

Planting Vegetables and Herbs

My vegetable garden is comprised of 5 raised beds made from concrete blocks and edged with brick. I like raised beds because it's easier on the back and you can control the condition of the soil. The PVC pipes are hooped over the beds to allow for bird netting or shade cloth to protect the plants. My garden is adjacent to the hen house where abundant crops can be fed to willing chickens.



When vegetable planting in the fall, I generally use a combination of plants and seeds. For example, I have never grown strawberries from seeds. Some of my herbs are perennial so they regenerate themselves year after year. I still haven't figured out the right number of plants to produce the right amount of vegetables for my family. One year, I stopped counting after picking the 85th eggplant. You can only donate so many eggplants before your friends stop taking your phone calls. Another year, as an experiment for the children, we

left the zucchini on the vine to grow and grow-one ending up with a final weight of 8 lbs. Big photo op.

Growing food is a bit hit and miss-all your good intentions can change based on the weather, critters, soil conditions and water. But the joy of picking something you have started is very rewarding...and it tastes so much better than store-bought produce.



Two weeks earlier, I amended my soil with our own compost made from recycled kitchen and yard waste. I do this to let the

soil settle in. Composting adds a natural alternative to chemical fertilizers. It's free, easy to make and good for the environment. Here is more information on [composting](#).



I purchased the plants at [Whitfill Nursery](#) and was pleased to see a very large selection of non-GMO (non-genetically

modified) plants. Here's the list of vegetables I planted last weekend: Tomatoes- Roma, Sweet 100s, Early Girl; brussels sprouts, spinach, romaine lettuce, Boston lettuce, arugula, strawberries (Eversweet), radicchio. Herbs: garlic chives, Italian basil, cilantro, and dill. I already have an abundance of rosemary, marjoram and mint.





My kale, bell peppers and a few heirloom tomato plants survived the summer. We are a bit “kaled-out” so the chickens

get to enjoy the balance.





Here is my planting bible, [Vegetable Planting Guide for the Valley of the Sun](#). I have used it year after year and it's the best summary of what vegetables to plant during the year. As well, here is the [Herb Planting Guide for the Valley of the Sun](#). Hope you find these charts helpful!

Happy planting,

Mary