

Growing Small

Vegetable Gardening in Small Spaces

By Ron Kujawski

Checklist for getting more from a smaller garden:

__ Make a garden plan: What to plant and where

Crops:

-Space efficient crops: continuous yield – tomatoes, peppers, cukes, pole beans, cut and come again greens

-Bush varieties

-Short season: multiple cropping

__ Extend the growing season

_ Start season with plants that either require cold or are cold tolerant

_ Start plants indoors

_ Warm the soil early

-Raised beds: increase soil temp. by 5F or more; drain quickly

-Plastic over soils

_ Use cold protection devices

-Cold frames, hot caps, fabrics, grow tunnels

_ Plan for fall garden

-Grow crops that tolerate frost: cole crops, root crops, leafy greens

-Start plants indoors, in garden or cold frame for transplanting in mid-season

_ Grow crops in winter cold frames

Best for greens: mesclun, mache (corn salad), spinach, arugula

__ Use plant succession - most efficient way to save space

-Multiple cropping of one vegetable with short growing season, i.e. radish, greens

-Sequencing early, mid-season, and late season crops:
radish/leaf lettuce>summer squash>leafy greens

__ Intercropping

-Fast growers among slow growers: radishes and carrots

-Alternate rows of fast grower and slow grower: lettuce and tomatoes

__ Space-saving planting schemes

-wide row

-double rows

-staggered rows

-square foot gardening

-incorporate veggies into flower borders

___ Grow plants in containers

Plants grow faster

Methods:

Types of containers

Soil mix

Plants for containers

___ Use vertical space

Trellises

Hanging pots

Layering

Wall hangings

___ Preserve your harvest: a few tips

Suggested vegetable varieties for small plot gardens

Beets: Early Wonder

Cabbage: Dynamo

Carrots: Little Finger, Danvers Half Long, Bolero Nantes

Cucumber: Spacemaster, Container Cuke

Eggplant: Morden Midget, Any in a Large (14”D) Container

Green Beans: Mascotte, Kentucky Wonder (produces for months)

Lettuce: Salad Bowl, Black Seeded Simpson, Tom Thumb, Oakleaf

Muskmelon: Minnesota Midget, Midget Muskmelon, Honey Bun Hybrid, Short ‘n Sweet

Pepper: Baby Bell, New Ace, Red Chili (hot)

Radishes: Champion, Comet, Sparkler, Early Scarlet Globe

Spinach: Abundant Bloomsdale, Melody

Squash-Summer: Pic-n-pic (yellow crookneck), Patio Golden (zucchini), Caserta (zucchini)

Swiss chard: Pot of Gold

Tomatoes: Standard: Early Girl, Celebrity

Cherry: Tiny Tim, Pot-n-patio

Roma: Window Box

Watermelon: Doll Babies