

Companion Planting

Before synthetic fertilisers and pesticides, gardeners and farmers had to rely on natural growing methods to produce healthy plants. In natural conditions, plants grow in close communities with a number of different species existing side by side.

Planting different crops/plants near each other provides specific benefits, assuming the plants assist each other in nutrient uptake, pest control, pollination and overall enhanced productivity.

When used together with their organic gardening methods, companion planting can eradicate pests and diseases as well as making a marked difference in the soil.

Many plants have natural substances in their roots, flowers or leaves that repel or attract insects. They are also able to enhance or inhibit the growth of plants situated nearby.

By using the companion planting philosophy, one can chase away harmful insects while encouraging the beneficial ones to stay. There are no firm rules to companion planting and gardeners are encouraged to experiment with combinations to discover what works for their gardens.

Companion planting may mean your garden does not look as tidy as it “ought” to, but the advantages far outweigh what may be seen as the “chaos” of a cottage-style garden.

Here are a few examples to get you started ...

- **Nasturtiums** attract caterpillars. Plant them close to cabbages and lettuces and they will act as a trap-crop and protect the cabbage and lettuce.
- **Marigolds** deter aphids and their roots cleanse the soil by deterring nematodes.
- **Comfrey** benefits all plants and when the leaves are added to compost heaps the breaking down process is speeded up.
- **Marjoram** scent confuses pests.
- **Mint** controls aphids around **tomatoes**.
- **Parsley** attracts bees to **tomatoes**.
- **Lettuce** planted between **corn** plants gets shade in the hot afternoons.
- **Marigolds** and **Petunias** help to repel beetles on **bean** plants. **Summer savoury** helps **beans** grow sturdy and strong.
- **Rosemary** and **sage** repel cabbage butterfly. **Celery** helps to control grubs on **cabbage**.

- The chemical secreted by **dill** improves the health of **carrots**. **Sage** and **onions** help to repel carrot fly.
 - **Bush beans** and **celery** help each other to grow better.
 - **Leeks** grow better when planted near **celery** and **onions**.
 - **Radishes** and **beans** help each other to grow better. **Lettuce** makes **radishes** more tasty.
 - **Basil** improves growth and flavour of **tomatoes**. It repels thrips, flies and mosquitoes.
 - **Beans** enrich the soil with nitrogen drawn from the air. They are great with **carrots**, **cabbage**, **beetroot** and **cucumber**. They are not good with **onions** and **garlic**.
 - **Beetroot** adds minerals to the soil, especially magnesium. They grow well with **lettuce**, **onions** and **cabbage**.
 - **Chives** improve the growth of **carrots** and **tomatoes** and help keep aphids away from **tomatoes** and **sunflowers**.
 - **Mexican marigolds** deter nematodes found in the soil, as well as chasing away whitefly from **tomatoes**. However, **beans** and **cabbage** don't do well around marigolds.
 - **Peppermint** repels white cabbage moth and aphids. Bees love the flowers.
 - Besides being pretty when in flower and attracting good bugs, **sage** is good around **broccoli**, **cauliflower**, **rosemary** and **carrots**, chasing away white cabbage moth. It does well with **cucumbers** or **onions**.
 - **Yarrow** leaves added to compost heaps speed up decomposition.
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There are also certain plants that will inhibit the growth of one or both types of plant. Below is a more extensive list of good and bad combinations.

Beans:	Good with Corn, Carrots, Strawberries
	Bad with Tomatoes, Onions, Broccoli
Broccoli:	Good with Geraniums, Borage, Rosemary
	Bad with Tomatoes, Mustard
Lettuce:	Good with Beans, Carrots.
	Bad with Celery, Parsley, Cabbage

The mint family (Sage, Hyssop, etc.) repels slugs that are attracted to lettuce

Potato:

Good with Horseradish

Bad with Sunflowers, Tomatoes

Horseradish increases disease resistance of Potatoes

Tomatoes:

Good with Roses, Peppers, Asparagus

Bad with Potatoes, Cabbage, Rosemary, Peas

Basil:

Good with Tomato, Peppers, Oregano, Petunias

Bad with Rue, Sage

Borage:

Good with almost everything - it is the magic bullet of companion plants

Coriander:

Good with Spinach

It repels Aphids

Rosemary:

Good with Sage, Carrots, Beans

It deters Cabbage flies and repels many bean parasites

Spearmint:

Controls Ants, Aphids

Marigolds:

Repels nematodes

If this all seems a bit intense, just refer to the following general combinations.

General **GOOD** combinations:

Leek and celery Lettuce and carrots Sage and cabbage Parsley and tomato Beans and potatoes

General **BAD** combinations:

Beans and garlic Mint and parsley Wormwood with anything Fennel with beans or tomatoes

Sunflower with any vegetable except squash

Plant	Companions	Function	Foes
Apple	Nasturtium	Climbs tree and repels codling moth.	
Asparagus	Tomatoes, Parsley, Basil		
Balm	Tomatoes	Improves growth and flavour - attracts bees	
Basil	Tomatoes	helps repel flies and mosquitoes	Rue
Beans	Potatoes Carrots, Cucumber, cauliflower, summer savoury, most other vegetables and herbs.		Onions Garlic Gladiolus
Beetroot	Onions, Lettuce, Cabbage, Silver beet, Kohlrabi		
Birch		dead leaves encourage compost fermentation.	
Borage	Tomatoes, squash and strawberries	Deters tomato worm, improves growth and flavour and in the strawberry patch will increase the yield.	
Brassica's (Cabbage, Cauliflower, Broccoli)	Aromatic plants, sage, dill, camomile, beets, peppermint, rosemary, Beans, Celery, Onions, Potatoes, dwarf zinnias.	Dill attracts a wasp to control cabbage moth. Zinnias attract lady bugs to protect plants.	strawberries, Tomatoes
Broad beans	Potatoes, Peas, Beans		
Caraway		helps breakdown heavy soils.	
Carrots	Lettuce, Peas, Leeks, Chives, Onions, Cucumbers, Beans, tomatoes, wormwood, sage, rosemary		Dill in flower and being stored with apples
Catnip		repels fleas, ants and rodents.	

