PLANT, GROW, EAT

A STARTER GUIDE TO GROWING YOUR OWN FOOD

PABLO LAMBEY
FOUNDATION

01

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

Seed Preparation – Techniques for both direct seeding and transplanting

Soil Preparation – How to create healthy soil mixes using compost and other organic materials

Crop Planting Guide – A seasonal planting calendar with recommendations for different crops

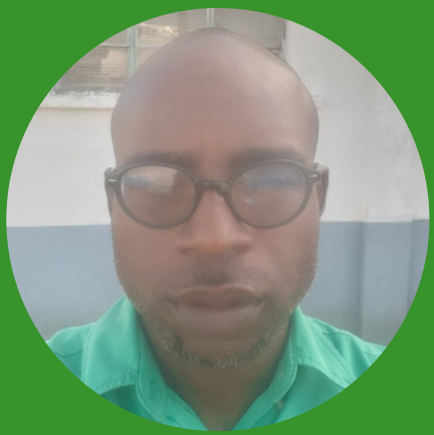
Best Planting Practices – Including crop rotation, companion planting, plant families, and integrated pest management

SOURCE: HORTICULTURE CROP TRAINING & DEMONSTRATION CENTRE, CENTRAL FARM

YOUR GARDENING MENTORS

MRS. SEDELLA HIGINIO

MR. RUSSEL LAMBERT



MR. CORDEL MORRIS

NOTES

PABLO LAMBEY
FOUNDATION

HE WHO FEEDS YOU, OWNS YOU!

Gardening isn't just about planting — it's about **taking control of your food, your health, and your future**. Whether you have a yard, a few buckets, or just a small patch of soil, you can grow fruits, vegetables, and herbs that nourish your family and lower your grocery bill.

Because the truth is: **whoever controls your food controls your future.** If you rely entirely on others for what you eat, you also give up part of your independence. But when you grow your own food, you reclaim power over your health, your economy, and your way of life.

This program was created to spark curiosity and action — to show young people, adults, and elders how possible it is to start growing right at home. It's about **building skills, eating better, saving money,** and **creating stronger, more self-reliant communities,** one garden at a time.

SOURCE: HORTICULTURE CROP TRAINING & DEMONSTRATION CENTRE, CENTRAL FARM

WHY GARDENING AND PLANTING?

Gardening and planting are more than just activities; they're powerful tools to:

- Take control of what you eat by growing healthy, fresh food
- Turn open or unused spaces into something useful and sustainable
- Bring people of all ages together to learn, work, and share
- Create systems that support your community now and in the future
- Reconnect with the land and the traditions passed down to us

