



Home Gardener's NEWSLETTER

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April Success Tips

- 1. Get out and plant!** Spring is here!
- 2. Plant your flower beds!** We have a gorgeous variety of annuals and perennials—new varieties plus carefully selected proven varieties that will make you proud to grow them!
- 3. If you missed fertilizing** all your plants last month, do it now. We have organic and regular specialty fertilizers to satisfy every plant's needs and whims.
- 4. For drier areas** of your yard, choose our low-water or drought-tolerant plants.

Grow A Salad!

Plant a salad garden and have healthy, delicious salad fixins right at your fingertips! Add to that the psychological benefits of gardening, plus the exercise it provides, and you've got a recipe for a healthy lifestyle!



Plant leaf lettuce, tomatoes, bell peppers, cucumbers, carrots, and onions. If you have more space, add beans, beets, radish, arugula and radicchio. They'll make more interesting, colorful salads. Take up less space by planting bush type cucumbers and patio-type tomatoes.

Plant tomatoes at the northern end of the garden so they don't shade other plants. If there is a part of the garden that receives a little more shade, plant lettuce there.



Color Tips!

Want to make your garden more beautiful? Here are some techniques for using our gorgeous annual and perennial flowers.



- ◆ **Brighten shady areas:** Darker colors tend to get lost in part shade, so use more plants with lighter colored flowers, such as coral, pink, white and light blue. Plant impatiens, foxgloves, lobelia, vinca minor, campanula, and alyssum.
- ◆ **Plant for contrast.** If your flower bed is in front of a dark-stained fence or house, plant pale flowers (light yellow daylilies and petunias, pink cosmos, and white daisies). Use darker, stronger colors (orange marigolds, and mixed colors of gerbera daisies, celosia, mimulus, phlox, and zinnias) in front of a light colored house.
- ◆ **Create a color focal point.** Instead of long, uninterrupted rows of flowers, create a focal point by planting a mass of one color in the center, such as red salvia, then surround it with flowers in contrasting colors and height, such as dark blue lobelia and white bacopa.
- ◆ **Use theme colors.** Variations of the same color will unify your garden. For instance, if blue is your theme, use as many shades of blue as you can find, from deep royal petunias, lobelia and salvia to pastel ageratum. Include some in purple and lavender, too.
- ◆ **Include colorful foliage.** Try multi-colored coleus, variegated hostas, whitish lamium (has small pink flowers), lamb's ear, and reddish grasses.

Start Now for Great Roses

Roses give us incredibly beautiful flowers over a very long period of time. To really enjoy your roses throughout their blooming season, begin caring for them now as they leaf out and flower buds are forming. Spend just a few minutes weekly on each plant—here's what to do.



Watch the new foliage for deficiencies of micronutrients such as iron, manganese and zinc, as well as yellowing between the main veins. Fertilize regularly with our *Bayer Advanced Rose & Flower Care*, which controls insects and fertilizes at the same time. Aphids are one of many insect problems that this product will control.

Open up the center of the bush to permit good air circulation, which helps prevent mildew and rust problems. Prune dead and weak canes, and spindly growth. We have products to control rose diseases. Mulch to conserve water, discourage weeds, and keep roots cool.

If you want perfect-for-picking roses, choose hybrid teas, with their beautiful long stems. For even larger blooms, nip off side buds as they become visible, leaving only the stronger terminal bud to develop. To keep the plants blooming, keep picking the flowers, and continue feeding, watering, and caring for your plants. Your future is looking rosy!

DECORATE YOUR HOME & GARDEN!

20% OFF!

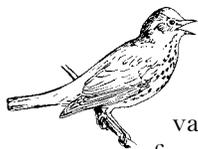
• TALAVERA

(Handpainted Mexican Pottery/Art)

• ALL STATUARY IN STOCK!

With this coupon only. Expires April 30, 2006.

This Park is for the Birds!



In downtown Boston a half-acre rubble-filled vacant lot has been transformed into a park, not for children, but for birds and butterflies. There are few children residing in the area, so a playground-type park was voted down in favor of the bird park.

