

## Annual Veggie Gardens

Plant in March: (*cool weather*)

**Broccoli, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Garlic, Lettuce, Onions, Peas** (*they need a fence or trellis for support*), **Radishes, Spinach**



Plant April-June

**Beans, Beets, Corn** (*\*most U.S. corn is now genetically modified-GMO--so only buy organic seed (& plant 3+ rows for pollination)*), **Carrots, Celery, Collards, Eggplant, Kale, Mustard Greens** (*greens can last all winter in TN*), **Okra**, (*stalks can get 15' high*), **Peppers** (*sweet & hot*), **Popcorn, Peanuts, Potatoes** (*plan to add dirt on top regularly & get GardensAlive.com organic potato-beetle spray*) **Sweet Potatoes** (*require their own 8'x10' plot*) **Tomatoes** (*support on a strong fence*)

## Melon Patches

**Watermelon, squash, pumpkins, cucumbers & cantaloupes** each need their own 8'x10' patch. Do not plant them close to each other or they may cross-pollinate and produce something weird. They require a LONG growing season, so plant as soon as possible and expect to wait. Mulch around them after planting.



**Asparagus** is perennial but dies back in winter. Cut & eat the tops in spring.

### Bug Tips:

- 1) it may take awhile for bugs to find your garden.
- 2) food grade Diatomaceous Earth (DE) applied **after every rain** will eliminate most bugs & it's edible & beneficial to people. DE comes in 25+ lb. bags in feed stores
- 3) bugs usually eat in evening or early morning—which is the best time to garden (carry a lidded jar with water for **hand-picking bugs** to 'nip them in the bud' at sunrise)
- 4) maintaining a **frog pond, bat house** or **bluebird house** helps—since these predators devour their weight in bugs at night



## Getting Started

First, put down a *border* (*rocks, landscape timbers, bricks...*) on an area in FULL SUN, CLOSE to the house, easy to water & protected from dogs & deer. This may require portable fencing (*i.e., 5'x7' chain link dog pens put together*).

On the **FIRST WARM DAY** in **February**

The easiest way to start a **weed-free garden is to totally COVER UP** an area with a heavy TARP (*dark side up—to hold heat & weighted with rocks or bricks*) for **about a month BEFORE** planting.

On warm days, this BURNS & KILLS the roots of WEEDS & GRASS & is far superior to tilling—for both the earthworms and you. (*I learned this method from 2 Corinthians 5:4b: "...not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."* **Covering up** weeds to kill the **roots** is easier than pulling weeds later—or even poisoning them.)

## March/April

After the grass has been burned up by the heat of the tarp, take it up, rinse, dry, fold & put the tarp away for another project.

For **extra** weed-proofing: within the boundaries THICKLY overlap the area with NEWSPAPER. (*Don't try this on a windy day!*) Earthworms love newspaper &, **as the grass & weeds die**, they actually **serve as fertilizer!** Walk over it once lightly to see if the newspaper seams pull apart--wherever that happens--if you don't put on another thick overlapping layer--you'll have weeds pop up. (*Even if you didn't do the tarp cover-up, you can do this step anytime of the year to start a quick garden!*)

Then, HOSE it down and top with some kind of mulch (*bark, pine needles...*).

**You won't regret this prep time!**

Lastly, plug in your store-bought plants or the ones you've started from seed.

**You shouldn't have weeds for at least a year!** BUT, if you do, **pull them up** IN THE RAIN or just AFTER THE RAIN.

Weeding is MUCH easier then! Label gardens (*marked popsicle sticks?*) and write down on paper where & what you planted.

# Gardening

## in East Tennessee



Besides total fasting, nothing can cultivate an appreciation for wholesome food like growing it yourself.

### Planting:

It's all about the SOIL—BREAK IT UP (*ready to receive air & water*) or COVER IT (*for worms to break it up*) BEFORE YOU PLANT anything. SET BOUNDARIES (*with wood, fencing or rocks*) for each crop. Only plant what you are willing & able to PROTECT & HARVEST.

### Watering:

New plants & trees need to be watered EVERY DAY—until they develop a root system that reaches deep water. New plants & trees that have been well-watered EARLY in the MORNING won't wither under intense noonday sun.

### Weeding:

Any plant IN THE WRONG PLACE is a weed! If you don't deal with ROOTS, weeding is tiring & endless. To destroy a growing weed—DEPRIVE IT of ALL light for 21+ days.

### Pruning:

YOUNG vines & trees grow in the DIRECTION and TAKE ON THE SHAPE formed by the first few years of their pruning. All living things FACE THE LIGHT-source and grow best UNCROWDED—able to absorb the LIGHT for themselves. MATURE VINES welcome drastic pruning—cutting away excess growth so their fruit develops larger and stronger.

