



# GroundEd

THE INITIATIVE COLLECTION:  
Organic Gardening -Practicality



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# Introduction

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**Organic gardening is not as difficult as many beginning gardeners believe it is.**

It is true there is a bit more work and increased attention levels to the details of an organic garden than a regular garden. However, with the proper guidance you will soon discover it's not anywhere near as

difficult as you thought it was. This guide will provide you with the basic steps you need to get you started.

Assuming you know little to nothing about organic gardening let's make certain you understand what it is. Quite simply it means you are going to plant your garden without using synthetic fertilizers, for making the plants grow and chemical pesticides to control the bugs.

To really maximize your garden, regardless if it's going to be flowers, herbs, veggies or a mish mash of several plants it's best to have a detailed plan. And the best time to formulate your plan is in the fall, right after the fall growing season ends. The reason for this is you will have time to prepare the ground before the spring planting season begins.

Perhaps the most critical thing you must do before anything else is to select the optimum location for your organic garden or for that matter any garden. Your plants will do extremely well if they can receive about six hours of sunlight per day.

In almost all cases positioning of your planting area in the southeast part of your ground will give more than adequate amounts of sunshine. Also make sure your ground has easy access to water and the ground has good drainage, to allow water runoff and aeration of the ground.

Once the proper location has been determined the next step is preparing the ground where you will be planting. This means it's time for the physical labor part. You are going to till the ground using a yard fork or a tiller, then get on your knees to start pulling weeds, grass and removing the rocks.

To make the weed and grass removal successful you should perform the initial removal, then go back a couple of weeks later and remove any weeds and grass which have grown up in the meantime.

Now it's time for you to actually determine what your selected ground is going to need, in the way of the proper nutrition to help your vegetation grow.

You do need to have the soil tested for the proper ph level. If you're not sure you would do an accurate job of this take a sample of your soil to your local nursery or garden center and they can do this for you.

Once the testing has been completed by the nursery folks they can tell you exactly what kind of natural fertilizers and pest control product you will need. While you are at the nursery or garden center you should ask their advice on the proper plants and vegetables which will grow best in your treated soil.

In conclusion this guide has given you the basic things you need to start your organic gardening project the right way. It has covered the location of the garden, the sunlight exposure, preparation of the ground prior to planting and the proper nutrition your ground will need. Organic gardening is not as complicated as it seems.

## **What Is Organic Vegetable Gardening**

Vegetables should be part of everyone's diet. If you don't want to spend a little bit more for those organically grown and sold in the supermarket, perhaps you should consider planting your own in the garden. It is very easy to do that even your kids can join in the fun.

Organic vegetable gardening is the "in thing" these days as people have realized that the use of fertilizers and pesticides do more harm than good. Yes, it will make the vegetables bigger or enable the farmer to harvest them faster but the chemicals used in making this happen could be detrimental to the health of those who eat it.

But since the early farmers never did that and relied only on sunlight and irrigation, this concept is making a comeback. These will also enable you to this at home since you have access to the three most basic things namely soil, water and sunlight.

What kind of organic vegetables can you plant? Well, just about everything. Some examples of these include broccoli, cabbage, carrots, onions, potatoes and a lot more. You just have to know which of them can be planted during the different seasons of the year.

Proper drainage is important for your vegetables. If there isn't, you can check if it is feasible to grow these using a raise bed.

When you have done your research, you can now buy the seeds from the store. These are usually sold in packets so don't forget to read the instructions before using them.

Planting the seeds for your organic vegetable gardening is the second phase of this operation. The challenging part is making sure nothing happens to it until the time comes that this will be harvested.

Your vegetables may be under attack by pests, weeds and other animals. To prevent this from happening, you need to get a bird, a toad and even other insects to eat them.

For weeds, the only thing you can do is pull these one by one from the ground. As for other animals, putting up fences and using animal hair, baby powder or deodorant soaps seems to be a good deterrent.

Mulch is another solution. This can be made from chipped barks, garden compost, leaf molds and manure. It must be applied at 3 to 4 inches or 8 to 10 cm from the ground in order for it to be effective.

Some organically grown vegetables can also be done indoors. Take for example that tomato that can be grown using an organic container

made out of clay, plastic or wood. Just don't forget to give it some water daily and sunlight so it can grow.

You can place the containers outside during the day and if the weather is too cold, bring them indoors and put them somewhere else like in the western or southern windows of your home.

One more thing you have to remember about growing organic vegetables in such containers is not to use soil but rather a mixture of peat, perlite and vermiculite.

Organic vegetable gardening is challenging but it pays off when you are able to reap what you sow. This means additional savings and maybe even a small business if you want to sell whatever excess you have in the market.



# Chapter 1: How To Benefit Others And Yourself With Organic Gardening

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**What benefits are in organic gardening besides having a more beautiful garden or eating healthier veggies and fruits?**

Actually, there are more special benefits than most people and organic gardeners ever think about. This article will tell you about the additional benefits and give you some thought-provoking ideas that may surprise you.

Did you know you can feed children around the world with your organic garden? "How in the world can you do that?" you ask. It's really quite simple and only takes a little more planning and work on your part.

