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## W039-Salsa Garden

The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service

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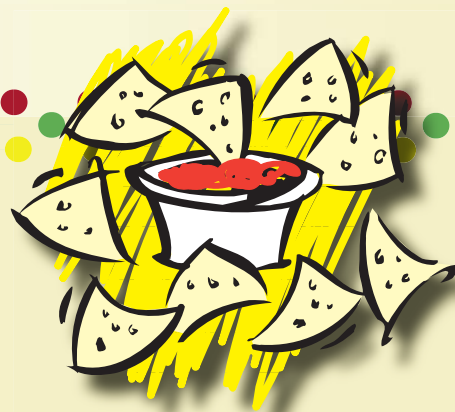
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# Salsa Garden



## Love Salsa? Spice up Your Landscape with a Salsa Garden!

### Steps to Planning a Theme Garden

1. Determine what type of theme garden you would like. In this case, we want a Mexican Salsa Garden.
2. Determine the location and size of your garden. Select an area that receives at least six hours of full sunlight every day and is close to a water source.
3. Take a soil sample and send it to be analyzed with the help of your county Extension agent.
4. The shape of your garden may be a 4'x4' square area or in the shape of a jalapeno! Use whatever fits into your landscape scheme.
5. Amend the soil according to soil test results. Using a tiller, work in a 3-inch layer of organic matter (peat moss, manure, rotted compost, etc.) to improve the soil structure.
6. Select plants from a list of recommended varieties.

7. Plant warm-season vegetables, such as tomatoes, peppers, eggplant and most herbs, after April 25th to avoid frost or freeze damage.
8. Water, weed, fertilize and harvest on a weekly basis throughout the growing season.
9. Enjoy your abundance of fresh vegetables and herbs.

## Recommended Plants

### Tomatoes:

Celebrity, Better Boy, Early Girl, Roma, Sweet Million (cherry)

### Tomatillos:

"Husk Tomatoes"

### Peppers:

*Sweet Bell:* California Wonder, Big Bertha, Sweet Banana, Golden Summer

Tip: Use small tomato cages to support peppers during the growing season.

### Hot Peppers:

Jalapeno, Cayenne, Habanero, Hungarian Wax



**Chives and Onions:**

Plant early and harvest mid-June to July.

**Garlic:**

Plant bulbs in the fall to late winter for harvest in late June.

**Cilantro:**

This herb provides a strong, spicy flavor to salsa.

**Other herbs:**

Sweet basil, oregano, marjoram, parsley

**Harvest, Storage and Preparation of Fresh Vegetables**

**Tomatoes:** Harvest when fully colored, yet still firm. May be frozen and stored before canning or processing. Blanch tomatoes in boiling water for 30 seconds to remove skins before storing.

**Tomatillos:** "Husk tomatoes" are ripe when the tomatillo fills out its papery husk, but are still green. Tomatillos can also be purchased canned or fresh at specialty stores.

**Peppers:** Hot or sweet. Harvest frequently to promote reproduction throughout the growing season. May be frozen or strung and dried.

**Onions and Garlic:** Harvest when 80 percent of the tops have fallen over or died down. May be field-cured or cured in mesh bags or trays, braided and strung. Fall-planted garlic is usually ready to harvest mid-June.

**Herbs:** Harvest throughout the growing season. For best flavor, gather herbs early in the morning. Most herbs may be dried or frozen for future use.



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Agricultural Extension Service, Charles L. Norman, Dean

**Refrigerator Salsa:**

- 1 gallon prepared tomatoes and/or tomatillos
- 1 can tomato paste
- 2 whole garlic cloves, minced
- 1 large onion
- 1 cup chopped sweet bell pepper
- 1/4 - 1/2 cup chopped, hot peppers (optional)
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup vinegar
- Herbs, salt, pepper to taste
- Mix together all ingredients in large container.
- Add more hot peppers for desired hot and spicy flavor! Refrigerate for at least 24 hours for best flavor. Serve with your favorite tortilla chips or Mexican style dish!

**More information:**

A large number of gardening resource materials are available at no charge on the UT Extension Website, with more materials added all the time. Visit [www.utextension.utk.edu/publications/default.htm](http://www.utextension.utk.edu/publications/default.htm)

Some Extension gardening and foods publications include:

- PB724 Canning Foods
- PB725 Preserving Foods
- PB774 Food Storage Guide
- PB901 Growing Vegetables in Home Gardens
- PB 1215 Disease Control in the Home Vegetable Garden
- PB1228 Gardening for Nutrition
- PB 1391 Organic Vegetable Gardening
- SP 291-A Growing Vegetable Transplants
- SP 291-B Growing Vegetables from Seed
- SP 291-C Soil Preparation for Vegetable Gardens
- SP 291-D Care of the Vegetable Garden
- SP 291-G Fall Vegetable Gardens
- SP 291-I Weed Control in Home Gardens
- SP 291-L Fresh Vegetable Storage for the Homeowner
- SP 291-N Raised Bed Gardening
- SP 291-O Guide to Spring-planted, Cool-season Vegetables
- SP 291-P Guide to Warm-season Vegetables
- SP 325-D Canning Vegetables
- SP 425-A Healthy Tennesseans Eat More Fruits and Vegetables

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