



Organic Gardening

A Guide for a Small Garden

The Healthy Garden

To make your organic garden healthy in a small space, you will need to observe the ecological process that work best and apply them to your garden. A well designed garden should be sustainable, give you food all year round and require little maintenance.

The Sustainable Garden

Sustainable gardening is a practise based on knowledge. A sustainable garden requires minimal inputs with maximum outputs, sourcing nutrients from within the system. Use information of traditional knowledge mixed with scientific gardening techniques to learn about your garden. These are some basic principles to get you by:

Soil Fertility

The liveliness of the soil is the key to a successful garden. It requires inputs of organic matter such as compost, mulch, organic fertilisers or nitrogen fixing plants (the pea family) to provide nutrients for your plants.

Diversity

Create habitat for predators of pests by growing a diversity of vegetables, herbs and natives.

Plants and Seeds

Grow plants and seeds which are adapted to local conditions. Non-hybrid seeds can be collected and stored for the next growing season.

Local Resources

Where possible, obtain gardening supplies from local suppliers. This helps maintain local systems improving ecological and human health It reduces transportation and its dependence on fossil fuels.

Integrated Pest Management

Use knowledge, observation, and experimentation to understand what is going on in your garden. In our garden food web predators feed on pests that eat our plants. The problem with chemical sprays is that they destroy both pests and predators. Help protect beneficial insects, birds and lizards through a range of techniques such as;

Crop rotation: Move different crops around in plots over time to reduce the build up of soil borne diseases of plants.

Attract predators: Create habitats in your garden by using flowering plants, natives, shrubs, rocks, logs and water features.

Companion planting: Grow plants together that have mutually beneficial relationships. Grow the following with;

- **Beetroot:** Onions, Lettuce, Cabbage, Silverbeet
- **Cabbages:** Beans, Celery, Beetroot, Onions, Potatoes
- **Cauliflower:** Celery
- **Celery & Celeriac:** Chives, Leeks, Tomatoes, Dwarf Beans
- **Carrots:** Lettuce, Peas, Leeks, Chives, Onions, Cucumbers, Beans
- **Broadbeans:** Potatoes, Peas, Beans
- **Tomatoes:** Asparagus, Parsley, Broccoli, Sweet Basil
- **Sweet Corn:** Potatoes, Peas, Beans





The Productive Garden

Once we learn to recognise what and how much we eat we can design our gardens to meet most of our food needs.

Back to Basics

Basic food crops include silverbeet, tomatoes, pumpkins and broccoli. If you side pick the leaves of silver beet and broccoli they should last you all year.

Hardy vegetables

Pumpkins, squash, gourds, long beans, loofah, asparagus, melon, African cucumber, Chinese mustard and Chinese cabbage are all indestructible in frost and drought.

Natural sweeteners

Stevia, licorice, Aztec sweet herb; and also dried herbs for flavouring.

Herbs for stress, pain, immune boosting and sleeplessness:

Gotu kola, king of bitters, lemon balm, St. Johns wort, mother of herbs, chamomile, feverfew, woundwort, brahmi; aloe vera (living 1st aid plant), as well as speedwell for cuts and comfrey for bruises.

High Protein Food plants not commonly known

Salad mallow, sweet leaf bush, Queensland greens, fenugreek, comfrey, kang kong, amaranth alfalfa, warrigal greens, chicory, and Lebanese cress. These are all good for hiding along garden side walks and other areas prone to theft or vandalism.

Shade tolerant food plants

Make use of shady places with a ground cover of any of these plants; asparagus, blueberries cape gooseberries, lettuce, parsley, sorrel and strawberries.

Edible Natives

Get to know your local edible natives such as; warrigal greens, native amaranth, dandelion, plantain, nettle.

The Waterwise Garden

Water your plants only when the soil is dry. Mulched beds and deep rooted perennials use less water. Install a drip irrigation system if you can. They can end up being cheaper in the long run.

