

Container Savvy

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I. Container Choice

- A. Materials
- B. Size and drainage
- C. What kinds of containers to NOT use
- D. Self – watering containers
 - 1. Commercial choices
 - 2. Make your own
- D. Hydroponics

II. Fill it up

- A. Choosing a commercial mix (and how to make it better)
- B. Making your own mix (see attached sheet)
- C. Poly sorb crystals

III. What to grow

- A. Variety selection
 - 1. Best veggies
 - a. tomatoes, peppers and the common stuff
 - b. greens
 - c. root crops
 - d. vine crops
 - e. peas and beans
 - f. taters
 - g. fruits
 - 2. Flowers
 - a. annuals and tropicals
 - b. perennials and their benefits
 - c. bulbs
 - 3. Herbs
 - a. annual herbs
 - b. perennial herbs

IV. Maintenance

- A. Organic fertilizer choices
 - 1. Granular
 - 2. Liquid
- B. Watering
- C. Staking and Trellising
- D. Deadheading and pinching
- E. Harvesting
- F. What to do at the end of the season

The Best Vegetable and Fruit Varieties for Containers

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Tomatoes:

Full-sized fruits, smaller plants: Mountain Princess, Iron Lady, Glacier, Bush Big Boy, BushSteak, Patio Paste, Fresh Salsa, Bush Goliath, Totem, Patio Princess

Cherry-sized fruits, dwarf plants: Sweetheart of the Patio, Red Robin, Tumbling Tom, Minibel, Tiny Tim, Small Fry, MicroTom, Sweet 'n Neat, Gold Nugget

Peppers: Sweet Bellina, Basket of Fire, Baby Belle, Mohawk Patio, Cheyenne Patio, Tequila Sunrise, Miniature Yellow Bell, Oda, Bangles Blend, Tangerine Dream, Yum yum Gold

Eggplants: Fairy Tale, Morden Midget, Patio Baby, Bride, Hansel, Gretel, Little Fingers, Amethyst, Emerald Isle, Pinstripe, Pot Black

Greens: Dwarf Green Curled kale; Little Gem, Tom Thumb, Bambi and Red Cash lettuces; arugula, pak choi, tat soi

Radish: French Breakfast, Easter Egg, Cherry Belle, Amethyst, Starburst

Carrot: Yaya, Romeo, Caracas, Oxheart, Parisienne, Thumbelina, Little Finger, Short 'n Sweet

Beets: Baby Ball, Little Ball, Babybeat

Cucumbers: Salad Bush, Bush Champion, Spacemaster, Picklebush, Patio Snacker, Miniature White

Squash:

Summer: Dunja, G-Star, Burpee's Best, Saffron, Patio Star, Bush Baby, Buckingham, Patio Green Bush, Patio Silver Bush

Winter: Sugarbush, Bush Delicata, Butterbush, Tivoli, Reno, Honey Bear, Table King Bush, Bush Buttercup

Peas: Karina, Laxton's Progress, Peas-in-a-pot, Tom Thumb, Half Pint, Little SnapPea Crunch, Snowbird

Corn: Yukon Chief, On Deck, Blue Jade Dwarf, Golden Midget

Berries:

Blueberries: Pink Icing, Blueberry Glaze, Jelly Bean, Peach Sorbet, TopHat

Raspberries: Raspberry Shortcake

Blackberries: Baby Cakes

Strawberries: Any variety; Loran, Tristan, or Alpine-types

Fruit trees: combination dwarf apple trees; columnar apple trees such as Red Sentinel, North Pole, Blushing Delight, Tangy Green ; genetic dwarf peaches such as El Dorado, Pix Zee, Honey Babe, Empress; nectarines such as Necta Zee and Necta Babe

Figs: Excel, Hardy Chicago, Petite Negri, Brown Turkey, Norland

Gooseberries, honeyberries, currents, and Pixie™ grapes

Mixing Your Own Potting Soil

Like all good recipes, quality ingredients are the key.

Large volumes can be mixed in a cement mixer or compost tumbler. Smaller quantities can be made in a wheelbarrow or large bucket. Be sure to mix very thoroughly to ensure a well-blended, consistent product.

Seedling mix

5 parts finely screened compost

4 parts garden soil

1-2 parts coarse sand

1-2 parts sphagnum peat moss

Add 2 Tbsp lime for each shovel of peat moss

Peat- soil combination mix

2 parts vermiculite

3 parts sphagnum peat moss

2 parts perlite

2 parts dehydrated manure

3 parts garden soil

½ part bone meal

Potted perennial and shrub mix

1 part compost

1 part coarse sand

1 part sphagnum peat moss

1 part composted pine bark

Add 2 Tbsp lime for each shovel of peat moss

General potting mix

6 gallons sphagnum peat moss

¼ cup limestone

4.5 gallons vermiculite or perlite

4.5 gallons compost

Mix together: 2 cups rock phosphate, 2 cups greensand, ½ cup bone meal, ¼ cup kelp meal and add 1 ½ cups of this fertilizer blend to the finished mix