Cauliflower	Celery		
Celery & Celeriac	Chives, Leeks, Tomatoes, Dwarf Beans, Brassica's		
Celery & Celeriac	Chives, Leeks, Tomatoes, Dwarf Beans		
Chamomile	Cabbages and onions	deters flies and mosquitoes and gives strength to any plant growing nearby.	
Chives	Carrots	grown beneath apple trees will help to prevent apple scab; beneath roses will keep away aphids and blackspot. Deters aphids on lettuce and peas. Spray will deter downy and powdery mildew on gooseberries and cucumbers.	Peas, beans
Citrus	Bracken Fern grape vines	Repels stink beetles	
Comfrey	Avocados and most fruit trees	Garden edging, compost activator, medicinal, foliage spray, nutrient miner, essential to all gardens.	
Cucumbers	Beans, corn, peas, radish, sunflowers		Potatoes, aromatic herbs
Dill	Brassica's	Dill attracts predator wasp for cabbage moth.	
Elderberry		a general insecticide, the leaves encourage compost fermentation, the flowers and berries make lovely wine!	
Fennel.		(not F. vulgare or F. officinale) repels flies, fleas and ants	Most plants dislike it
French Marigold	Tomatoes most vegetables.	root secretions kill nematodes in the soil. Will repel white fly amongst tomatoes.	
Fruit trees	nettles, garlic, chives, tansy, southernwood and horseradish		
Garlic.	Roses, raspberry	helps keep aphids away from roses and raspberries, repels cabbage butterfly	Peas and beans
Geranium		Strong aroma - deters insects and encourages bees	
Grapes	Hyssop, tansy and sage		
Hyssop	Cabbage, grapes	attracts cabbage white moth keeping Brassica's free from infestation.	Radishes
Leek	Onion, celery, carrot		
Lettuce	tall flowers, carrots, radish, onion family	Flowers offer light shade for lettuce	
Marigolds	Tomatoes, most vegetables	Kills couch, nematodes and eel worm	
Melon	Radish		

Mint	Cabbage, tomatoes	Deters white cabbage moth, deters ants and fleas (especially spearmint), will deter clothes moths.	
Nasturtium	Radishes, cabbages, zucchini cucurbits, fruit trees	secrete a mustard oil, which many insects find attractive and will seek out, particularly the cabbage white moth. The flowers repel aphids and the cucumber beetle. The climbing variety grown up apple trees will repel codling moth.	
Nettle		Beneficial anywhere, increases aroma and pungency of other herbs	
Onion and garlic	Beets, summer savoury, tomatoes, lettuce, strawberries, camomile		
Parsley	Tomato, asparagus, roses	Deters rose beetle, improves tomato and asparagus.	
Peas	Carrots, turnips, corn, beans, radishes, cucumbers, most vegetables and herbs		Onions, garlic gladiolas, potatoes
Potato	Beans, cabbage, marigold, horseradish (plant at corners of patch) eggplant, sweet alyssum.	Alyssum attracts beneficial wasps and acts as a living ground cover	Pumpkin, squash, cucumber, sunflower, tomato, raspberry
Pumpkin	Corn		Potato
Pyrethrum		will repel bugs if grown around the vegetable garden.	
Radish	Peas, nasturtium, lettuce, cucumbers, spinach	Radish attracts leaf minor away from spinach	
Raspberry	Most vegetables		Blackberries, tomatoes, potato
Rosemary	Cabbage, beans, carrots, sage	Deters cabbage moth, bean beetles and carrot fly	
Roses	Garlic, chives, parsley, mignonette lettuce.		
Rue (Rutus, not Peganum)		keeps cats and dogs off garden beds if planted round the borders.	
Sage	Rosemary, cabbage and carrots	Deters cabbage moth and carrot fly	Cucumbers

Spinach	Strawberries		
Squash	Nasturtium Corn		
Strawberries	Bush bean, spinach, borage, lettuce		Cabbage
Sunflower	Cucumbers		Potato
Sweet Corn	Potatoes, Peas, Beans, cucumbers, pumpkin, squash	Corn acts as a trellis for beans and beans attract predators of corn pests.	
Tansy	Fruit trees, roses and raspberries	repels moths, flies and ants. Plant beneath peach trees to repel harmful flying insects. Tansy leaves assist compost fermentation.	
Thyme	Here and there in the garden	Protects cabbages, improves growth and flavour of vegetables, general insect repellent.	
Tomatoes	Asparagus, Parsley, Chives, onion, Broccoli, Sweet Basil, marigold, carrots, parsley.		Kohlrabi, potato, fennel, cabbage
Turnip	Peas, nasturtium, lettuce, cucumbers		
Wormwood (Artemesia, not Ambrosia)		although it can inhibit the growth of plants near it, wormwood does repel moths, flies and fleas and keeps animals off the garden.	
Yarrow	Near aromatic herbs and vegetables	Plant along borders and paths. Enhances essential oil production and flavour	