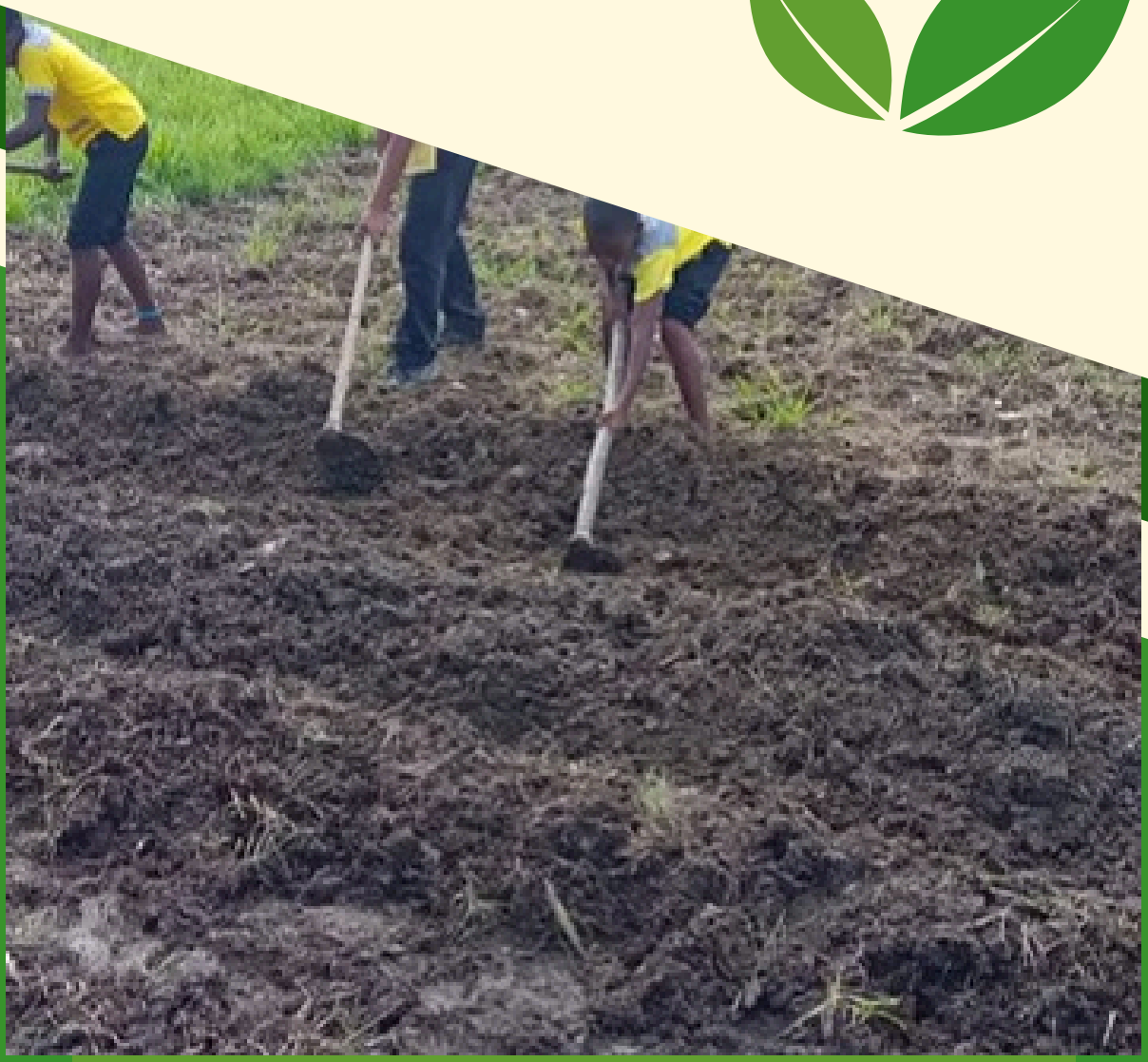
SOURCE: HORTICULTURE CROP TRAINING & DEMONSTRATION CENTRE, CENTRAL FARM

STARTING SEEDLINGS

Some vegetables are challenging to grow directly from seeds because they either require **specific conditions** to germinate or take a long time to reach transplant size. For crops such as tomatoes, eggplants, and peppers, starting them as seedlings in a nursery environment is crucial to ensure healthy development.

In contrast, **vegetables with larger seeds**—such as squash, cucumbers, and melons—and certain quick-germinating crops like radishes, okra, and carrots, **are more resilient** and can be sown directly into the soil in your garden or field.

SOURCE: HORTICULTURE CROP TRAINING & DEMONSTRATION CENTRE, CENTRAL FARM



SEEDLING PREPARATION METHODS

There are several effective ways to prepare seedlings before planting:

- **Seedlings on Raised Beds** – planted directly into prepared soil beds
- **Seedlings in Boxes** – grown in wooden or plastic containers for easy transport
- **Seedlings in Trays** – started in seedling trays as part of nursery setups for better care and spacing

SOURCE: HORTICULTURE CROP TRAINING & DEMONSTRATION CENTRE, CENTRAL FARM

CHOOSING THE RIGHT SOIL FOR GROWING

Successful seedling growth begins with the right soil. For optimal results, use fertile, **well-balanced** soil that supports healthy root development. In nursery settings, **loam or sandy loam** soils are recommended. These soils are **well-aerated, drain efficiently**, and are **rich in organic matter**, providing the nutrients and structure young plants need to establish strong foundations.

