
Centering On Organics

A New Series

What Does it Mean To Be An Organic Vegetable Garden?

In agriculture it means growing fruits, vegetables, flowers and other plants using natural methods. Completely avoiding synthetic chemicals, pesticides, herbicides, hormones or fertilizers.

Instead, centering on building healthy soil, by nourishing it with natural fertilizers, organic matter, increasing bacteria, fungal and microbial activity, keeping soil disturbance to a minimum.

Encouraging biodiversity by rotating crops, planting companion plants that either repel pests or attract beneficial insects.



A HANDY REFERENCE OF 15 COMMON ORGANIC GARDENING TERMS.

1. Biodiversity — For gardeners, it means cultivating a rich mix of plants, insects, and microorganisms that work together to create a balanced, thriving, living web.
2. Compost — Decomposed organic matter (food scraps, leaves, etc.) used to enrich soil.
3. Mulch — Material (straw, leaves) layered on soil to retain moisture and suppress weeds.
4. Humus — The dark, stable organic component of soil formed from fully broken-down matter.
5. Amendments — Materials added to soil to improve structure, drainage, or nutrient content.
6. Tilth — The physical condition of soil in terms of its structure, drainage, and suitability for planting.
7. pH — Measurement of soil acidity or alkalinity on a scale of 1-14; most veg prefer 6.0-7.0.
8. Cover Crop — Plants grown to protect and improve soil between main growing seasons.
9. Interplanting — Growing two or more crops in the same space simultaneously to maximize yield and deter pests.
10. Companion Planting — Growing different plants near each other for mutual benefit, such as pest control or pollination.
11. Crop Rotation — Moving plant families to different beds each season to prevent disease and soil depletion.
12. Inoculant — Beneficial bacteria or fungi applied to seeds or soil to boost plant growth and nutrient uptake.
13. Mycorrhizae — Symbiotic fungi that attach to plant roots and help them absorb water and nutrients.
14. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) — A strategy using natural methods first to control pests with minimal chemical intervention.
15. Beneficial Insects — Insects like ladybugs and lacewings that prey on garden pests or aid in pollination.



Bursting Out In The Garden





Advantages Of Organic Gardening

♥ It's Good For Your Health

Gardening organically decreases your family's, your plants and the foods you grow exposure to toxins. Stress relief—spending time with plants and green space is beneficial to mental and physical health.

♥ Improved Soil Structure

Organic gardening practices, such as composting and using organic mulches, enhance soil structure and fertility

♥ Better For The Environment

When we use natural methods to grow food and flowers, it eliminates the use of potentially harmful and toxic products. These chemicals and synthetics contaminate the soil.

♥ Natural Pest Management

Organic gardens attract and support beneficial insects, such as bees, butterflies, ladybugs, parasitic wasps and green lacewings which aid in pollination and natural pest control.

Community Building When Gardening Together

♥ Community Gardens

Bring people together where individuals work collectively to grow organic produce. Additionally, these gardens foster a sense of community, cooperation, and shared purpose.



Growing an organic garden does require a more mindful approach to planting and nurturing, but the short and long term benefits are well worth it for everyone and everything.

The Fab Five Herbs To Grow With Your Veggies

Basil — pairs with tomatoes and peppers, repels aphids and whiteflies.

Dill — draws in beneficial predator insects, great near brassicas and cucumbers.

Chives — confuses carrot flies and aphids, attracts early pollinators.

Parsley — a magnet for good bugs, works well near asparagus and tomatoes.

Oregano — acts as a living mulch, repels spider mites and cabbage moths.



Companion Plant With Herbs For A Healthier, More Flavorful Garden!

The vegetable garden doesn't have to be all business.

Tuck a few well-chosen herbs into the rows and beds, and you'll gain fragrant allies that repel pests, attract pollinators, improve soil, and — of course — stock your kitchen beautifully.

SCARECROW CONTEST



1st—Angie Cloud



2nd—Debra Grzeskowiak

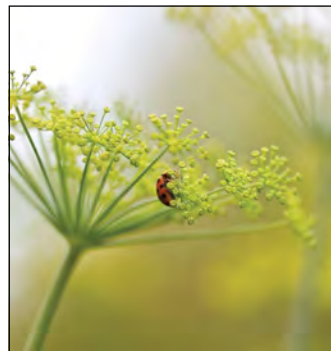


Judge—Mike Chavez



Cultivating Facts On Dill

- ✘ Dill is more than just a pickle partner— Its feathery leaves and seeds have charmed kitchens and gardens around the world.
- ✘ Edible value— produces both flavorful leaves and seeds used in cooking and pickling.
- ✘ Attracts pollinators— its umbel flowers draw bees, butterflies, and beneficial insects.
- ✘ Easy to grow— thrives in full sun with well drained soil and minimal maintenance.
- ✘ Medicinal uses— traditionally used to support digestion and ease colic.
- ✘ Self-seeding: frequently reseeds returning each year without replanting.
- ✘ Companion planting— Dill is a beneficial companion plant for vegetables like tomatoes, cucumbers, and lettuce - helping to repel pests and improve soil health.
- ✘ The Greeks— used dill to quiet hiccups.
- ✘ Settlers in North America— called dill “meeting seed” because it was given to children to chew on to keep them quiet during sermons.