Source Pictures: The Seed Network





Planting Guide

	Row spacing (cm)	Plant spacing (cm)	Depth (cm)	Cool/Frost Melbourne, Tasmania, & mountains	Mild Perth, Sydney, & Adelaide	Subtropics Coastal Coffs Harbour to Rocky	Tropics	Number of seeds per gram	Best Soil Temp °C	Rate per hectare	Average days to maturity
Amaranth	50-75	50	.5	Sep-Nov	Sep-Mar	Aug-Apr	Feb-Nov	900	16-30	1.2kg	50
Artichoke	200-240	160-180	1-2	Sep-Nov	Aug-Nov	Aug-Nov	Feb-Nov	22	15-18	600g	300-400
Asparagus	90-120	20-35	1-2	Sep-Nov	Aug-Nov	Aug-Nov	Feb-Nov	23-28	16-30	1.5kg	2-3 years
Bean, Broad	60-90	15-25	5	Feb-Sep	Mar-Jul	Mar-Jun	Mar-Jun	5-1	6-24	150-200kg	90-120
Bean, Bush	50-60	8-15	2-3	Oct-Dec	Sep-Feb	Aug-Apr	Any	2-4	16-30	60-85kg	55-70
Bean, Climbing	100	10-20	2-3	Oct-Dec	Sep-Jan	Aug-Apr	Any	3-4	16-30	50kg	65-80
Beetroot	45-60	5-10	2	Sep-Apr	Jul-Apr	Any	Any	50-90	8-30	7-9kg	55-70
Broccoli	50-60	35-50	.5-1	Oct-Mar	Sep-Apr	Feb-May	Feb-Jun	175-330	7-30	400g	60-90
Brussels Sprouts	100	45-60	.5-1	Oct-Feb	Dec-Apr	Feb-Jun	Feb-Apr	225-300	7-30	400g	85-95
Buckwheat	Broadcast	Broadcast	.5-1	Sep-Mar	Jan-Oct	Feb-Oct	Apr-Jul	30		60-100kg	30-45
Burdock	60	50	1-2	Sep-Feb	Sep-Apr	Aug-May	Feb-Sep	50		6kg	120
Cabbage	50-75	35-60	.5-1	Aug-May	Any	Any	Any	20-380	10-35	300g	60-110
Capsicum	100-150	50-60	.6	Sep-Nov	Aug-Dec	Aug-Mar	Any	120-160	18-35	400g	70-90
Carrot	25-30	2-5	.5-1	Sep-Feb	Sep-May	Feb-Nov	Feb-Nov	600-900	10-30	3-4.5kg	65-90
Cauliflower	60-100	45-60	.4-.6	Oct-Apr	Dec-Apr	Jan-Apr	Feb-Apr	240-420	10-30	300g	110-155
Celeriac	45-80	15-30	.2-.5	Oct-Dec	Sep-Dec	Mar-Oct	Feb-Sep	2100-3000	8-21	300g	90-120
Celery	45-80	15-30	.2-.5	Oct-Dec	Sep-Dec	Mar-Oct	Feb-Sep	2100-3000	12-21	400g	120
Chilli	90-120	40-50	.6	Sep-Nov	Aug-Dec	Aug-Mar	Any	130-190	18-35	500g	65-80
Collards	50-100	40-50	.5-1	Jan-Apr	Feb-Apr	Mar-Sep	Apr-Sep	300	8-30	500g	60-80
Corn, Maize	60-90	20-30	2-3	Oct-Jan	Sep-Feb	Aug-Mar	Any	2-4	16-35	8-10kg	100-150
Corn, Sweet	60-90	20-30	2-3	Oct-Jan	Sep-Feb	Aug-Mar	Any	4-7	16-35	10-15kg	80-100
Cucumber	120-150	40-60	1	Oct-Dec	Sep-Feb	Aug-Mar	Feb-Sep	30-40	16-35	1-2kg	60-70
Eggplant	80-90	50-80	.5-.8	Sep-Nov	Aug-Dec	Aug-Mar	Any	200-250	24-32	250g	90-110
Gourd	150	90-120	2	Oct-Nov	Sep-Dec	Aug-Jan	Any	10	20-30	2kg	95-120
Herbs, Parsley	50-60	20-30	.5-1	Oct-Apr	Sep-May	Feb-May	Apr-Sep	500-650	10-30	3.5-4.5kg	65-135