SOURCE: HORTICULTURE CROP TRAINING & DEMONSTRATION CENTRE, CENTRAL FARM

09

SOIL TREATMENT METHODS

Fermentation Method
This method enriches the soil by introducing beneficial microbes.

Instructions:

- Mix 10 buckets of soil with:
  - 2 liters of molasses
  - ½ pound of urea mix
  - 1 liter of EM in 5 gallons of water
- Combine thoroughly and cover the mixture with plastic
- Let it ferment for 5 to 7 days

Sterilization Method
This method helps eliminate pests, weeds, and harmful bacteria.

Instructions:

- **Hot Water Treatment**: Pour boiling water over the soil to kill pathogens
- **Solarization**: Cover the soil with clear plastic and leave it under direct sunlight for 7 days. The heat will naturally sterilize the soil.

SOURCE: HORTICULTURE CROP TRAINING & DEMONSTRATION CENTRE, CENTRAL FARM

COMPANION PLANTING

Companion planting is a gardening technique that involves growing certain plants close to one another to support healthier growth. These plant pairings can help by:

- Repelling pests
- Improving nutrient absorption
- Attracting pollinators
- Providing natural support or shade

By choosing the right combinations, gardeners can **reduce the need for chemicals** and create a more balanced, productive growing environment.

SOURCE: HORTICULTURE CROP TRAINING & DEMONSTRATION CENTRE, CENTRAL FARM

COMPANION PLANTING EXAMPLES

Zucchini thrives when planted near flowering herbs such as dill, summer savory, and basil. These herbs attract **pollinators, such as bees**, which are essential for effective fruit production.

Sage serves as a beneficial companion to **broccoli, cauliflower, rosemary, cabbage**, and **carrots**. It helps **deter common pests** such as **cabbage moths** and **beetles**, reducing the need for chemical pesticides.

- However, **sage should not be planted near cucumbers, onions**, or **rue**, as these combinations may hinder growth or attract unwanted pests.
- Allowing sage to **flower** can also attract **beneficial insects**, which contribute to natural pest control and support a healthier ecosystem in the garden.

SOURCE: HORTICULTURE CROP TRAINING & DEMONSTRATION CENTRE, CENTRAL FARM

PLANTING METHODS BY CROP

Direct Seed Only

These crops grow best when their seeds are planted directly into the soil:

- Beans
- Carrots
- Corn
- Onions (bulbs)
- Peas
- Radishes
- Spinach
- Squash

Direct Seed or Transplant

These crops can either be sown directly or started as seedlings and then transplanted:

- Cucumber
- Lettuce
- Muskmelon
- *Squash (can be started either way, but transplant with care)

Transplant Only

These crops require more controlled conditions to start and should be transplanted once seedlings are well established:

- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Eggplant
- Onions (from seed)
- Parsley
- Peppers
- Tomatoes

⚠ Note: Transplant squash, muskmelons, and cucumbers carefully, as they are sensitive to root disturbance.

SOURCE: HORTICULTURE CROP TRAINING & DEMONSTRATION CENTRE, CENTRAL FARM

HOW COMPANION PLANTING ENHANCES YOUR GARDEN

Companion planting offers a variety of ecological and agricultural benefits that contribute to healthier, more productive gardens. These include:

- **Flavor Enhancement** – Some plant combinations can naturally improve the flavor profile of nearby crops through shared nutrients or mutual influence.
- **Nitrogen Fixation** – Certain plants, such as legumes, convert atmospheric nitrogen into a form that other plants can utilize, thereby enriching the soil and promoting nearby growth.
- **Pest Management** – Companion plants may repel harmful insects or attract pests away from more vulnerable crops, reducing the need for chemical pesticides.
- **Attracting Beneficial Insects** – Many companion plants attract helpful insects, such as ladybugs, lacewings, and parasitic wasps, which help control pest populations.
- **Pollination Support** – Flowering companion plants can increase pollinator activity in your garden, leading to better fruit and seed development in adjacent crops
- **Structural Support and Protection** – Taller or sturdier plants can provide physical support for climbing varieties or serve as windbreaks and shade providers, creating a more balanced microclimate.