Planting herbs —will make you feel dill-ightful !



Dill Sauce

**Looking for dill sauce for salmon, or your favorite fish or seafood?
This sour cream version is a great accompaniment.
You may add more lemon or mustard to suit your taste.**



Ingredients

- ½ cup sour cream
- 1 ½ tablespoons Dijon-style prepared mustard
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh dill

Directions

1. Whisk together sour cream, mustard, lemon juice, and dill until well blended.
2. Chill before serving

Dill Dip

**Great with fresh veggies or chips.
Yields 4 cups.**

Ingredients

- 2 cups mayonnaise
- 2 cups sour cream
- 3 tablespoons grated onion
- 3 tablespoons dried dill weed
- 1 ½ teaspoons seasoned salt, or more to taste
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley

Directions

1. Combine mayonnaise, sour cream, onion, dill weed, seasoning salt, and parsley together in a bowl.
2. Cover and refrigerate 4 hours or overnight.



Above recipes from Allrecipes.com

Cucumber Bites with Dill Cream & Smoked Salmon

These elegant smoked salmon appetizer bites are made with cucumber slices topped with herby cream cheese, smoked salmon strips, fresh dill, and a bit of lemon to perk things up

Yields 24 pieces.



Ingredients

- 24 slices cucumber, each about 3/4-inch thick
- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1/2 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 4 ounces smoked salmon, cut in 2-inch strips
- 24 small fresh dill sprig

Directions

1. Form a cup in each cucumber slice by using a melon baller to scoop a 1/2-inch deep depression from one side. Place cucumbers, scooped-sides down, onto paper towels to drain for 15 minutes.
2. Mix cream cheese, chopped dill, lemon zest, lemon juice, and pepper in a bowl until well combined.
3. Spoon about 1/2 teaspoon cheese mixture into each cucumber cup. Top each cup with a salmon strip and a dill sprig.

Recipe from Allrecipes.com



A Gardener's Bookshelf

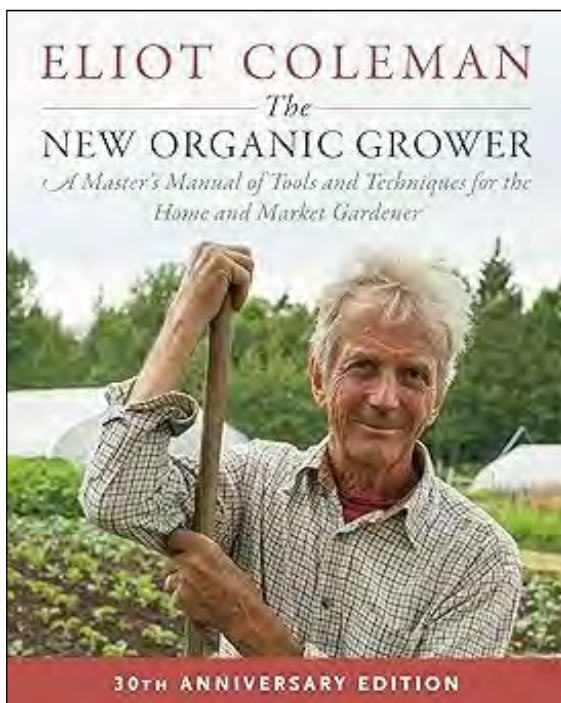
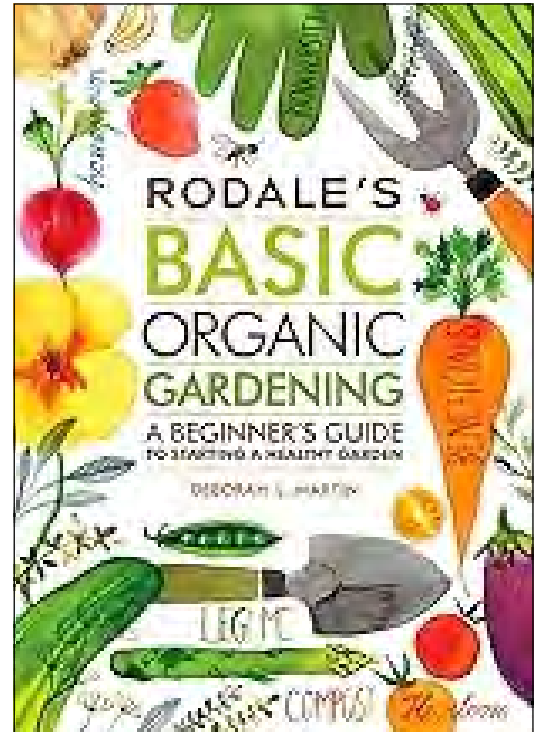


**A good gardening library can be one of your best tools.
This space is for sharing books to consider on gardening and plants.**

Rodale's Basic Organic Gardening: A Beginner's Guide to Starting a Healthy Garden
By author Deborah Martin.