When you began to plan your own personal natural garden, you should layout a larger and grander garden. It doesn't make any difference if it's for flowers, veggies, fruits or bushes to beautify your yard. That's right! Make it bigger. When it's harvest time you will have more flowers, plants and veggies than you can possibly use.

Instead of plowing under the excess crops from your organic gardening or inundating your friends and relatives with it take it to the local Farmers Market or the Flea Market and sell it.

Chances are you won't have a problem selling it and you may end up with a pocket full of cash. Take the cash from the sell and donate it to your favorite "Feed The Children" charity. When you do this a starving child will benefit from your garden, long after you harvested your crops.

Another great benefit from raising your own organic fruits and veggies is it's a great school project for your child's school. Help your child and their classmates set up their own organic garden.

The immediate lessons they learn will be about how to help the environment, healthy eating, teamwork and it makes learning fun for them. Again, set it up, so the children can take the crops to the local Farmers Market or Flea Market to sell.

The proceeds from the sell can be used to buy something which will benefit all of the children of the school.

This next benefit is one that is seldom thought about by your children or possibly by you.

This is the benefit of the physical exercise you and the kids will receive by working in the garden. You know that the kids today don't play outside the way you did when you were a kid.

An hour a day of working in your garden will help in weight loss (burning calories), lowering blood pressure, strengthen the heart and lungs, build muscle, sharpen the mind. Relieve stress and sleep better.

The end result being you and kids will be much happier and healthy to boot.

One last benefit you will realize by you when working with the earth and growing things organically is the restoration of your spirit and soul. You will receive such a sense of wellbeing when you have a fruitful harvest, you just can't beat it. You will know you have done your part to help "Mother Nature" return to her natural state and touched all the other human beings by doing so.

As you have just read the benefits to organic gardening can benefit not only yourself and your family, but you can actually reach out and make a difference in the world.

## **Information You Should Know About Organic Vegetable Gardening**

Organic food products are the trend these days after studies have shown that the age-old practice of using fertilizers and pesticides happen to be harmful to our health. This means that we have to change our approach and try something else.

The concept of organic vegetable farming is not new given that ancient civilizations have been doing it for years. We somehow forgot that thinking that modern science could help us produce better crops.

But if we go back to the basics, we realize that the resources need to make this work is right before our eyes.

First is the soil. Although 2/3 of the Earth is made up of water, the remainder is what we use for infrastructure while a certain percentage of that is devoted to agriculture.

The second thing you need is water. The ancients used an efficient irrigation system so that water from the rivers would go to the land they planted on. These days, we have the technology to divert water to these areas using pipes. When it has not rained for a long time, we are able to make artificial rain.

Third is sunlight. We may not control its movement but if we are able to plant our crops in an area that has sufficient exposure to the sun, whatever we plant will grow.

But between the period of putting the seeds in the ground and before these are harvested, farmers have to be on their guard. The crops are threatened by insects. This is why people are advised to use other insects, birds and toads.

Organically made fertilizers also come to play here and some examples of them include the application of compost, manure and cover cropping.

The soil where the vegetables were grown and harvested may not be ready to plant the same crops so maintain its fertility, farmers are also encouraged to rotate their crops.

To make sure that farmers who practice organic vegetable gardening are doing it right, the Department of Agriculture together with the International Federation of Organic Agriculture or IFOAM that has been in operation since 1972 sees to it that certain standards are in place.

Some people will argue that organic farming is not able to produce the same amount of yields as compared to those who use fertilizers and pesticides.

This is true however, in times of drought, these crops are still able to survive because there is still enough water underground. This means farmers will still be able to harvest and there is a steady supply of goods in the market.

It is expected that the demand for organic vegetables will grow in the future. This is as more people become of food safety issues and how this affects the environment.

You can do your share by trying organic vegetable gardening in your backyard. The things you need are very affordable. You just need to practice what farmers do in the fields.

In fact, such information can now be found in books and online so do some research and put this into practice. It is fun and rewarding to see that what you worked on for weeks is now being served on your dinner table.

Back then, you have to remember that there were only a few skilled jobs and one of them was being a farmer.



## Chapter 2: The Truth About Organic Gardening

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**Are you one of the thousands upon thousands of people who look at organic gardening as something mystical or from the "Hippie" age?**

You can rest assured there is nothing mystical about using "mother natures" own creations (natural elements), produced by the earth and animals, to plant your own natural garden.

The information provided in this chapter will dispel the so called "mysticism" idea of organic growing held by many.

A great many people have the mistaken belief that gardens planted without chemicals were begun by the rebelling "Hippies" and "Flower Children" of the 1960's. The author suspects strongly that your forefathers would find fault with that belief.

The truth is that as more and more media attention was given to the "Hippies" and "Flower Children", many people were hearing about organic gardening for the first time, but it has been around for centuries upon centuries.

A lineage of farmers which has practiced all-natural growing for centuries is the Amish farmers. Even in today's modern world, with manmade chemical fertilizer, weed killer and pesticides, these amazing farmers continue to practice all-natural crop growing with truly phenomenal results.

It's not only here in America that "organic" growing is practiced. Many of the countries around the world still use century old methods of natural growth.

Another myth about natural growing of your garden is that you will never be able to keep all the pest and bugs out of it. People believe that without using chemical based and expensive pesticides, you just can't control bug infestations.

