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W038-Pizza Garden

The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service

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Grow Your Own Slice of Pizza Pie!

Steps to Planning a Theme Garden

1. Determine what type of theme garden you would like. In this case we want an Italian-Style Pizza 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 large circle with triangle sections to look like a pizza or whatever shape fits your landscape!

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 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 vegetable and herbs.

Recommended Plants

**Tomatoes:**
Celebrity, Better Boy, Early Girl, Roma, Sweet Million (Cherry)
Tip: Plant 24 inches apart; stake or cage with heavy wire cages for support.

**Peppers:**
Sweet Bell: California Wonder, Big Bertha, Sweet Banana, Golden Summer
Tip: Use small tomato cages to support peppers during the growing season.

**Eggplant:**
Black Beauty, Ichiban, Dusky, Millionaire

**Sweet Basil:**
“To be fragrant.” Many varieties are available; grow from seed or select plants from your local garden center.

**Chives & Onions:**
Plant early and harvest mid-June to July.
Marjoram: Many varieties are available; grow from seed or select plants from your local garden center.

Oregano: Has a stronger flavor than marjoram, adding much flavor to Italian dishes.

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

Harvest, Storage & 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.

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

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

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

Pizza Sauce Recipe:
- 1 gallon prepared tomatoes
- 1 can tomato paste
- 1 whole onion
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 cup sweet bell pepper
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup vinegar
- Herbs, salt, pepper to taste
Place all ingredients in large crockpot and let cook 6-8 hours. Frequently drain off excess juice & save for canning.

Written by Karla Kean, Montgomery County Extension Agent, and Beth Babbit, Tennessee Master Gardener Coordinator.

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