

Ornamental **fruits & vegetables**

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MAKE IT BEAUTIFUL, NUTRITIOUS & PRODUCTIVE

PLANT & GARDENING INFORMATION

- melindamyers.com
- [All-America Selections](#)
- Your local [University Extension Service](#)
- [University of Wisconsin Extension Service - Horticulture](#)
- [Michigan State University Extension](#)
- [North Carolina Extension Gardener Plant Toolbox](#)

LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES

- Foundation plantings and front entrance
- Raised beds for easier access or to mask a problem
- Underutilized spaces, like the side yard
- Hillside - terraced garden outside kitchen door
- Containers - lots of small scale fruits and vegetables available now

THINK SUBSTITUTIONS

- A hedge becomes a row of raspberries, an apple is your shade tree...
- Instead of Japanese maple - use Black Lace Elderberry
- Functional and edible
 - [Asparagus divider](#)
 - Screen of [espaliered fruit trees](#)
 - Cucumbers, scarlet runner beans trained on trellis or fence
 - Shade - pleached apples, grapes, kiwi or other perennial vine
 - Willow amsonia perennial - replaced with asparagus or dill (reseeds readily)
 - Edible groundcovers - strawberries, thyme, Swiss chard

- Annual color and texture - curled parsley, Bull's Blood beet, Japanese Red Kingdom mustard, Redbor and Lacinato kale, purple basil, Peppermint Stick celery

EDIBLE ORNAMENTALS

(interesting catalog - onegreenworld.com)

- [Spruce tips](#) (*Picea*) in smoothies, Canadian martini, salads, syrup...
- Redbud flowers high in vitamin C
- Juneberry / Serviceberry (*Amelanchier*) - nutty blueberry in June
 - Obelisk variety is narrow / upright
- Cornelian Cherry Dogwood (*Cornus mas*) - fruit for wine, jams
- Elderberry (*Sambucus*) - flowers and fruit
- [Chokeberry](#) (*Aronia 'Viking'*) - astringent, high in antioxidants
 - Low Scape Hedger®
 - Ground Hug®
 - Low Scape Mound®

EDIBLE FLOWERS

- [Pansy, calendula & nasturtium](#) in elevated garden
- Pansy
- Nasturtium
 - Alsaska
 - Baby Rose
- Daylily flowers & [squash blossoms](#)
- Tangerine Gem marigold - citrusy fragrance and edible

Utility-friendly Tree Planting Tips from We Energies

Trees growing too close to power lines can cause sparks, fires, power outages and shock hazards. To avoid these problems, plant trees that won't interfere with power lines when fully grown. Small ornamental trees or shrubs that will not exceed 15 feet in height such as serviceberry, dogwood and low-growing evergreens are best to plant around power lines. Trees such as maple, basswood, burr oak, white pine or spruce grow more than 40 feet high and should be planted more than 50 feet from any overhead power lines.

And don't forget to call 811 at least three days before planting to check the location of underground services.

Learn more utility-friendly planting tips at we-energies.com.



HERBS

- Parsley as edger
- Sage as perennial edger
- Dill & fennel as filler - reseeds readily
- Thyme as groundcover

ORNAMENTAL FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Adjust planting dates based on your location - these are for Midwest and North

- Sunlight requirements
 - Full sun best for vegetables grown for flowers or fruit
 - Full or part sun for root vegetables (radishes, beets, carrots)
 - Greens are the most shade tolerant
- Moist, well-drained soil

LETTUCE, SPINACH AND GREENS

- Plant early spring and late season for fall harvest
- Most thrive in cooler temperatures
- Grow in containers (mixed with spring and fall flowers, window boxes), in ground or mixed borders
- Harvesting
 - Outer leaves of leafy crops when 4 to 6" tall
 - Head when loose and firm
- A few to try:
 - Leaf type lettuces - Ruby Skies, Oak Leaf, Simpson, Salad Bowl, Galactic, Freckles
 - Butterhead - Bibb, Summer Bibb, Buttercrunch, Little Gem
 - Romaine - Red Romaine
 - Cresses - Upland, Curly
 - Endive and escarole, chicories - Lorca, Ruffec, Salad King, Cos Batavian (AAS)
 - Chinese cabbage - Asian Delight (AAS, slow to bolt)