Again, it just isn't so. One of the best all-natural ways to control the pest is to use their mortal enemy. Birds! But then you ask, "How can you attract enough birds?" You create an environment around your garden that is friendly for the birds.

One of the best ways to draw the birds early on is place a birdhouse or birdhouses which are made especially for the type of birds which frequent your area. Not only do you furnish a nesting area for them but make water fully accessible to them.

You can put something as simple as a small container filled with water or even go for something much more sophisticated, like a running fresh water fountain. Once the birds have been drawn to your garden and realize they can feast on your bug infestation your problem will be solved in short order.

Frankly, with more research on the internet or a visit to your local nursery, you will become knowledgeable and see the truth about organic gardening. The real truth is it's a great way to improve your family's health and help restore "Mother Earth" to its own good health.

## **Is Organic Gardening Always Safe?**

Everywhere you turn today people are talking about organic gardening and the healthy benefits of eating organically grown fruits and veggies.

However, are organic grown vegetables and fruits as healthy and safe as people claim? The information contained in this article will provide you with food for thought.

In a recent study, done by United Kingdom scientist, revealed that almost 33% of the food being sold in the UK had measurable levels of pesticide and chemicals used in crop enhancement, which are dangerous to the human body.

In addition, the same study indicated that almost all developed countries, throughout the world, had approximately the same levels of contamination. Unfortunately, this included organically grown food as well.

The primary reason for this contamination was due to the ground water which the plants consume. This is from years and years of chemical pesticides and chemical fertilizer being dumped on the

ground, to enhance the yield and speed the growth of the produce, then leeching into the ground water table.

The only way your organic gardening can avoid this water is to use filtered water or distilled water. However, using distilled water means your produce will be short on certain nutrients vital to the health of your body. In addition to the ground water the contamination is also caused by the wind currents.

Much of the pesticides and fertilizers applied to the crops are sprayed on. Consequently, the mist of chemicals is caught by the wind and can be carried a good distance before dropping to the earth.

If your organic garden happens to be in the path of the wind your plants will become covered with the synthetic pesticides and fertilizer.

Other studies have shown that these same pesticides and other chemicals, over a period of years or even months can cause health problems in the human body. It is now believed that these chemicals can affect the brain development of unborn babies in the mother's womb.

In addition, these chemicals have been linked to certain kinds of cancer, breakdown of the nervous system, weakening of the immune system and other diseases which can destroy the vital organs of the human body.

Perhaps you believe that washing of your veggies will protect you, but this is not necessarily the case. These same studies have also indicated that certain fruits and vegetables are susceptible to these same chemicals leeching into the meat of these veggies and fruits through the skin.

An example of this kind of fruit would be lemons or grapefruit. In this case organic produce would really be much safer than the regular grown fruit.

As you can tell from reading the above information organic gardening may not be quite as safe as you thought it was. However, with the proper precautions, such as always washing the veggies and fruits prior to preparing or eating, will reduce the risk of ingesting dangerous chemicals.



# Chapter 3: The Principles of Organic Vegetable Gardening

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**More farmers are getting into organic vegetable gardening because it is cost effective and they are able to produce almost the same yield of crops.**

You too can do this at home but first, you have to understand the principles of organic vegetable gardening.

First, organic vegetable gardening does not use any fertilizers, nutrients or pesticides. Nature is your partner here because you will be using two things to make it all work namely sunlight and water. We don't produce these ourselves, but you have to find the ideal area and provide adequate drainage.

Aside from sunlight and water, you can help the crops grow by using compost heap from leftover food, chipped bark, garden compost, leaf molds and manure. You can mix these all together and then spread this throughout your garden.

A lot of people are grossed out by manure. You don't have to scoop this from the toilet because this is sold in stores. If you have a dog, put on some gloves and put it there. Chickens are also great to have. Just let them roam around in the garden.

Some people use dead animals or meat products. You don't put these in the soil but leave it for a couple of weeks in the bin because maggots will soon appear, and this is what you use to help fertilize your garden.

Another helpful creature is the earthworm because it digs deep into the ground and aerates the soil bringing various minerals to the surface which also provides better drainage.

This long pink colored creature also leaves casting behind that experts say is five times as rich in nitrogen phosphorous and potassium. Again, this can be purchased from the gardening store.

Organic garden is challenging since you have to deal with unwanted guests. Some of these pests include armyworms, crickets, gypsy moth caterpillars, slugs and squash bugs.

Before, people used fertilizer to kill them but in an organic setting, the best weapon is the toad that is known to eat almost every type of insect. If you have caterpillars or spiders lurking in the garden, get a bird because this is not in the toad's diet.

In some cases, you don't have to buy a toad or a bird from the pet store. They may come in to your home as long as you set the ideal environment for them. You can put up a bird house or a small pond.

Within days, you will have some new occupants protecting your garden.

Other insect killers which you can get to do the job include the praying mantis and the ladybug because they mark their territory and eat anything that dares enter their domain.

Plants can also be used to protect your vegetables. For example, the rosemary, sage or thyme is an effective deterrent against butterflies. Marigolds on the other hand are effective against nematodes.