The plants (90% are natives) include bird-attracting perennials such as echinaceas, asters, rudbeckias, monardas, plus honeysuckle, yarrow, and daylilies to entice butterflies. Trees and shrubs planted to lure the wildlife are hackberry, hawthorn and blueberries.



To provide shelter and a variety of foods there is a group of trees including dawn redwood and Japanese stewartia, plus New England native trees.

Non-fliers (neighbors and local hospital workers) also enjoy the park, wandering the paths and taking lunch and coffee breaks under the pergola or near the fountain.

Two thirds of the \$850,000.00 construction costs were raised by a neighborhood group, whose volunteers now maintain the park.



Ants that Glide to Safety

Tiny ants that live in the tree-tops of the Amazon have the uncanny ability to glide back to their own tree trunk when they fall. The ants, *Cephalotes atratus*, live in colonies high up in trees. When gusts of wind dislodge the ants, they are able to direct their fall, and 85% land safely back on the same tree trunk. In tests, most of these ants were back in their original location within 10 minutes of the fall.

It now appears that this ant is not alone in being able to direct its fall from tree tops. A study has found 25 out of 60 species of ants can do this to some degree. Several species of carpenter ants were reported to be "pretty good at it".

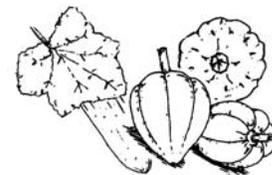
Trading Spaces in the Vegetable Garden

Planting the same kinds of vegetables in the same spot year after year can increase insect and disease problems. Most plant diseases lie dormant during winter on plants the same as, or similar to, those they attack during the growing season. Insects overwinter as eggs or pupae in the soil, or as adults in weeds or on other plants, often not far from their last feeding spot.

Crop rotation—changing your garden layout and alternating where you plant certain types of plants every three years—helps prevent contamination of new plants with the pests and diseases of previous year's crops. It also helps the soil to recover and replenish the nutrients used by a previous crop.

We have grouped together some of the most popular vegetables into families. Avoid planting vegetables from the same group in the same area year after year.

- ✓ tomato, eggplant, potatoes and peppers.
- ✓ chives, garlic, leeks, onions, shallots
- ✓ beets, Swiss chard, spinach
- ✓ peas, broad beans, snap beans, lima beans
- ✓ chives, garlic, leeks, onions, shallots
- ✓ carrots, parsley, celery, parsnip
- ✓ cucumber, pumpkin, squash (plus cantaloupe and watermelon)
- ✓ cabbage, cauliflower, kale, collards, Brussels sprouts, broccoli, kohlrabi, turnips, rutabaga, Chinese cabbage, mustard



Tip: Select vegetable varieties that are disease resistant, especially where the amount of sun is more limited, and be sure to properly prepare the soil using our soil amendments.



Zucchini Corn Casserole

1½ pounds zucchini, cooked,
drained & chopped
8oz can cream style corn
2 eggs, slightly beaten
1 small onion, chopped

1 small bell pepper, chopped
1 Tbsp butter
salt & pepper to taste
½ cup grated Cheddar
cheese

Preheat oven to 350°. Combine corn and eggs; stir in zucchini. Meanwhile, saute onion and bell pepper in butter about 5 minutes, then add to zucchini mixture. Add salt and pepper. Pour mixture into a greased casserole. Bake uncovered for 30 minutes or until lightly browned. Healthy and *delicious!*

Vegetables for a Family of Four

Home-grown vegetables taste so good, you'll want to grow plenty—but not so many that you have to ship them off to market to sell! It can be difficult to know the exact number of vegetable plants you'll need to feed your family, so here are some suggestions for a family of four.

Plant 4 of the following: sweet bell peppers (more if you love roasted red peppers!), eggplants, summer squash, cucumbers, Swiss chard, and tomatoes (choose several varieties). Plant at least 12 corn plants (in a square to promote pollination). When planting seeds for vegetables like lettuce, carrots, beets, radishes and snow peas, measure by the length of a row, following packet directions.

It's always a good idea to plant a few extras because not every plant survives, and it's fun to trade home-grown produce with your neighbors. And remember to make successive plantings to have fresh vegetables over a longer period. If you purchase one of our vegetable 6-packs and only have space for four plants, put the two extras in the front yard among ornamental plants.