- Mache or corn salad - fist size rosette of leaves
- Radichio head-forming chicory - Chioggia (tangy to bitter flavor)
- Mustard - Red Kingdom Mizuna, Green Wave, Red Giant
- **Kale** - Prizm (AAS), Lacinato (AAS), Redbor (AAS), Red Russian, Scarlet, Tuscan Baby Leaf
- Spinach - America (AAS), Bloomsdale Long Standing, New Zealand (more heat tolerant)
- **Malabar climbing spinach** - not a true spinach, more heat tolerant
- Swiss chard - Bright Lights (AAS), Peppermint

CABBAGE, BROCCOLI AND BRUSSEL SPROUTS

- Plant early to mid-spring and mid-season for fall harvest (in North)
 - Just plant Brussels sprouts in spring - it's a longer season vegetable
- Harvesting
 - Cabbage when head is full size and firm - cut, leaving lower leaves for additional heads
 - Broccoli when flowerhead is full size, before buds open, leave stem for resprouting
 - **Brussels sprouts** from bottom up the stem when sprouts 1" in diameter
- A few to try:
 - **Cabbage** - Red, Savoy
 - Purple broccoli, purple sprouting broccoli
 - **Brussels sprouts** - green or red

Landscaping Around We Energies Utilities

Plants and other landscaping features can interfere with utility equipment and cause safety risks. Remember to:

Maintain equipment visibility: Use techniques that camouflage rather than hide utility equipment. Hearty grasses and/or flowers are preferred. They provide aesthetic improvements and grow back quickly should equipment access be necessary.

Ensure easy access: When fencing is used, choose a split-rail type, which can be easily dismantled when equipment access is needed. Be sure fences are located more than 3 feet from transformer sides and no permanent fence post is located in front of transformer door.

Keep proper clearance: When woody shrubs or bushes are used, place them more than 3 feet from transformer sides and more than 10 feet from its door. Keep future growth in mind for the size of shrubs or bushes.

Learn more utility-friendly planting tips at we-energies.com.

BEANS

- Plant several weeks before tomato and eggplants and later plantings
- Use pole beans as vertical element, screen or backdrop
- Harvest in 50 to 80 days
 - Snap - before beans swell and show
 - Dry - outer shell dry
- A few to try:
 - Scarlet Runner
 - Royal Burgundy
 - Yellow Wax

TOMATOES

- Choose the Best Tomato for Your Favorite Recipe and its beauty
- Wait for warm soil and air to move transplants into the garden
- Trench tall, leggy plants to encourage rooting
- Grow sprawled, staked, towered, in 3 to 5 gallon container or a hanging basket
- Space 24 to 36"
- Determinate
 - Grows a certain height and stops
 - Good for containers
- Indeterminate
 - Grows, flowers and fruits until frost kills
 - Pinch tips late season to encourage fruit to form and ripen
- Growing Tomatoes
- Hot and Cold Weather Tomatoes
- Tomato Growing Tips
- A few to try:
 - Chef's Choice
 - Midnight Snack
 - Striped Paste Heirloom

- Sun Sugar
- Sunrise Bumble Bee
- Sun Dipper
- Yellow Apple
- Espalier tomato
- Kitchen Minis™ tomatoes
- Growing Tomatoes Indoors
- Pico de Gallo made with ornamental tomatoes

PEPPERS

- Wait for warm soil and air to move transplants into the garden
- Plant at same depth as growing in container
- Grow in ground or 2 to 3 gallon container
- Space 18" apart
- Sweet, hot or ornamental (edible, but most are hot)
- Harvest in 60 to 70 days
 - Fruits firm and fully colored
- Colorful, Nutritious and Shapely Peppers
- Hot Peppers
- Hot Peppers and Scoville Heat Units
- A few to try:
 - Pot-a-Peño (hot) AAS winner
 - Cayennetta (hot) AAS winner
 - Fish (hot)
 - Buffy (hot) AAS winner
 - Candy Cane Chocolate Cherry (sweet)
 - Cornito Giallo (sweet) AAS winner
 - Lunchbox
 - Just Sweet
 - Kitchen Minis™ sweet and hot peppers