But despite all the flowers and creatures that nature has to offer, crop rotation is seen as the best way to keep the soil fertile. If you planted this kind of vegetable for this season, change it with another and the return to the first after this one is harvested.

The principles behind organic gardening are very simple. You just have to be practice it, so you can harvest the vegetables you have planted weeks ago.

## **The History of Organic Vegetable Gardening**

The history of organic vegetable gardening dates back many centuries ago as the ancient civilizations relied on this livelihood and fishing to put food on the table.

Back then, nobody used fertilizers and pesticides but as the world's increased in population, the demand for food also went up. To fill the gap, scientists decided to introduce fertilizers and chemicals to cut the harvesting time and make the vegetables bigger.

Organic vegetable gardening only made a comeback in the 1980's making an old practice new again when the US department of

Agriculture encouraged farmers to do it by giving them incentives. This made more farmers join the bandwagon which is also being done in Europe.

But organic vegetable gardening is not just eliminating the use of fertilizers and pesticides. Farmers will have to use other means to make crop grows such as compost, crop residue, crop rotation, integrated pest management and mechanical cultivation in order to preserve soil productivity and combat pests.

The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements is the regulator these days that tells farmers across the globe how this should be done. Their recommendations help crops grow in 75 million acres of land across the globe.

Their strategy is focused on sustainable development so that the land used today can only be used by the next generation as we have left for them a healthy ecosystem.

Organic vegetable gardening has proven to be effective because since its inception in 1980. To prove this point, one study has pointed out that the amount of corn and soybeans produced using this method was almost the same compared to those who used fertilizers and pesticides.

The best part is that this was achieved without using that much energy and without the risk of having harmful chemicals enter our bodies.

It has been estimated by one university that if developing countries also practice organic vegetable gardening, they too can also double or triple their crops without wasting money on buying pesticides and fertilizers.

One thing you have to keep in mind here is that a percentage of vegetables being consumed in the US are imported from other countries.

Because organic vegetable gardening is so easy, anyone can do it. This will enable you to plant your own vegetables at home instead of buying these from the supermarket.

The key to a successful harvest using organic farming is planning. You will need the land to plant these on that has adequate sunlight and an efficient drainage system so that they are able to get water.

If you are able to figure that out, the only thing you have to worry about is what to plant because some vegetables do not well under certain conditions that could be attributed to the climate and the type of soil in the ground.

Those who know what they can and cannot plant will save themselves time and money, so they can focus on what works.

The history of organic vegetable gardening has now come full circle as we are doing what the ancients have practiced long before we were born. You can do your part by buying those that are organically grown from the supermarket or planting your own.

The end result is that we eat healthy without ever thinking if these contain any chemicals that may be harmful to our bodies.



## Chapter 4: Steps to Success with Organic Gardening

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**If you have long been curious about organic gardening, you may now be familiar with how things are being done in this process.**

But even so, you must not tire out from learning new things to help you with this venture.

It is important to keep yourself updated with how things are being done. You should be in tuned with the local gardeners in your area so that you can talk things out with enthusiasts like you.

If your goal in going organic in terms of gardening is to help nature, then you are on the right track. For sure, nature itself will find ways to

help you out and for you to be able see solutions to your problems just around the corner.

This is how generous nature is. And this is also the basic idea of the organic process of gardening. It is to give back to nature what nature has bestowed you with. In gardening, you will have to veer away with synthetic materials. You only have to use what can be found on the ground or the environment around you.

For example, in fertilizers, you have the option to make your own compost. But this is no easy task. Doing so will take a lot of effort and time on your part.

The first method to go about this is to gather dried leaves, certain animal manure, vegetable peels and the likes on a compost bag. You have to attend to it periodically to add moisture once in a while and to make sure that you are doing things right.

The second method is to pile up the materials that you have gathered on the ground. Pile those up in a space that you will allocate for your compost. You just leave them there and let nature takes its course through those materials.

Through time, years even, that pile will be turned into compost materials that you can also use as fertilizers for your garden. But you've got to be careful to choose only the part that is not infested with pests. If not, you'll have bigger problems with your garden.

The latter method will take longer. And because it is open, and you cannot regulate it, certain elements can be accommodated into the pile which may be harmful to your garden.

So, when you are already using that, you still have to check very closely so that you will retain your garden's health and beauty.

You have to remember that you must be picky with your plants. Ask a local dealer what plants will grow easily on your location. You must not opt for something you like that will not survive the site's conditions.

Learn the art of mulching. You have to do this periodically in your garden beds. This will kill the growing weeds. You'll be able to monitor the unnecessary pests and get rid of them. This also moderates the temperature of the soil. And by mulching it, you'll prevent the soil from eroding.

Have a variety of plants in your garden. This way, you will be able to attract beneficial insects. These are the types that would feed on the pests that your garden may incur.

And the most important thing to do in organic gardening is to befriend your plants. You must know all them fully well. This way, you will have an idea as to what to do in cases where a problem struck, and you have no one to help you.

## **Tips for Organic Vegetable Gardening**

Organic vegetable gardening is easy. But to help you, here are some tips you should know.

The most important thing to do is to decide what you want to grow. There are so many vegetables to choose from but keep in mind that certain vegetables cannot be grown because of the climate so take that into consideration as well.

