

Starting a Vegetable Garden

A trend for *food gardening* has developed with the growth of the organic movement. People are concerned about the chemicals used on food that they eat. With the recent increases in the cost of food, more gardeners are growing their own. The thrill of preparing a meal with food that you have invested effort and joy in is huge.

Follow these guidelines to ensure that your veggies and herbs are tasty and of top quality:

- **Grow in a sunny position** where the plants will receive at least four to six hours of sunlight per day
- **The garden size** need not be huge - a relatively small patch of 1m x 2m will feed a family of four if small quantities of various varieties are planted. Avoid the common mistake of planting an entire packet of seed all at once. Sow only a few seeds and keep the rest to sow at monthly intervals. This will ensure there is a constant supply of fresh vegetables. It's a lot of hard work growing masses of veg that you then have to donate to friends and neighbours
- **Plant** in well-composted and well-drained soil
- **Organic fertilizer** should be used regularly for best results (Talborne Organics or Bounce Back)
- **Water** deeply and frequently in summer but less often in winter
- **Plan the positions** of each plant so that taller varieties don't overshadow smaller plants and deprive them of sunlight
- **Allow enough room** for growth and remember that some plants grow well together and some don't – see the information on Companion Planting for best results
- **Plant** either in rows or incorporate them into your flower beds. A border of red lettuces, parsley or garlic chives looks lovely
- **Rotate your crops** to decrease the likelihood of disease. Plant a root veg, followed by a legume and finally a leafy veg i.e. carrots/beetroot then beans/peas then lettuce/rocket
- **Mulch** helps retain water and suppress weeds



Michells Incredible Edibles – organically grown herbs, veggies and fruit