USING RECYCLED MATERIALS

Use everyday items to create sustainable and affordable garden structures:

- **Wooden Pallets** – Ideal for raised beds, compost bins, or vertical planters
- **Used Car Tires** – Can be stacked and filled with soil for planting or used as durable garden borders
- **Plastic Bottles** – Repurpose as hanging planters or drip irrigation systems

SOURCE: HORTICULTURE CROP TRAINING & DEMONSTRATION CENTRE, CENTRAL FARM

CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE

A-Level Subjects	Degree Options	Career Fields	Higher Degrees Specializations
Science Subjects (e.g. Biology, Chemistry, Physics)	B.Sc. Agriculture / B.Sc. Agronomy	Institute of Marine Affairs Genetics Research Solar Energy Research	Research Tissue Culture Entomology / Plant Pathology Herbicide Technology
Sciences/Maths (e.g. Maths, Physics, Computing)	B.Sc. Natural Sciences	Farm Manager Aquaculture Veterinary Medicine Horticulture Teaching	International Organisations Field Staff Planning Management
Languages/Social Sciences (e.g. History, Geography, Literature)	B.Sc. Engineering (Agricultural or Chemical)	Engineering Firms Manufacturing Quality Control Food Processing	Industry Agrochemicals Machinery Software Biotechnology
	B.Sc. Social Sciences / B.A. Arts	Agri. Development Planning Rural Sociology Statistics Demography	International Agencies (Funding, Developmental Aid, Trade, etc.)

TAKEN FROM "CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE: A PARTIAL EXPOSÉ" - AUTHORED BY MR. STEVE MAXIMAY.

SEASONAL PLANTING CALENDAR

Crop	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tomato	X	X	X								X	X
Cilantro	X	X	X								X	X
Radish	X	X	X								X	X
Sweet Pepper			X	X	X					X	X	
Sweet Corn			X	X	X					X	X	
Head Lettuce	X	X	X								X	X
Potato	X	X	X								X	X
Hot Pepper			X	X	X					X	X	
Eggplant			X	X	X					X	X	
Cucumber			X	X	X					X	X	
Celery	X	X	X								X	X
Cauliflower	X	X	X								X	X
Carrots	X	X	X								X	X
Cabbage	X	X	X								X	X
Onion	X	X	X								X	X
Broccoli	X	X	X								X	X

SOURCE: HORTICULTURE CROP TRAINING & DEMONSTRATION CENTRE, CENTRAL FARM

NOTES

PABLO LAMBEY
FOUNDATION

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF OUR GARDENING FUNDAMENTALS EVENT. YOUR SPONSORSHIP HELPED SOW SEEDS OF KNOWLEDGE, EMPOWERMENT, AND CULTURAL PRIDE. **WE'RE ESPECIALLY GRATEFUL FOR YOUR ROLE IN CELEBRATING GARIFUNA TRADITIONS WHILE PROMOTING EDUCATION, SUSTAINABILITY, AND A HEALTHIER FUTURE.**

Bowen & Bowen

EMPTY CONTAINERS

belize bank
Our Country. Your Bank

FUNDING FOR TREES

MR. ROY CAYETANO
VARIOUS PLANTS

MR. JOSEPH ESTEPHAN
SOIL

MRS. SEDELLA HIGINIO
VARIOUS PLANTS & PREP - WORK

MR. RUSSEL LAMBERT
SEEDLINGS & PREP-WORK

MR. CORDEL MORRIS
COMPOST AND AMENDMENTS TO SOIL & PREP - WORK

MR. NOEL RAMOS
TREES - DRAGON FRUITS

COMMON TERMINOLOGY

Compost: Decomposed organic matter that enriches the soil, enhances its structure, and improves moisture retention.

Fertilizer: A substance that adds essential nutrients, like nitrogen and potassium, to the soil to support healthy plant growth.

Manure: Nutrient rich animal waste used to improve soil fertility and add organic matter.

Soil Amendments: Materials added to soil to improve its structure, fertility, and ability to retain moisture.