So, you want to have a hard time taking care of it, choose those that are well adapted to the soil, temperature, sun and shade exposure.

If you live in an area where droughts are frequent, make sure you are planting drought resistant vegetables since it does not eat up that much water and can withstand dry weather.

You should determine how much space you have. This will make it easy for you to plot on a sheet of paper the layout of how you want your vegetables to grow.

You should mulch your vegetables with organic material. This can be made from food waste, dead leaves or grass and manure. This helps conserve water, adds humus and nutrients as well as discourage weeds from growing.

The best part is that you don't have to dig deep to put these in because 85% of the vegetable's roots are found in the top 6 inches of soil.

Aside from compost, you can also use natural fertilizers and organic material to help the vegetables grow. They also encourage native earthworms that are nature's tillers and soil conditioners.

The biggest threat that could destroy your vegetables are pests. To get rid of them, you should use other insects, birds, frogs. If your crops though have been infected, spray infected stems and leaves with dilute soapy water and then clear water that is very effective.

If you decide to buy vegetables that are grown instead of using seedlings, most of these come in plastic containers. Be careful when you remove them, so you avoid tearing the outside roots especially if these have grown solidly inside the container.

When planting vegetables, don't stick with just one but plant many different kinds because this invites insects to take up resident in your yard.

Believe it or not, only 2 percent of the insects in the world are harmful. This means the rest are beneficial. Some examples of these include ladybugs, fireflies, green lacewings, praying mantis, spiders and wasps since they eat insects that try to eat your vegetables. Another thing they do is pollinate the plants and decompose organic matter.

Don't forget to remove weeds that come out in your garden. You can pull these out by hand or spot spray it with a full strength of household vinegar. Best of all, it is safe for the environment.

Practice crop rotation. This will make sure that the soil is always fertile. When planting the new vegetable, avoid regular deep cultivation as this will damage the roots, dry out the soil, disturb healthy soil organisms and bring weeds to the surface that will soon germinate.

If you follow these tips, you will surely be able to have a successful organic vegetable garden. You can plant and harvest them all year round so you don't have to buy these goods anymore from the supermarket. That is assuming of course you have a huge parcel of land to work with.



# Chapter 5: The Benefits of Eating Organically Grown Vegetables

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**If you have gone to the doctor, chances are he or she has told you to watch what you eat.**

If you have been eating the right amount of fish, meat, fruits and vegetables then you have nothing to worry about. But because some of these contain harmful chemicals, perhaps you should start switching to organically grown vegetables and other food products.

Why should you buy organic food products? Simply because majority of these items have been genetically modified. Farmers have used various techniques, chemicals and fertilizers to make them bigger even if they know that this is dangerous to your health.

No magic or anything fancy is used to make organically grown crops. You only need fertile soil, sunlight, water and some compost to make it work.

A recent study shows that following this simple plan helps vegetables have 50% more vitamins and minerals than those made from conventional methods. If you eat them regularly, you are able to have a healthier life.

You will probably feel like you will live longer too as organically grown vegetables tastes much better. This is because although fertilizers and pesticides have their advantages, they remove essential vitamins and nutrients, so you are not getting the required daily allowance that your body needs. In short, you may think you are but in reality, this isn't what's happening.

Another benefit of eating organic vegetables and food is that you help the environment. This happens because farmers will no longer use harmful chemicals and put these into the ground.

The land which they have worked on can be planted by the next generation because the land that has been cultivated for so long is still fertile.

When you go to the supermarket, one thing you will notice is that the price of organically grown vegetables and other items are much more expensive than those conventionally grown.

Should you always buy something if it is cheaper? In the case of food, the answer is no because you can't put a price on the lives of those who eat it.

Surely, you also don't want to wait until someone you know gets sick so think about the future and go organic.

Eventually, the price of organic items will go down when more farmers decide to sell these in supermarkets. It is only because there is a small section of this available now in the store but when it becomes an industry standard, things will change.

Until that happens, you can probably plant and grow these in your backyard. You just need the supplies especially the seeds or the fullygrown plant to help you get started.

Don't forget to do some research first so you know how to take care of them. After all, sprinkling water every morning is just one of the many things you have to do to help this grow.

Perhaps one of the biggest challenges in organic food is that the US imports a lot of vegetables from countries that are not yet practicing this back to the basic's method.

But with a little help and encouragement, they too will come around so everyone not only here but in other countries as well will be able to enjoy the benefits of organically grown vegetables and fruits.

## **Organic Vegetable Gardening Is the Way to Go**

In the US, farming is \$6 billion industry. To keep it that way and with the health and welfare of the public in mind, the Department of

Agriculture has taken steps, so farmers can shift to organic farming. This does not only save money but also has some health benefits.

But first, we have to know what organic farming is. This is a technique that has been practiced by ancient civilizations that simply relied on the land they worked on, the sun and the water to make the harvests grow.

It was only when scientists invented fertilizers and pesticides that we moved away from this technique because it was thought that this will make the crops bigger and harvesting faster.

Unfortunately, the use of fertilizers and pesticides has done more harm than good. The chemicals used are harmful but never in small dosages. But imagine what if somebody consumes this in excessive amounts and unknowingly develops an illness or their baby has birth defects.

