

# Goodness from the Garden

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## 1. Success in the Vegetable Garden

- Follow local/regional advice
- Choose a sunny location
- Provide moisture and drainage
- Build healthy soil
- Use compost and mulch
- Plant in the proper season
- Control weeds, pests and disease
- Harvest at peak for best quality

## 2. Vegetable Gardening Resources

- Books
  - Texas Fruit and Vegetable Gardening by Greg Grant
  - The Southern Kitchen Garden by William D. Adams and Tom LeRoy
  - The Vegetable Book by Sam Cotner
  - Vegetable Gardening in the Southwest by Trisha Shirey
  - Month by Month Gardening by Skip Richter
  - The Vegetable Gardener's Bible by Ed Smith
- Aggie website:  
<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu>
- Blog: [www.masterofhort.com](http://www.masterofhort.com)

## 3. Garden Location/Layout

- 6-8 hours of sun
- Rows, Raised Beds, Square Foot Garden
- Utilize containers
- Grow vertical when possible

## 4. Build Healthy Soil

- 8-12" loose soil, pH of 6.0-7.5
- Incorporate 1-2" compost each season
- Mulch to protect soil
- General fertilizer recommendation:
  - ½-1 cup fertilizer (15-5-10) per 20' row
  - Or 1 tablespoon/plant
  - Double amount if using organic (8-2-4)
  - Liquid fertilizer or fish emulsion every 3-4 weeks

## 5. Principles of Organic Gardening

- Limit use of pesticides, use least toxic
- Support and encourage beneficial insects
- Incorporate compost, utilize mulch
- Biodiversity – 'mix it up' with herbs, flowers

## 6. Plant in the Proper Season

- Recommended Varieties
- Vegetable Planting Calendar
  - Average First Freeze: late November
  - Average Last Freeze: early March

## 7. Cool Season

- Beets, broccoli, cauliflower, collards, kale, lettuce, peas, spinach, Swiss chard
- Optimum temp for growth is 55-65°
- Frost tolerant once established

## 8. Warm Season

- Beans, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, peppers, potatoes, squash, tomatoes,
- Susceptible to frost
- Protect from late cold snaps

## 9. Beans, Bush and Pole

- 50-65 days to harvest
- Bush beans mature faster than pole
- Pole beans produce over longer period
- Bush Varieties: *Contender, Derby, Jade, Jumbo, Maxibel, Roma II, Velour*
- Pole Varieties: *Fortex, Kwintus, KY Wonder, Rattlesnake, Purple Pod*

## 10. Butter Beans (Limbs)

- Well adapted to heat
- 65-90 days to harvest
- Harvest when seeds are fully developed
- *Christmas Pole, Henderson, Dixie Speckled Butterpea, King of the Garden, Worchester Indian Red*

### 11. Soybeans/Edamame

- Plant in mid-March
- Harvest when pods are plump
- *Beer Friend, Envy, White Lion*

### 12. Southern Peas

- Drought and heat tolerant
- Plant in late spring
- Harvest in 60-70 days  
(pods should be plump and pale in color)
- Or allow to dry on vine for winter storage
- [www.heavenlyseed.net](http://www.heavenlyseed.net)
- *Mississippi Silver, Calico Crowder*
- Yard long beans: grow on a fence or trellis
- *Gita, Liana, Red Noodle*

### 13. Cucumbers (slicers and picklers)

- Grow from seed or transplants
- Harvest in 55-65 days
- Pick frequently, before they turn yellow
- Grow upright on a trellis or a cage
- *Green Fingers, Poona Kheera, Suyo Long*
- Picklers: *Homemade Pickles, Vertina*

### 14. Okra

- Plant from seed
- Harvest in 50-60 days
- Pick frequently when 3-5" long
- Wear gloves and long sleeves to harvest
- *Burgundy, Stewart's Zeebest*

### 15. Summer Squash

- Plant spring and fall
- Harvest in 50-60 days
- Harvest at peak – bigger is not better
- Squash vine borer - try Micromesh
- *Costata Romanesco, Eight Ball, Zephyr*
- *Tromboncino/Trombetta* squash

### 16. Tomatoes

- Always use healthy transplants
- Look for resistant varieties – VFNT
- Plant in early spring with protection
- Pollination ceases when nighttime temperatures reach mid-70s

### 17. Tomato Care

- Water in with half-strength fertilizer
- Spray weekly with liquid fertilizer
- Wrap cages with row cover (Agribon, Reemay)
- Work in 2-3 tbs fertilizer at fruit set
- Mulch plants

### 18. Tomato Types

- Determinate:  
Bush type, 60-75 days to harvest, most fruit matures all at once  
(*Solar Fire, Sunmaster, BHN 444*)
- Indeterminate:  
Vining plants, 75-80+ days to harvest, produces fruit over a longer period

### 19. Some Tomato Favorites

- Standard Slicer  
*Big Beef, Celebrity, Champion, Early Girl, Iron Lady, Solar Fire, Tycoon*
- Grape/Cherry  
*BHN 968, Black Cherry, Black Plum, Favorita, Juliet, Sweet 100, Sun Gold*
- Heirloom  
*Black Krim, Brandywine, Cherokee Purple, JD's Special C-Tex, Juane Flammé, Marianna's Peace, Porter, Stupice*
- Paste:  
*Amish Paste, Big Mama, Viva Italia*

### 20. Pest Patrol

- Monitor garden regularly for pests
- Inspect underside of leaves
- Tolerate some damage
- Spray, hand-pick, squish
- Read the label (and follow it)

### 21. Low toxicity insect and disease controls

- Bt – caterpillars, borers
- Insecticidal Soap – aphids, spider mites, leaf-footed bug nymphs
- Spinosad – caterpillars, thrips
- Neem oil – aphids, beetles, caterpillars, spider mites, squash bugs, stink bugs
- Serenade® – downy mildew, powdery mildew, early blight
- Potassium bicarbonate – early blight, downy mildew, powdery mildew
- Copper Soap fungicide – downy mildew,

### 22. More Tips

- Start small
- Plan ahead
  - Will you be super busy or on vacation at harvest time?
  - Will you be around to water?
- Keep records, make notes
- Incorporate herbs and flowers

**THANK YOU AND GOOD LUCK!**

