

FACT SHEET: Picking the Benefits of a Fall Garden

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It's time to plan your fall garden. I'm focusing on vegetables, herbs and spices for several reasons. These plants are easy to grow, require minimal maintenance, are inexpensive, healthy and delicious additions to your menus.

Vegetables to plant in September include: beans, broccoli, cabbage, collards, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, endive/escarole, mustard, onions (green and bulbing), pepper, southern peas, summer squash, tomatoes and turnips. Create a root vegetable casserole with turnips, potato, rutabaga, parsnips, olive oil and spices. I can smell it already!

Herbs and spices you can plant in September include: anise, basil, borage, chervil, coriander, fennel, mint, rosemary, sage and thyme. I love the smell of rosemary brushing against my clothes as I walk through my landscape beds. Cut the flowers off your herbs to promote additional growth.

Be sure you follow the planting instructions, and water daily for 7-10 days to start. If it does not rain, then water and fertilize as needed with a complete fertilizer or finished compost. For more information on composting, contact the Extension office for workshop dates.

Creating a vegetable and herb garden can save you money; the cost difference of purchasing the plants versus purchasing the produce, gasoline, wear and tear on your vehicle, pollution and travel time. It can also be a wonderful family experience. You can share this project with your children; planting, pruning, harvesting, meal planning and cooking. Their fond memories will remain with them for the rest of their lives...as have mine.

Gardening is the #1 pastime in America! Visit or call the Hillsborough County Extension office for additional horticulture information. We are located at 5339 County Road 579, Seffner, FL 33584, (813) 744-5519. Master Gardeners are available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. We can help!

For a copy of the Hillsborough County Gardening Calendar created by Sydney Park Brown, Ed.D, which lists many 'to dos' month by month, go to:

<http://hillsborough.extension.ufl.edu/HomeGardening/Garden-Almanac.html>

Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh021>