Kale	50-100	40-50	1	Jan-Apr	Mar-Apr	Mar-Jun	Apr-Aug	250-370	8-30	500g	50-65
Kohl Rabi	35-40	10-20	.5-1	Aug-Mar	Aug-May	Mar-Aug	Mar-Sep	250-350	8-30	2-2.5kg	55-70
Leek	30-75	10-15	.5-1	Sep-Mar	Aug-Apr	Jan-Mar	Feb-Mar	350-450	8-30	2.5-3.5kg	105-130
Lettuce	35-50	20-30	.6	Sep-May	Any	Any	Feb-Nov	600-1200	8-27	1-2kg	60-85
Luffa	150	45-75	3	Sep-Nov	Sep-Dec	Aug-Jan	Any	6	20-30	8kg	80
Marrow	100-120	90-120	2	Oct-Dec	Sep-Jan	Aug-Mar	Feb-Sep	6-8	20-35	2-4kg	90-120
Mustard Greens	50-75	35-60	.5-1	Any	Any	Any	Any	300	10-35	300g	40-60
Okra	90-120cm	35-60cm	1cm	Oct-Nov	Oct-Dec	Aug-Feb	Feb-Sep	15-25	20-35	8-9kg	80-98
Onion	30-40	5-10	.5-1	Feb-Sep	Feb-Aug	Feb-Jul	Mar-Jun	240-400	8-30	3.5-4.5kg	180-240
Parsnip	35-50	8-10	.5-1	Aug-Feb	Jul-Mar	Feb-Sep	Mar-May	230-400	6-21	5-6kg	120-140
Pea	45-60	5-8	2-3	Jan-Oct	Feb-Sep	Mar-Jul	Mar-Jun	3-5	8-24	100-120kg	65-80
Pumpkin	250-300	90-120	3	Oct-Dec	Sep-Dec	Aug-Feb	Feb-Sep	5-12	20-32	1.5-2.5kg	105-140
Radish	25-35	3-5	1-2	Any	Any	Any	Any	100-140	8-30	15-25kg	40-50
Rhubarb	60-70	40-50	1.2	Sep-Dec	Aug-Jan	Aug-Feb	Feb-Sep	60			
Rockmelon	120-150	40-60	1-2	Oct-Dec	Sep-Dec	Aug-Feb	Feb-Sep	25-40	20-32	1.8-2.5kg	75-115
Rosella	90-120	45	1	Nov-Dec	Oct-Feb	Sep-Mar	Aug-Mar	50-70	24-32	2.2-2.5kg	175
Salad Greens, Endive	45-60cm	20-30cm	.5-1cm	Sep-Mar	Sep-Apr	Mar-Jul	Mar-Jul	700-1000	15-25	600g-1kg	70
Salsify	20-40	5-10		Aug-Feb	Aug-Mar	Mar-Oct	Mar-Aug	60-80		1kg	110-180
Shallots	20-30	2-3	.5	Feb-Oct	Feb-Sep	Feb-Sep	Mar-Jul	350-480	8-30	3-4.5kg	85-105
Silverbeet	50-60	15-30	1.5-2	Sep-Mar	Sep-May	Any	Feb-Sep	50-60	10-30	8-20kg	50-85
Squash, Button	90-120	60-80	2-3	Oct-Dec	Sep-Jan	Aug-Mar	Feb-Sep	7-12	21-35	2.5-5kg	50-60
Sunflower	50-100	20-30	1-2	Oct-Dec	Aug-Jan	Aug-Apr	Any	7-15		10-12kg	70-80
Swede	45-70	10-20	1	Any	Jan-Apr	Jan-May	Feb-May	380-480	15-30	2kg	70-75
Tomato	60-150	40-60	.5	Sep-Dec	Aug-Dec	Aug-Apr	Feb-Aug	250-400	16-35	300-400g	60-120
Turnip	30-50	12-20	1	Sep-Apr	Sep-Apr	Aug-May	Mar-Sep	400-500	12-30	2.5-4kg	45-65
Watermelon	150-200	60-75	2-3	Sep-Dec	Aug-Dec	Aug-Feb	Any	10-20	21-35	3-4kg	68-100
Zucchini	90-110	50-90	2-3	Oct-Dec	Sep-Jan	Any	Feb-Sep	6-12	21-35	2.5-5kg	44-63

Source: Eden Seeds



References & Further Reading

The Watershed Sustainability Resource Centre, 218 King Street Newtown, 9519 6366

www.sgaonline.org.au

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