<http://2-acres.com/Ginger> email: <ginger@2-acres.com>

**INDOOR WINTER 'RESURRECTION' GARDEN:** If you have a sunny window, it's fun to cut off **bottoms of onions & celery** and **tops of radishes & carrots** & put in **shot glasses** with a little water (*I place them in a cupcake tray*) and watch them **REGROW!** (*But, you have to change the water every day—or it'll get slimy and they won't do well.*)



## Perennial (last 2+ years) Plants, Bushes & Trees that require routine maintenance

### Herb Beds

This is where you start!

Every household should have an herb bed of (*at least*) **chives**! They are in the garlic family, very medicinal, and go with nearly every dish--from spaghetti sauce to egg salad! **Chive plants** spread each year and will eventually take over an area. No need to re-plant, they re-seed themselves. And, in Tennessee, they last through the winter!

**Parsley, sage, rosemary & thyme** must be replanted every few years, even if you let them 'go to seed' & like chives, are somewhat winter hardy.

**Mints** and Greek **oregano** are invasive, like chives, but are powerful anti-fungal--so they're worth planting, too.

**Cilantro** (*seeds are called coriander*) is a natural chelator of heavy metals in the body—a VERY valuable herb!

**Stevia** is a healthy natural sweetener.

**Garlic cloves** that have green on them in the store plant easily but take months to get going. Plant in Fall. **Garlic is THE most potent anti-biotic on the planet!**

Be sure the herb bed is CLOSE to the kitchen--or, trust me, you won't use it.

It also should have flowers to attract beneficial insects and repel the others.

(Note: **many flowers are edible.**)

**Herbal 'weeds':** dandelion leaves can be used in salad & the roots dried for teas, as can milk thistle—and they are excellent **liver purifiers**—but make sure they haven't absorbed poison from neighbors' fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides & termiticides.



### Berry Patches



**Berries need water**--lots of it!

Be sure to get THORNLESS **blackberries** and **raspberries**. But, if you plant different kinds of berries close to each other, you'll get some unusual berries, like boysenberries. Blackberries & raspberries spread and need to be pruned (*with all of the branches that bore fruit cut off*) in the fall **every year**. Blackberries need **strong** support/fencing.

**Elderberries** are small berries, grow on weak, bamboo-like branches, but, like **cherry** bushes, are bird-magnets. (*Just hang up rubber snakes to repel the birds.*)

**Blueberries** don't spread but are not as easy to grow. They need the 'right place' and fertilizer (*coffee grounds, eggshells, Epsom salts...*).

But, you don't need to prune them.

It takes time to see fruit on **fig** or **pomegranate** bushes & a bad winter will easily kill them. Avoid **goji**—it has thorns & tastes awful.

**Strawberries** are 'weed-magnets' but reproduce & spread nicely.



### Grape Arbors

**Grapes** do very well in Tennessee. In fact, one vine will grow on a fence over 12' in each direction and produce barrels of grapes for grape juice, jams & wines, so be sure to use sturdy fencing. Japanese beetles LOVE grape leaves! **Muscadine** is the only native U.S. grape & is **very medicinal!**

### Fruit & Nut Orchards

**Apple, pear & cherry** do well here.

(note: *Cherry trees are toxic to animals.*)

**Peaches & plums** don't do as well. Even so-called 'dwarf' varieties need about 30' width or drastic pruning every fall or winter. (*If you prune any other time, it spawns more growth.*) The fruit is **so** sweet it attracts yellow jackets and often rots on the tree. A late freeze will ruin any plum or peach harvest.

The trick to having a low-maintenance orchard is chickens. They eat bugs, and, if you can make a safe place for them to live under your fruit trees, you may not need to spray the trees--chickens eat bugs that hibernate in the ground under the trees and come out in spring to lay eggs in the developing fruit. Unfortunately, chickens are high-maintenance to keep their rotated foraging areas clean, **green & safe**.

**Black walnut** trees grow wild all over Tennessee. Try **pecan** or English **walnut** instead. **Mulberry** trees are considered invasive by the Dept. of Forestry--so you have to special order them. They attract silk worms, but letting chickens forage under the tree may help. Keep them pruned low.

There is a Japanese **banana tree** that is cold hardy and grows in Tennessee, but it doesn't bear bananas. And, you have to cut it to the ground every fall. The trunk doesn't burn (*too wet*). It's invasive, but not as bad as **bamboo**—whose roots spread for miles each year until it takes over!

**Gardener Tip: East TN is Zone 6**  
(the highest number is Zone 10—south FL)