About Melinda

Nationally known gardening expert, TV/radio host, author & columnist Melinda Myers has over 30 years of horticulture experience and has written over 20 gardening books, including *Can't Miss Small Space Gardening*, the *Midwest Gardener's Handbook 2nd Edition* released 2022, and *Jackson and Perkins' Beautiful Roses Made Easy*. She hosts the nationally-syndicated "Melinda's Garden Moment" program airing on over 115 TV and radio stations throughout the U.S. Melinda also hosts the internationally distributed Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series and Instant Video, including the latest *Food Gardening for Everyone* DVD set. She is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine, writes the twice monthly "Gardeners' Questions" newspaper column and a nationally-distributed gardening column. She appears regularly as a guest expert on national and local television and radio shows.

Visit Melinda's website,
melindamyers.com

EGGPLANTS

- Wait for warm soil and air to move transplants into the garden
- Plant at same depth as growing in container
- Grow in ground or 2 to 3 gallon container
- Space 18" apart
- Harvest in 70 to 80 days
 - Fruits full size
 - Glossy before skin dulls
 - Leaves thumb print when gently pressed
- A few to try:
 - Hansel (AAS)
 - Gretel (AAS)
 - Bambino
 - Icicle (AAS)
 - Rosa di Napoli

OKRA

- Plant same time as tomatoes
- Space 30 to 36" apart
- Harvest when pods are immature, tender and about 2 to 3" long for most varieties
- Two to try:
 - Blondy (AAS)
 - Fire Candle (AAS)

SWEET POTATOES

- Wait for warm soil and air, no frost, before planting
- Plant slips 4" deep and 12" apart
- Use young leaves in soups and stews
- Harvesting and storing
 - Harvest roots in 90 to 100 days
 - Cure at 80°F for 4 to 14 days for sweeter flavor
 - Store at 65°F
- Treasure Island™ is ornamental and edible

CUCUMBER

- Plant when the air and soil are warm
- Grow sprawled on ground in rows or hills, trained on support or in container
- Harvesting
 - Sweet pickles when 1.5 to 2.5"
 - Dills when 3 to 4"
 - Slicing when 6 to 9", skin bright green
 - Burpless when 10 to 12"
- Kitchen Minis™ Quick Snack cucumber

CUCAMELONS

- Mini, crunchy cucumber with citrus flavor
- Rapid growing vine that can reach 10'
- Train on support - handle with care as vines are easily damaged
- Heat, drought and pest tolerant
- Harvest in 70 to 75 days
 - Fruits fall off when ripe
- Cucamelon Bloody Mary Salad recipe

SQUASH AND MELONS

- Plant when air and soil are warm, additional plantings through mid summer based on remaining frost-free days
- Grow sprawled on ground in rows or hills, trained on support or in container
- Sling large fruit
- Harvesting
 - Summer squash when fruit are 6 to 10" long or 3 to 6" in diameter
 - Winter squash when full size, rind is hard, portion touching the ground is cream or orange
 - Melons 65 to 90 days, fruit is full size, rind is dull, ground spot cream, tendrils dry and curled

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- A few to try:
 - Astia zucchini - bush type for containers
 - Vining varieties trained on obelisk
 - ◉ Delicata winter squash backdrop in garden bed
 - ◉ Sunshine winter squash
 - ◉ Sling large / heavy fruit

ARTICHOKES

- Imperial Star produces chokes in one season
- Start from seeds indoors, 6 to 12 weeks before last spring frost
 - Or purchase transplants
- Plant in garden when soil is warm and frost danger has passed
- Harvest chokes in 80 to 100 days, when 2 to 4", firm and closed

FRUIT

- Unusual Fruit Plants for Gardens in the North Central Region
- Tips for Growing Berries, Figs and Grapes at Home

STRAWBERRIES

- Day-neutral and everbearing - frequent harvests
 - Delizz® (AAS)
 - ◉ Start from seeds in spring
 - ◉ Fruit the first year
- June bearing (one crop) and day-neutral - both produce runners
- Strawberry pot or bag
- Use PVC tube with holes in center of container to deliver water to all parts of the planter
- Overwintering strawberries in containers
 - Sink plastic pot in the ground in vacant part of the garden
 - In unheated garage - may damage clay or terracotta pots as soil freezes and expands

