

April 15, 2017

VEG GARDENING 101

GETTING YOUR GARDEN READY

We are done with the FOLLOWING cool season veggies by now

peas-by St. Patricks Day

cold hardy lettuce-planted in March

asian greens like pak choi, tatsoi, mustards-will start bolting once the weather heats up

spinach-will start bolting once the weather heats up

arugula-very cold hardy-will start bolting once the weather heats up

endive-it will continue to grow

onions, leeks-they will continue to grow

RAISED BEDS

-You should finish creating your garden area or raised garden beds.

Remember you don't have to make a box out of wood. Do a layout in your garden if you've don't have anything yet.

RAISED BED WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

-You could just rake some of your native soil into a raised box shapes. This is how I do this: I like to define my beds and layout the garden by putting stakes in ground on the 4 corners of my new bed shapes-use a tape measure. let's say 4' x 6' long or 4 X 8' long or even square 4x4'. I pick only 4 feet deep so you can walk around it and harvest the plants from any side.

If you are putting a raised bed up against a fence or wall, only make it 18 inches x whatever length you need. This is important as we don't want to walk across any of our 'raised' beds as it compacts the soil. That where are you? we can make our soil fluffy. **PLANTS DON'T LIKE COMPACTED SOIL.** This is so you can easily reach across the bed (18") on a wall without walking across it. Also I make my beds anywhere from 6 inches high to 12 inches high depending on how much native dirt I can get from my garden.

Put stakes in the 4 corners and tie string from from stake to stake defining the shape. Then I shovel the native dirt from what will be my path into what will be my raised bed. That lowers your paths and raises your bed.

RAISED BEDS WITH BOUNDARIES

You could of course actually frame your raised bed with wood, (not railroad or pressure treated wood-toxic) and if you do it that way, put some wire called hardware cloth on the inside of the bottom of your box to keep gophers out. You could also use cinder blocks, or bricks or anything that defines your shape. I've used 2 layers of flagstone too.

So one way is less permanent and cheaper and the other way is more permanent and expensive. If you make it by the raking the soil into a square, you will have to trap gophers as there is no hard boundary around it to keep them out. There are many ideas online for raised beds how to- just google 'how to make raised beds'.

NEXT: ADD SOIL ADMENDMENTS

You need to be adding soil amendmments like compost, rock phosphate, greensand, COMPOSTED old horse manure or chicken manure to your bed before planting. Be sure it is composted. Dig it in. Prepare your beds now. Even if it's only a hole, add compost and soil conditioners to it. Now you are ready to plant. Also always add more compost, yum yum mix, and worm castings if you can get them to bottom of hole. On some plants I add more ingredients. The idea is each hole where you are transplanting a plant, is highly enriched so it has a good start.

PLANT THESE SEEDS

Plant the following veggies by SEEDS in April-water 2x a day

Beet seeds-each seed is a couple of plants so when they pop up, keep the strongest one and cut the rest off. Pant about 1 1/2 inch deep. Thin out every 3 inches after germination.

Carrots-do not put nitrogen in soil. IF YOU DO YOU WILL GET 'HAIRY CARROTS'

plant very shallow-sprinkle in roughed up soil, sprinkle sand over them to cover them and put medium weight row cover over them. Water right thru row cover. it will hold the seeds in place till germination. Water 2x a day Thin out to every 2 inches. don't put nitrogen in your carrot bed-it will create hairy carrots.

Kale-Put in now by plants or seeds-great crop that won't bolt in summer. It is a biennial-lives approximately 2 years-that means it puts it's energy into leaf production the first year and to seed production the second year. Thin out to every 6 inches.

Chard-Transplant plants or plant by seeds. Thin spacing to every 6 inches.

Garlic-plant the biggest cloves and do not take the skin off. Plant 6 inches apart plant, pointed side up about 3 inches deep and cover with soil. Add straw in trough to help retain water.

Shallots- Plant one shallot every 6 inches leave top of shallot showing just a little bit. Do not plant deep. Add straw in trough to help retain water.

PERRENIALS

Plant strawberries, blackberries and raspberries in late spring. Water regularly. They will grow back each year. Start harvesting 2 years later.

Grapes-I like Himrod grape-a table eating seedless green grape that is wonderfully sweet, drought resistant when established and delicious and survives our winters.

Tomatoes-You **NEED WALL OF WATERS TO PROTECT YOUR PLANTS FROM THE COLD NITES**. Transplants plants **after May 15th in wall of waters**. We will talk extensively on Saturday, May 13th about how to grow 5-7' high tomatoes!

May 13, 2017

Tomatoes-You NEED WALL OF WATERS TO PROTECT YOUR PLANTS FROM THE COLD NITES. Transplants plants **after May 15th** in wall of waters.

Tomatoes-Do not plant by seed as we have too short of growing season. Put in plants only. Same for peppers and eggplants, buy transplants. The WOWs will provide protection down to _11_degrees at night. Even if the days get warm or even hot, keep them in WOWs until the plant reaches the top of the WOW and then remove the wow. this will be sometime in June. The nites are still cold, maybe not freezing but still really cold. Some people will use the WOW for an earlier plant-out date and you can, but are you a gambler?

Plant eggplant transplants out in the garden around June 1 when it warms up more

Plant peppers transplants out in the garden around June 1 when it warms up more