



# Arizona Gardening

**Taught By: Vickie Goetz**

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# Have A Plan

- Plan on paper first
- Who will do the work
- How much garden space is available
- Standard, semi-dwarf, or dwarf trees
- Raised garden, ground level, or containers
- What will you do with the produce- can, freeze, dehydrate, share
- Plant what you like to eat
- Grow plants with a good yield for space used

# Have A Plan

- Start small and expand with knowledge
- Plan walk areas – do not walk where you will plant
- Choose varieties that do well in our zone – early fruit tree varieties with low chill hour requirements of 500 or less
- Choose varieties with different maturity times
- Use succession planting and intercropping
- Rotate where vegetables are planted each year for 3 years
- Try new things
- Keep records – when, where, and what you plant, the variety, when you harvested and was it successful

# Gardening Basics

To be good, vegetables must be grown fast. They need proper sunlight, drainage, nutrients, and water. If any of these are out of balance, the vegetables will not taste good and the yield will be poor.

# Location

- Direct sunlight 6-8 hours
- Watch for reflected heat and light
- Tall and trellised plants on the north side
- Plant with a purpose
- Summer/Winter sun direction changes
- Utilize micro-climates

# Raised beds & container gardening

- Easier weed control
- Easy to reach
- Containers can be moved around for sunlight or frost protection
- Dry out more quickly so water more frequently
- Nutrients wash out more rapidly
- Roots are more sensitive to heat and cold

# Soil Preparation

- Soil is the most important aspect of gardening
- Proper drainage is required

# To Prepare A Garden Area:

- Flood area and allow to dry to workable state
- Work already composted material (one third to one half the mixture) into soil to a depth of 12" to 18"
- Do not use manure, fertilizer, or sulfur when planting immediately
- Vegetables do best with a slightly acidic to neutral pH of 6-7
- Only work in the soil when it is in a workable state
- Never work in the soil when it is wet



# Watering

- Plants need a steady continuous supply of moisture
- Water thoroughly and infrequently
- Water in the early morning
- Do not sprinkle
- Water to the depth of the roots
- For tree watering – the emitters need to be between the trunk and the tree drip line. Move emitters out away from the trunk as the tree grows.
- Increase water when it is windy, dry and hot
- Decrease water when there is rain and cooler weather

# Seeds

- Keep a two year supply of seeds and rotate
- Store in a cool, dark, dry area
- Save seeds only from healthy open-pollinated varieties -not hybrid plants

# Planting Seeds

- Cover with soil 3-4 times their diameter - More shallow in winter and a little deeper in summer
- Seeds need to stay moist to germinate
- You may presoak seeds a few hours to hasten germination
- Make sure to have good soil contact
- Plant on flat ground or the sides of rows – not on top of rows
- Plant melons and squash on the sides of rows or mounds to keep stems out of water
- Plant seeds so that mature plants will barely touch each other
- Cut off weaker plants to thin out– do not pull them out

# Transplanting Plants

- Only buy healthy compact plants – not tall spindly plants
- Have the soil prepared ahead of time and in a workable state
- Transplant in the evening or on a cloudy day
- Dig the hole wider than the plant root ball and the same depth as the nursery container – except for tomato plants
- Gently loosen the roots and spread them out
- Be careful not to crush the stem
- Place the plant in the hole at the same depth as it was in the container

# Transplanting Plants

- Break off peat containers below the soil level
- Do not fertilize when transplanting
- Fill the hole half to two thirds with soil and gently firm soil around roots to eliminate air pockets
- Fill the hole with water to settle the soil
- Finish pushing dirt in around the plant to fill the hole
- Water the plant on a slow drip
- Water daily the first week then space out watering
- Protect from sun, heat, wind, and pests for 1-2 weeks

# Mulch

- Start with a thin layer and add material as plants grow
- Maintain 4 to 6 inches deep
- Use compost, leaves, dry grass clippings, saw dust, pine shavings
- Keep mulch away from tree trunks

# Compost

- Use a 4:1 ratio of brown to green
- Maintain the pH balance
- Green material adds nitrogen –Creates heat while breaking down- fruit and vegetable scraps (not potato or tomato), coffee grounds (acid), grass clippings
- Brown material adds carbon - sawdust, pine needles & pine shavings (acid), leaves, wood ashes (alkaline but adds potassium), crushed egg shells
- Do not use meat or dairy
- Animal waste – adds nitrogen – Must be composted for a minimum of 120 days -use cautiously because of disease and high salt content

# When To Plant

- Temperature and weather dictate what and when to plant
- Soil temperature is more important than the calendar date



# There Are Two Categories Of Vegetables

- COOL SEASON VEGETABLES
- WARM SEASON VEGETABLES

# Cool Season Vegetables

- Grow best in soil temperature of 60-70 degrees
- Daytime temperatures below 85 degrees and nights below 60
- Germinate in cold soil
- Withstand cool and slight freezing weather
- Plant in fall and through winter
- Crops need to mature when the temperatures are cool
- Beets, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, carrots, chard, garlic, herbs, lettuce, onions,
- peas, potatoes, radish, spinach and turnip

# Warm Season Vegetables

- Grow best in soil temperatures 80-90 degrees
- Daytime temperatures above 85 degrees and night time lows above 60
- Need warm temperatures to set and properly mature fruit
- Plant in early spring as soon as soil is warm enough
- Artichoke, green beans, corn, cucumber, eggplant, herbs in shade, melons, peppers, potatoes, pumpkin, squash, sunflowers, sweet potatoes and tomatoes

# Fertilizer

- Plants need a continuous and uniform supply of nutrients
- Fertilize on a schedule once each month with a complete fertilizer when plants are actively growing
- Do not over fertilize – follow label instructions
- Water before and immediately after when applying granular fertilizer
- Fertilize sparingly when temperatures are above 90 degrees

# Weather Protection

- Cover frost sensitive plants with cloth or paper (not plastic) before the sun goes completely down in the evening
- Drape over entire plant and to the ground
- Remove in the morning after temperatures warm up and sun is on the plants
- Build a temporary greenhouse over frost sensitive plants
- Do not touch plants when they are frozen
- Shade plants from hot summer afternoon sun
- Wrap trunks of young trees with tree wrap

# Pruning

- Be conservative – no more than one-fourth of the plant in one season
- Prune out dead, diseased, or crossing branches
- Prune to allow sunlight
- Prune for safety
- Prune deciduous plants and trees in the winter
- Prune frost sensitive evergreens in spring before they bloom

# Pest Control And Disease

- Keep gardens clean and weed free
- Wash off small pests with a spray of water early in the morning
- Hand pick off larger pests in the early evening
- Only water in the morning, do not over water, and maintain good air circulation around plants
- Learn to recognize beneficial insects



Thank You