Such threats are real which is why we have to do something before it happens. Before the Department of Agriculture wanted everyone to go into organic farming, tests were conducted.

The results show that organically grown vegetables have more nutrients and vitamins compared to conventional farming. The same goes for its taste.

Organic vegetables do not have hydrogenated fats, artificial flavor or coloring, sweeteners, additives, preservatives or residual antibiotics. This means that what you get is all natural. But don't forget to wash these first before it is cooked to remove any residue from the compost used in helping it grow.

The government or the Department of Agriculture is not the only one who should push farmers to shift towards organic farming. You can do your share by talking to the farmers themselves as they are the ones

who plant them. You can also start planting organically grown vegetables yourself because they cost a bit more in the supermarket.

Before you start planting, check how big is the area so you have an idea what kind of vegetables can be planted given your limited space. You then need to buy the necessary tools and make some of them yourself. This information can be found online, in books and from the gardening store.

If you don't want to start making an organic vegetable garden using seeds, you can get starter plants instead but be aware that they cost a bit more and this takes the thrill out of gardening.

But if money is no object to you, by all means get this from the store. Just make sure that there is a stamp which certifies that this has been approved by the Department of Health, Quality Assurance International, California Certified Organic Farmers or the Oregon Tilth Farm Verified Organic.

If everyone does their share, no one will use chemicals and fertilizers anymore. Everyone can live healthy and eat healthy. At the same time, we are able to protect the environment so future generations will be able to use the land we have used to plant their crops in the future.

Organic vegetable gardening is truly the way to go. If you noticed, some restaurants have done their share as well by making people know that whatever they use is organic.



# Chapter 6: Organic Vegetable Gardening So Important These Days

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**Organic vegetable gardening seems to be the trend these days as more people have become conscious of what they are eating.**

This is because conventional methods which involve the use of harmful chemicals may enter our systems.

In order to control the problem, the US Department of Agriculture has issued a new directive. This encourages farmers to shift to organic farming.



With organic farming, farmers will no longer need to plant crops using genetic engineering, irradiation and sewage sludge. Instead, this will be replaced with crop rotation.

Crop rotation is the practice of planting a different crop in the same area where another crop once occupied. This keeps the soil's nutrients fertile, so it can be used again in the following season.

If you think about it, this approach is easier said than done as farmers are accustomed to the old ways of doing it. To help them change their minds, the government offers incentives and subsidies to farmers who decide to follow this plan.

But the main reason why organic vegetable gardening is so important is the fact that the crops harvested have 50% more nutrients and vitamins compared to that of conventional farming methods.

This means the food they consume will reduce the risk of people suffering from a number of diseases like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and certain cancers.

Children who drink milk will be able to get more anti-oxidants, CLA, Omega 3 and vitamins when this is extracted from pastured grazed cows that will really strengthen their bones and muscles.

You can buy organically grown vegetables from the supermarket. The sad part is the almost everywhere you go, although the packaging comes from Department of Health, Quality Assurance International, California Certified Organic Farmers or the Oregon Tilth Farm Verified Organic, most of these are only 50% to 70% organic.

This is why homeowners who want to eat 100% organic vegetables are encouraged to grow these themselves.

There are two ways to make this happen. First, you buy the seedlings until they grow so you can harvest the. Second, you buy them fully grown and then just plant it into the ground.

Most people prefer the first because it makes them proud to know that what is served on the table was done from scratch.

In both cases, you have to prepare the soil, use compost and make sure that these are safe from threats such as insects, weeds and other animals that will eat what you have planted.

You can fight these with other animals, insects, organic fertilizers, deodorant soap and a few other items which you can find out after doing some research.

For those who don't have a big garden, they can try growing these organically grown vegetables in containers. They require more water than those planted in the soil so give doses frequently.

There is no doubt that organic vegetables and other products are important these days. If you value your health and those of your family, you can buy these from the store or plant it yourself.

For those who decide to buy organically grown vegetables, remember to wash before cooking them. This will remove any harmful substances or residue that may still be there which is invisible to the naked eye.

## **Why Should Farmers Practice Organic Vegetable Gardening**

Organic vegetable gardening has many advantages than conventional farming methods. This article will discuss that in the hopes that more people will realize that it has a lot of health benefits.

First, organic vegetable gardening does not use any fertilizers or pesticides. The ingredients used in making these products are harmful to humans and though they have been washed, people are still at risk of absorbing them when they are eaten.

A study shows that organically grown vegetables have 50% more nutrients and vitamins. This means that you are lesser at risk of developing certain health problems such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes and cancer.

Also, organically grown vegetables taste much better because it is not tainted with antibiotics. Think of it like powdered juice versus the kind that is naturally squeezed. The first one is mixed with a lot of artificial ingredients while the other is straight from the source.

It should be pointed out that fertilizers and pesticides make the soil unfertile. If this happens, we don't get the right number of vitamins and nutrients from the vegetables we consume.

If this is true, why did people use fertilizers and chemicals? Because back then, the use of such methods was thought to help increase food production, but studies later on have showed there was a flaw which is why this is being corrected.

