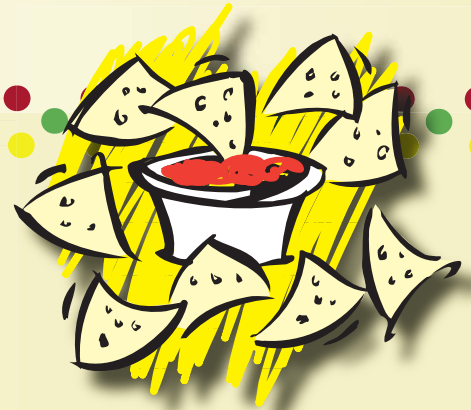




Salsa Garden



Love Salsa? Spice up Your Landscape with a Salsa Garden!

Steps to Planning a Theme Garden

1. Determine what type of theme garden you would like. In this case, we want a Mexican Salsa Garden.
2. Determine the location and size of your garden. Select an area that receives at least six hours of full sunlight every day and is close to a water source.
3. Take a soil sample and send it to be analyzed with the help of your county Extension agent.
4. The shape of your garden may be a 4'x4' square area or in the shape of a jalapeno! Use whatever fits into your landscape scheme.
5. Amend the soil according to soil test results. Using a tiller, work in a 3-inch layer of organic matter (peat moss, manure, rotted compost, etc.) to improve the soil structure.
6. Select plants from a list of recommended varieties.

7. Plant warm-season vegetables, such as tomatoes, peppers, eggplant and most herbs, after April 25th to avoid frost or freeze damage.
8. Water, weed, fertilize and harvest on a weekly basis throughout the growing season.
9. Enjoy your abundance of fresh vegetables and herbs.

Recommended Plants

Tomatoes:

Celebrity, Better Boy, Early Girl, Roma, Sweet Million (cherry)

Tomatillos:

"Husk Tomatoes"

Peppers:

Sweet Bell: California Wonder, Big Bertha, Sweet Banana, Golden Summer

Tip: Use small tomato cages to support peppers during the growing season.

Hot Peppers:

Jalapeno, Cayenne, Habanero, Hungarian Wax



Chives and Onions:

Plant early and harvest mid-June to July.

Garlic:

Plant bulbs in the fall to late winter for harvest in late June.

Cilantro:

This herb provides a strong, spicy flavor to salsa.

Other herbs:

Sweet basil, oregano, marjoram, parsley

Harvest, Storage and Preparation of Fresh Vegetables

Tomatoes: Harvest when fully colored, yet still firm. May be frozen and stored before canning or processing. Blanch tomatoes in boiling water for 30 seconds to remove skins before storing.

Tomatillos: "Husk tomatoes" are ripe when the tomatillo fills out its papery husk, but are still green. Tomatillos can also be purchased canned or fresh at specialty stores.

Peppers: Hot or sweet. Harvest frequently to promote reproduction throughout the growing season. May be frozen or strung and dried.

Onions and Garlic: Harvest when 80 percent of the tops have fallen over or died down. May be field-cured or cured in mesh bags or trays, braided and strung. Fall-planted garlic is usually ready to harvest mid-June.

Herbs: Harvest throughout the growing season. For best flavor, gather herbs early in the morning. Most herbs may be dried or frozen for future use.



Visit the Agricultural Extension Web Site at:
<http://www.utextension.utk.edu/>

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The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and county governments cooperating in furtherance of Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914.

Agricultural Extension Service, Charles L. Norman, Dean

Refrigerator Salsa:

- 1 gallon prepared tomatoes and/or tomatillos
 - 1 can tomato paste
 - 2 whole garlic cloves, minced
 - 1 large onion
 - 1 cup chopped sweet bell pepper
 - 1/4 - 1/2 cup chopped, hot peppers (optional)
 - 1/2 cup sugar
 - 1/2 cup vinegar
 - Herbs, salt, pepper to taste
- Mix together all ingredients in large container. Add more hot peppers for desired hot and spicy flavor! Refrigerate for at least 24 hours for best flavor. Serve with your favorite tortilla chips or Mexican style dish!

More information:

A large number of gardening resource materials are available at no charge on the UT Extension Website, with more materials added all the time. Visit www.utextension.utk.edu/publications/default.htm

Some Extension gardening and foods publications include:

- PB724 Canning Foods
- PB725 Preserving Foods
- PB774 Food Storage Guide
- PB901 Growing Vegetables in Home Gardens
- PB 1215 Disease Control in the Home Vegetable Garden
- PB1228 Gardening for Nutrition
- PB 1391 Organic Vegetable Gardening
- SP 291-A Growing Vegetable Transplants
- SP 291-B Growing Vegetables from Seed
- SP 291-C Soil Preparation for Vegetable Gardens
- SP 291-D Care of the Vegetable Garden
- SP 291-G Fall Vegetable Gardens
- SP 291-I Weed Control in Home Gardens
- SP 291-L Fresh Vegetable Storage for the Homeowner
- SP 291-N Raised Bed Gardening
- SP 291-O Guide to Spring-planted, Cool-season Vegetables
- SP 291-P Guide to Warm-season Vegetables
- SP 325-D Canning Vegetables
- SP 425-A Healthy Tennesseans Eat More Fruits and Vegetables

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