BUSHEL AND BERRY® COMPACT FRUIT

- Blueberries
 - Need moist, well-drained acidic soil
 - Only need one plant to produce fruit
 - ◉ Two varieties grown closely together yields more than double

- Perpetua produces several harvests
- Sapphire Cascade and Midnight Cascade for hanging baskets

- Raspberry Shortcake®
 - Thornless
 - Produces flowers and fruit on first year canes
- Baby Cakes® blackberry
 - Thornless
 - May have two harvests in a year
 - Remove 2nd year canes after fruiting

CURRANTS

- Black currants banned in some states, as it is alternate host for white pine blister rust
 - Resistant varieties
 - ◉ Consort
 - ◉ Crusader
 - ◉ Ben Sarek
 - ◉ Titania
- Harvest just before fully ripe for making jams and jellies
- Store harvested currants in a closed container
- Pruning Currants and Gooseberries

ELDERBERRY

- Full sun for best fruiting, light shade
- Prefers moist, rich soil, but will tolerate wet and occasional dry
- Flowers and fruit of American (*Sambucus canadensis*) and European (*Sambucus nigra*) are edible, NOT European Red Elder
 - *Sambucus canadensis* - vigorous and suckering
 - ◉ Adams
 - ◉ Aurea
 - ◉ York
 - *Sambucus nigra*
 - ◉ Black Lace - ornamental as well

APPLES

- Most need two varieties or nearby crabapple that blooms at the same time to develop fruit
- Dwarf and narrow upright varieties for containers
- **Harvesting**
- A few to try:
 - Urban Apple™
 - Golden Sentinel™
 - Scarlet Sentinel™
 - North Pole™
 - Self fertile varieties, like Jon-a-Red®

FIGS

- Brown Turkey and Chicago Hardy for Northern climates
- Plants die back in winter in the North
- Harvest at end of summer
 - Use frost protection to extend harvest season
- **Overwintering Figs in the North**

GRAPES

- **U of MN hardy grape varieties**
- Avoid frost pockets and windy locations
- Plant away from areas treated with herbicides
- **Training and Pruning Grapes**
- **Harvesting and Storing Grapes**

KIWI

- Need on male for every 6 to 8 female plants for fruit
- Full sun to light shade
- Moist, well-drained soil
- Avoid frost pockets and wind
- Vigorous vines like to twine
- Need strong support
- Hardy Kiwi (*Actinidia arguta*) Zone 4
 - Michigan State (female)
 - Anna (Ananasnaya) is what I have

- Cornell is male clone
- Issai is self-fertile
- *Actinidia kolomikta* Zone 3
 - Arctic Beauty -
 - Variegated leaves
 - Male and female varieties

CITRUS

- Meyer lemon and key limes among the easiest to grow indoors
- Indoors receives 6 to 8 hours of direct sunlight
- Increase container size as plant grows
- Hand pollinate plants growing indoors
- Move outdoors, if possible, once day and night temperatures remain above 50°F
- Watch for pests, especially scale and mites
- Harvest when fruit colors up and tastes ripe
- Fruit remains flavorful for a long period of time

OVERWINTERING PERENNIALS, TREES AND SHRUBS IN CONTAINERS

- Grow plants in weather-proof pot
- Plants one Zone hardier are better able to survive cold winters in a pot in the landscape
- Added protection
 - Insulate with bales of straw, annual planters, wood chips...
 - Move into unheated garage
 - Water whenever the soil is thawed and dry
- Watch for voles
 - Treat with vole repellent, like **Plantskydd**

Find out more about All-America Selections (AAS) listed in the handout on their website, all-americanselections.org



UPCOMING WEBINARS & APPEARANCES

May 4th

Pet-friendly Container Gardening
Small Space Vegetable Gardening
Garden U 2024

Webinar May 9th

How to Plan Your Rain Garden

May 11th 12th, 18th

Ask the Plant Doctor

Ebert's Greenhouse Village

June 1st

Selecting, Planting, Pruning and Caring for Hydrangeas

Ebert's Greenhouse Village

Webinar June 5th

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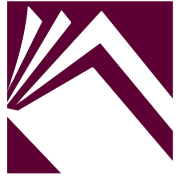
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