You can easily spot organically grown vegetables and other food items in the grocery as they are placed in a separate area. You will notice that compared to other products, they cost a bit more, but don't you think it is better to buy such products that are healthier?

Organic farming is not only practiced for vegetables. This is also being done for fruits and animal livestock as well as research has showed that milk from organic cows contain more anti-oxidants, CLA, Omega 3 and vitamins compared to those that use hormones, antibiotics and the remains of other animals.

Given that, people should pressure their government representatives and even those who have not yet shifted towards organic farming to do so immediately.

The government for its part has done their part by offering incentives and subsidies to farmers in exchange for no longer using genetic engineering, irradiation and sewage sludge.

This changes how the game is played because the goal here is sustainable development and the only way to make sure the soil used is always fertile is through crop rotation. This means planting one variant this season and changing it with another in the next and so forth.

It isn't hard to implement. Farmers just need the willpower to open their minds and make the change.

You can also get into organic vegetable farming yourself by doing this in your own backyard. You just need to buy the supplies, prepare the land, protect it from insects and other threats so you will be able to harvest it in the next few weeks.

Whenever you buy organically grown vegetables, don't forget to wash them before it is cooked. Although it is chemical free, you don't know what kind of compost was used to help it grow.

You hit two birds with one stone when farmers and you decide to go into organic vegetable farming. It keeps both the people and the environment healthy.

## Chapter 7: Feeding the Soil – One Vital Aspect of Organic Gardening

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**There is an important aspect of organic gardening that you can very well relate to.**

Imagine this. You are hungry. You haven't been fed. You haven't taken a bath. You haven't pampered yourself. You've spent so much time working and taking care of others, but you haven't tended yourself for your own good.

How would you feel? For a time being, you may be able to accept the fact. You may still tire yourself out without asking for anything in return. But as the days go by, you will feel the negative effects of the

situation. You will no longer have the kind of energy that you used to. Your body will deteriorate until it can no longer function for the things that it used to do.

How is this related to the organic method of gardening? You can actually compare this to the state of the soil. Soil is a very important aspect in this type and all the other kinds of gardening. This is the base of everything. This will be the bed, or the house of your plants. You must choose the right one in the first place.

Depending on your location, the soils that you may acquire vary on such factor. You should base the decision in picking out the plants on the types of soils that are available in your area. Once you have picked the right kind, you are now on your way to the first steps of your gardening venture using the organic method.

Relating to the sample above, the soil must never be left untended. It must never go hungry. Or else, what happened to the example may also happen to the soil.

You have to feed the soil. You have to bathe it. And you have to take care of it just like how you tend to yourself or to the plants situated on your garden.

You may know from your grade school days that the soil needs water, sunlight and air. But you are doing everything organically now. Does it carry out any differences?

Yes, a lot. Although you still have to feed your soil and the plants on its enough sunlight, water and air, you have to add something else. You've got to have organic matters placed on the soil.

Have you ever heard of composting? This is the process where you culminate decaying matters like leaves, grasses, peelings of fruits or vegetables, even manures and fish heads to act as your soil's fertilizer.



This is organic remember? You cannot resort to anything synthetic. This is one proof that this process entails a lot of hard work than you can ever imagine.

Not only are you going to feed the soil, you also have to attend to it regularly. Mulching is like massaging the soil to keep its shape. This way, you will be able to get rid of the pests that your soil has gotten through the days or months, however long you have been gardening.

This will actually help you prevent acquiring bigger problems. There are many types of soils that need certain care and attention. For example, clay can hold up water better than the sandy kind. You have to know those kinds of details to be able to improve on your organic gardening venture.

### **3 Tips For Organic Gardening Soil**

Do you really think organic gardening soil is the same as regular garden soil? If so, boy are you sadly mistaken and you have a rude awakening coming your way.

That's kind of blunt isn't it? Did I get your attention, I really hope so? The information in this article will help you get a better understanding of the facts about organic gardening soil.

The first misconception most new organic gardeners have about their soil is that anything can grow in any type of soil. All you have to do is throw a few seeds in the ground and boom you have a natural garden. You need to lose that preconceived notion if it applies to you.

You must take into consideration the overall climate conditions which will impact the soil. An example of these things would be rain, wind,

temperatures and exposure to the sun light. Then the next thing to consider is the amount of rocks and density of the soil.

An example of bad density soil would be where the dirt is tightly compacted and allows for no circulation of air or moisture. To have good organic gardening soil it must be loose, with excellent air and moisture circulation.

Not to worry though because one of the things you can do if your dirt is tightly compacted is introduce earthworms to the ground and allow them to do their thing.

Frankly though the earthworms take time to create their magic and they have a tendency to get out of the designated planting area quickly. However, there is a simple solution to that problem and you will help improve your soil quickly.

You can go to your local nursery or hardware store and purchase organic soil by the bag full or even by the truck load. Many organic gardeners will put this soil on top of their compacted soil and then plow it into the regular soil.

However, for this method to be effective you must have enough organic soil to be from a minimum depth of three inches up to six inches or more. The great thing about it is as you repeat this procedure through several growing seasons you will soon have brought the life back to your original soil.

Another tip about your soil is the proper levels of phosphates, hydrogen and acidity in the soil. This is often times referred to as the ph factor in the soil. It's quite easy today to go on the World Wide Web and order a testing kit for your soil.

