3 SEASON GARDENING IN D.C.

PLANTING VEGGIES FOR SPRING + SUMMER + FALL
City Blossoms is a nonprofit dedicated to fostering healthy communities by developing creative, kid-driven green spaces and innovative resources.
GROWING 3 SEASONS OF EDIBLE ANNUALS

TODAY’S AGENDA:

• WHY MAKE A CALENDAR + PLANTING PLAN?
• PLANT FAMILIES
• PLANTING IN WASHINGTON DC
• NEXT STEPS
• PRINCIPLES
• LET'S PLAN! GROUP ACTIVITY
WHY PLANNING IS IMPORTANT FOR 3 SEASON GARDENING

YOU ARE THE CONDUCTOR. THE PLANT FAMILIES ARE THE DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF THE ORCHESTRA. THINGS ARE MOST HARMONIOUS WHEN THERE IS A PLAN AND EACH SET OF PLANTS HAS THEIR TURN.

PLANTING AT THE WRONG TIME:

• PLANT COOL CROPS TOO LATE = BOLTING + BITTER TASTE
• PLANT WARM CROPS TOO EARLY = LOW GERMINATION
• PLANT WARM CROPS TOO LATE = PLANTS DON’T MATURE + CAN’T PRODUCE FRUIT IN TIME
• RUN OUT OF SPACE + TIME

PLANTING WITH A PLAN:

• RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT PLACE - RESEARCH PLANT VARIETIES TO MAKE THE MOST OUT OF YOUR SPACE AND GROW THE STRONGEST PLANTS
• CREATE A CALENDAR TO BE ABLE TO TRANSITION FROM SEASON TO SEASON
• GET MORE BANG FOR YOUR BUCK
THE MOST POPULAR FAMILIES IN DC
PLANTS WITH SOMETHING IN COMMON CAN BE GROUPED TOGETHER. LOOK FOR THE CLUES.

- **GOOSEFOOT FAMILY** – **CHENOPODIACEAE**: Beets, Swiss Chard, Spinach, Lamb’s Quarter
- **BRASSICA FAMILY** – **BRASSICACEAE**: Collard Greens, Bok Choy, Broccoli, Brussel Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Kale, Mustard, Radishes, Turnips, Arugula
- **CARROT FAMILY** – **APIACEAE**: Carrot, Celery, Fennel, Parsley, Parsnip, Dill, Cilantro
- **LEGUME FAMILY** – **LEGUMINOSAE**: Beans, Peas, Peanuts, Cowpeas, Fava Beans, Edamame, Clover
- **ALLIUM FAMILY** – **ALLIACEAE**: Garlic, Leeks, Onions, Shallot, Chives
- **CUCURBIT/MARROW FAMILY** – **CUCURBITACEAE**: Cucumbers, Melons, Summer Squash, Zucchini Winter Squash, Pumpkin, Gourd, Watermelon
- **NIGHTSHADES FAMILY** – **SOLANACEAE**: Peppers, Potatoes, Tomatoes, Eggplant, Tomatillo, Tobacco
- **MALLOW FAMILY** – **MALVACEAE**: Okra, Hibiscus, Cotton
- **MISCELLANEOUS**: **BINDWEED FAMILY** – **CONVOLVULACEAE OLANACEAE**: Sweet Potato, **DAISY FAMILY** – **ASTERACEAE**: Lettuce, Dandelion, Sunflower, Artichoke
GOOSEFOOT FAMILY – CHENOPODIACEAE: BEETS, SWISS CHARD, SPINACH
COMMON CHARACTERISTICS:

- EDIBLE LEAVES WITH SIMILAR SHAPES
- GLOSSY LEAVES
- CRUNCHY STEMS
- PREFER SPRING AND FALL
- SMALL/MEDIUM SIZE
BRASSICA FAMILY – BRASSICACEAE: COLLARD GREENS, MUSTARD, BOK CHOY, BROCCOLI, BRUSSEL SPROUTS, KALE
BRASSICA FAMILY – BRASSICACEAE: COLLARD GREENS, MUSTARD, BOK CHOY, BROCCOLI, BRUSSEL SPROUTS, KALE

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS:

- EDIBLE LEAVES THICK DULL-ISH LEAVES
- EDIBLE FLOWERS
- THICK FIBROUS STEMS
- PREFER SPRING AND FALL – CAN BOLT EASILY
- SMALL/MEDIUM SIZE
CARROT FAMILY – APIACEAE: CARROT, FENNEL, PARSLEY, PARSNIP, DILL, CILANTRO
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COMMON CHARACTERISTICS:

- EDIBLE LEAVES WITH FERN-LIKE, FEATHERY LEAVES
- SOME WITH EDIBLE BULBS AND ROOTS
- FIBROUS, HOLLOW STEMS
- PREFER SPRING AND FALL – SOME CAN HANDLE HEAT
LEGUME FAMILY – LEGUMINOSAE: BEANS, PEAS, PEANUTS, COWPEAS, FAVA BEANS, EDAMAME, CLOVER
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COMMON CHARACTERISTICS:
• EDIBLE SEEDS/PODS
• VINE-LIKE
• ROOT NODS FROM SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP WITH A BACTERIA, ADDS NITROGEN
• SPRING, SUMMER AND FALL ROTATION
• MEDIUM SIZE – MAY NEED TRELLISING
ALLIUM FAMILY – ALLIACEAE: GARLIC, LEEKS, ONIONS, SHALLOT, CHIVES
ALLIUM FAMILY – ALLIACEAE: GARLIC, LEEKS, ONIONS, SHALLOT, CHIVES

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS:

• GROW EDIBLE BULBS OR OTHER STORAGE ORGANS
• LONG, THIN SOMETIMES HOLLOW MOSTLY EDIBLE LEAVES
• DISTINCT SMELL
• HEADS WITH MULTIPLE EDIBLE FLOWERS
• SPRING, FALL AND WINTER
• MEDIUM SIZE – MAY NEED TRELLISING

SPRING, FALL AND WINTER
CUCURBIT/MARROW FAMILY – CUCURBITACEAE:
Cucumbers, Melons, Summer Squash, Zucchini Winter Squash, Pumpkin, Gourd, Watermelon
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Cucumbers, Melons, Summer Squash, Zucchini Winter Squash, Pumpkin, Gourd, Watermelon

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS:
- EDIBLE FRUIT
- LARGE NON-EDIBLE LEAVES WITH SPIKES/HAIRS/FUZZ
- HOLLOW GOOEY STEMS
- LARGE FLOWERS WITH FIVE ATTACHED PETALS
- SUMMER
- LARGE SIZE – MAY NEED TRELLISING
NIGHTSHADES FAMILY – SOLANACEAE: Peppers, Potatoes, Tomatoes, Eggplant, Tomatillo, Tobacco
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COMMON CHARACTERISTICS:

- EDIBLE FRUIT
- LARGE NON-EDIBLE/POISONOUS LEAVES
- SMALL FLOWERS WITH FIVE POINTED PETALS AROUND A CONE/TUBE
- SUMMER
- LARGE SIZE – MAY NEED TRELLISING
WASHINGTON D.C. PLANTING DATES: ZONE 7A

SPRING CROPS INDOOR PLANT: EARLY-MID FEBRUARY
  • Root Vegetables + Legumes not advised, Leafy Greens advised

SPRING CROPS DIRECT SEEDING + TRANSPLANT: LATE MARCH/APRIL
  • Any cool weather crops advised (freeze date April 15th)

SUMMER CROPS INDOOR PLANT: EARLY MARCH
  • Only Nightshades recommended. No Legumes or Cucurbits.

SUMMER CROPS DIRECT SEEDING + TRANSPLANT: MID-MAY/EARLY JUNE
  • Cucurbits + Legumes Direct Seeding + Nightshade Transplant advised.

FALL COOL CROP DIRECT SEEDING + TRANSPLANT: AUGUST
  • Any cool weather seeds or seedlings (Freeze date October 15th)

WINTER COOL CROP DIRECT SEEDING: OCTOBER/NOVEMBER
  • Onion bulbs and Garlic
3 SEASON PRINCIPLES

• APPLY PLANT FAMILY KNOWLEDGE TO A PLANTING CALENDAR AND A ROTATION PLAN FOR YOUR GARDEN.
  • LEAVES
  • FRUITS
  • ROOTS
  • LEGUMES

• DON’T BE SENTIMENTAL. RIP IT OUT IF IT DOESN’T TASTE GOOD OR IT’S TIME TO PLANT SOMETHING NEW.

• RULES ARE ONLY GUIDELINES – DON’T GET STUCK.

• EXPERIMENT!
NEXT STEPS:
WHAT TO DO WITH THIS INFORMATION

• DECIDE WHAT TO GROW - DISTINGUISH WHAT CHARACTERISTICS YOU ARE INTERESTED IN WHEN PICKING VEGETABLES FOR YOUR GARDEN

• CREATE A CALENDAR AND SKETCH OF YOUR PLOT THAT INCLUDES WHAT YOU WILL GROW, HOW MUCH SPACE IT WILL TAKE UP, WHEN YOU PLAN TO PLANT IT AND WHEN YOU PLAN TO PULL IT OUT

• LEARN ABOUT COMPANION PLANTING TO SEE WHAT FAMILIES WORK WELL TOGETHER

• FERTILIZE YOUR PLANTS WITH PURPOSE

• HAVE FUN!
KITCHEN SINK (Q+A)

Any other questions?
Want to get hands-on experience? Volunteer with us.
Want to introduce your kids to gardens? Come to Open Times, set-up a field trip
Shoot an email to info@cityblossoms.org or visit our website
www.cityblossoms.org