



10 Tips for a Successful Vegetable Garden

Patty G. Leander, Travis County Master Gardener

1. Seek Local Advice

- Aggie website: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu>
- Central TX Horticulture: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/travis/index.htm>
- Travis County Master Gardener Newsletter – *The Compost Bin*:
www.tcmastergardeners.org
- [The Southern Kitchen Garden](#) by Bill Adams & Tom LeRoy
- [Texas Fruit and Vegetable Gardening](#) by Greg Grant
- [The Vegetable Book](#) by Dr. Sam Cotner
- [Organic Vegetable Gardening](#) by Howard Garrett & Malcolm Beck

2. Find a Good Location

- most vegetables require 6-8 hours of sunlight
- select a location that is close and convenient to the kitchen

3. Ensure Adequate Moisture and Drainage

- locate garden near a source of water
- build raised beds if soil quality is poor
- use drip or soaker hoses, 1-1 ½ inches per week

4. Build Healthy Soil

- ideal pH is 6.5 - 7.0
- strive for 8-12" of loose, friable soil
- perform a soil test, use fertilizer as indicated
- incorporate compost or other organic matter

5. Use Mulch

- retains water, controls weeds, regulates soil temperature
- use leaves, compost, dried grass clippings, alfalfa hay, finely shredded bark

6. Plant the Right Plant at the Right Time

- cool season/warm season (first frost=mid-November, last freeze=mid-March)
- use recommended varieties

7. Monitor for Problems

- inspect your plants regularly

8. Control Pests and Disease

- use resistant varieties
- practice proper sanitation and crop rotation
- protect plants with floating row cover
- get to know the beneficial insects

9. Harvest at the Right Time

- pick at proper maturity for peak flavor and quality
- harvest frequently to encourage blooms

10. Eat What You Grow

- vegetables = vitamins, minerals, fiber and antioxidants