



PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

We've been paying a lot of attention to the details of gardening — so much so that we may have made gardening sound more complicated than it is. Actually, the basic principles are quite simple. Just to clarify things, we put together this brief summary to help you maintain a proper perspective.

1 PLAN AHEAD WHAT TO PLANT, WHERE, AND HOW MUCH

Here are the decisions you need to make — early, while the nights are still long and cold. (A) Size and kind of garden wanted. (b) How much to plant of each vegetable. Remember that overplanting can be disastrous! (C) Selection of vegetable varieties that you like and that are best for your area. (D) Map out on paper your garden plan to allow room for different vegetable growth habits and harvest times.

2 PREPARE THE SOIL FOR PLANTING AND INSURE FERTILITY

Roto-till or plow your garden deeply, breaking the dirt up smooth, into a fine seedbed. Work into the soil all organic matter — such as manure, compost, leaves, and vegetable waste — that you can. Broadcast a balanced fertilizer over the garden and work it in. Add lime if a soil test indicates a need for it.

3 PLANT AT THE RIGHT TIME — AND THE RIGHT WAY

Find out which vegetables like cold weather and which prefer hot, and plant accordingly. Remember to allow plenty of room for vine crops; to plant corn in a block for good pollination; to plant each type of seed at the proper depth; and to thin seedlings to allow room for growth. If you want to set out home-grown plants instead of seeding directly in the garden, study the charts and plant indoors or in a cold frame at the proper time.

4 CULTIVATE AND GIVE TENDER LOVING CARE TO GROWING PLANTS

Use the hoe often to skim over the soil surface and destroy grass and weeds just as they sprout. Cultivate to allow oxygen to get to the roots and to keep a hard surface from forming on the soil. Or put down a mulch to keep down weeds and conserve soil moisture.

5 PROTECT YOUR PLANTS FROM INSECT PESTS, ANIMALS, AND DISEASES.

Take a walk in the garden each day. Look for signs of pests and disease. Hand-pick insects, pull up and burn diseased plants, or use the best chemical control before a minor problem gets out of hand.

6 HARVEST AT THE PEAK OF GOODNESS AND KEEP THE PLANT PRODUCTIVE

Pick your vegetables as soon as they mature so the plant will keep producing. Know when to harvest for fresh eating, canning, freezing, or drying. Study various winter-storage methods for extending the garden season.

7 PLANT LATE CROPS FOR A FALL HARVEST

Sometime in July, or early August in the South, plant root crops, greens, peas, and other cold-hardy vegetables for a fall harvest. This planting is extremely important as it will provide most of the vegetables you'll store and eat fresh long into the winter.

8 BEGIN A SOIL-BUILDING PROGRAM FOR NEXT SEASON'S GARDEN

As soon as a crop is harvested, chop up and till in the spent plants, or remove them and add to a compost pile. Plant a green-manure crop or sow greens, like kale, or a root crop, like turnips. These will serve double duty, providing a winter harvest and a cover crop. Fall is a good time to add lime and natural rock fertilizers. Cover bare areas in the garden with leaves. Collect any organic waste available to mulch the soil through the winter, or use it for compost or for mulching next spring.