From the most trusted source for organic gardening methods.

With a "no question is unwelcome" approach, a troubleshooting section lessens frustrations and encourages experimentation. Rodale's Basic Organic Gardening is everything a beginning gardener (or one who's new to gardening organically) needs to get growing and keep a garden going strong all season.



The New Organic Grower, 3rd Edition: A Master's Manual of Tools and Techniques for the Home and Market Gardener, 30th Anniversary Edition. By Eliot Coleman.

This fully illustrated 30th anniversary edition of the landmark organic farming book offers new photos and updated information for small-scale market growers and serious home gardeners.

"One of America's most innovative farmers." — Michael Pollan, New York Times–bestselling author of How to Change Your Mind

LOCATION

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Be A Good Neighbor

- Knock dirt off plants before placing in trash bins.
- Chop up large plants to make more room in the bins.
- Make sure all faucets are off when you leave the garden.
- Please do not remove tools from other gardener's plots.



ATTENTION GARDENERS



PLEASE —

Do Not use the sinks to wash dirt off your vegetables.....it is clogging the sinks.

Instead, rinse them off inside your plots.

thank you

PLANTING CALENDAR — Please Read Notes First

- ⇒ **This calendar is for use as a general guideline.**
- ⇒ **Even the various garden books do not agree on all their recommended planting times.**
- ⇒ **Bear in mind, are you planting an early, or a late-bearing variety? Timing of planting and particular varieties are important factors, as well as, considering if are you planting seeds, or already started seedlings.**
- ⇒ **Nature loves to keep us guessing with earlier than normal winters or longer than normal summers!**
- ⇒ **Enjoy and expect the unexpected!**

January

Asparagus, Asian Greens, Beets, Broccoli, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Celery, Swiss Chard, Endive, Escarole, Garlic, Kale, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce, Mustard, Bunching Onions, Short Day Onions, Parsley, Peas, Potatoes, Radishes, Rhubarb, Rutabagas, Spinach, Turnips

February

Asparagus, Asian Greens, Beets, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Swiss Chard, Endive, Escarole, Fava Bean, Garlic, Kale, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce, Mustard, Bunching Onions, Short Day Onions, Parsley, Peas, Potatoes, Radishes, Rhubarb, Rutabaga, Spinach, Strawberries, Turnips

March

Artichoke, Asparagus, Asian Greens, Beets, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Swiss Chard, Endive, Escarole, Fava Bean, Garlic, Herbs, Kale, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce, Mustard, Bunching Onions, Short Day Onions, Parsley, Peas, Potatoes, Radishes, Rutabagas, Spinach, Strawberries, Turnips

April

Beets, Carrots, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Fava Bean, Garlic, Herbs, Lima Beans, Leeks, Lettuce, Melons, Okra, Onions, Parsley, Peas, Peppers, Potatoes, Radishes, Short Day Onions, Squashes, Strawberries

May

Beets, Carrots, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Herbs, Lima Beans, Leeks, Lettuce, Melons, Okra, Onions, Parsley, Peas, Peppers, Pumpkins, Radishes, Short Day Onions, Squashes, Swiss Chard, Tomatoes, Turnips

June

Beets, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Herbs, Lima Beans, Leeks, Melons, Okra, Peppers, Pumpkins, Squashes, Tomatoes, Turnips

July

Beets, Carrots, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Melons, Peppers, Squash, Tomatoes

August

Asian Greens, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cucumber, Kale, Leeks, Shallots, Onions



September

Asian Greens, Brussels Sprouts, Carrots, Cauliflower, Fennel, Garlic, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Onion sets, Peas, Potatoes, Radishes, Rutabagas, Spinach, Squashes, Swiss Chard, Turnips

October

Asparagus, Asian Greens, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Swiss Chard, Endive, Escarole, Fava Bean, Fennel, Garlic, Kale, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce, Mustard, Bunching Onions, Onion sets, Short Day Onions, Parsley, Parsnips, Peas, Radishes, Rutabagas, Spinach, Swiss Chard, Turnips

November

Asparagus, Asian Greens, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Swiss Chard, Endive, Escarole, Fava Bean, Fennel, Garlic, Kale, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce, Mustard, Bunching Onions, Short Day Onions, Parsley, Parsnips, Peas, Radishes, Strawberries, Rhubarb, Rutabagas, Turnips

December

Asparagus, Asian Greens, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Celery, Swiss Chard, Endive, Escarole, Garlic, Kale, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce, Mustard, Bunching Onions, Short Day Onions, Parsley, Peas, Potatoes, Radishes, Rhubarb, Rutabagas, Spinach, Strawberries, Turnips