However, one of the best ways to determine if you have right kind of soil for organic gardening is to take a sample of your soil to your

county agriculture agent or to your local nursery. For a small fee or no fee at all they will tell you everything you need to know about your soil.

In addition to providing you the information about your dirt they can also advise you as to the best type of plants that will grow in your soil. Furthermore, they are a great source for additional tips on growing an organic garden successfully.

These tips are just a few of the things about your organic gardening soil which are important. To really get ahead of the game on your soil you should continue to further your education.

# Conclusion

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## **Organic vegetable gardening is making a comeback.**

This is because people are more health conscious about the food they eat and, in some places, there is already a food shortage so some have decided to plant and grow these on their own. To help you get started, here is some organic vegetable gardening information.

Organic vegetable gardening does not use fertilizers and chemicals which can be harmful to humans. It also does not use genetic engineering or irradiation. Instead, it uses simple farming techniques like tilling the land, giving it enough water and sufficient exposure from the sun.

When harvesting is finished, something new is planted which is better known as crop rotation that helps keep the soil fertile.

Growing organic vegetables is not something that only farmers can do. This can be done by homeowners since they can plan some of these in their own backyard.

The first thing that you have to do is choose what kind of vegetables you want to grow. You also have to understand how big these can grow so it will be easy to plot how many can be placed per row.

The next step is to check the condition of the soil. There are kits you can buy from the store to check its fertility. If the soil is good, then you can start by clearing it of rocks and weeds by mowing, pulling or digging them out.

You should then add compost, bone meal or rock phosphate and greensand to the soil to supply it with nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium. You can also add lime or Sulphur to adjust the soil's pH level only if you have to.

It will also be a good idea to till or dig in fertilizers using organic matter. This must at least be an inch of sharp sand if the soil you have is made of clay and then you rake the soil into beds and rows. You should leave it be for at least a month before you start planting.

Don't forget to use organic mulch to blanket the garden. You can use ground bark for that since it will decompose over a season or two.

You can also use a compost pile made out of recycled leaves, grass clippings, coffee grounds, eggshells and kitchen waste since these serve as a good fertilizer.

The organic vegetable garden will grow but it will be always under threat from weeds and insects. For that, you have to use other animals

and insects to fight these pests. You don't have to buy them because setting the ideal conditions will invite them in to your home.

As for the weeds, you can get rid of them by pulling them out or spraying homemade vinegar as this stops them growing. If you plant thickly enough, you will be able to discourage weeds from growing in between the plants.

Planting your own organic vegetable garden isn't that bad given that the only ones who will be consuming what is planted are those that live in the household. But it's going to be a bed of roses from the time you till the land to the time that they will be harvested.

The advantage of working on a small spaced is that you can easily inspect the whole area, so nothing is left behind.

## **Organic Vegetable Garden Basics**

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to plant vegetables. But if you want to do this the old-fashioned way which has been proven to be very effective, you should know the organic vegetable gardening basics.

The first thing you have to know is what is organic vegetable gardening?

It is simply a way of farming that does not use any synthetic products which includes fertilizers and pesticides. In short, you work with nature to get what you want.

When choosing the right vegetable to plant is knowing which of these are suitable to the soil and the climate. If you live in an area that experiences droughts, buy those that do not consume that much water.



Before you drop seeds into the soil, make sure the land is ready by tilling the land, so it is clear both of rocks and weeds.

The next step will be to add compost, bone meal or rock phosphate and greensand to the soil to supply it with nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium. If the pH level of the soil is too high, add lime or Sulphur to adjust it.

One more thing you have to do before planting the seeds is putting in organic fertilizer. You can use recycled leaves, grass clippings, coffee grounds, eggshells and kitchen waste which should be applied a month before planting begins.

Then it is time to plant the seeds. Each seed must be spaced by a certain distance the roots do not fight for water.

In between each of the vegetables, you can plant other things as well because the tighter the space, the lesser the chances that weeds will grow.

Pests are the biggest threat to your organic garden. To fight them, you can use birds, frogs or other insects. You don't have these creatures to fend off other insects.

You simply have to create the ideal environment by putting a bird house or a small pond. Once they are in place, they will do the rest by patrolling your garden and eating those who seek to eat your crops.

Putting up a few barriers can also help. Row covers are known to prevent moths from landing and laying eggs. You can also use sticky traps and foil collars to stop pests and borers.

There are also organic pesticides around but some of them can only kill one or two kinds of pests. So, before you buy them, make sure you know what you are dealing with.

Crop rotation is the best way to preserve the fertility of the soil. This is done after you harvest the vegetables, so it is ready for planting once again. For this to work, you have to plant in the same area a different vegetable.

Anyone can learn organic vegetable gardening basics and soon have their own little farm in their backyard. It is fresh, and you can pick this anytime you want which is very convenient as these are only a few feet from your home.

Should everyone get into organic vegetable gardening? Perhaps because there is a food shortage right now and most of the vegetables imported do not use this technique.

The government for its part has given incentives to farmers here to shift to this method but it's going to take more effort to persuade countries that do business with the US to do the same thing.

## Organic Gardening Practicality



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