously had pumpkins, squashes, or similar crops.

How to Plant

Build mounds with 2-plants each about 4-6 feet apart. Can be trellised to help with spacing and keeping fruit off the ground. Water weekly, or twice weekly in hot weather.

Harvesting

Harvest before the fall frost when foliage is drying out. Cut with 3-4" of stem to avoid the fruit from rotting. Cure on sunny window for 1-2 weeks and do not allow harvested fruit to get wet.

Seed Source: Botanical Interests

Need some ideas? stephen@elamgardens.com