

## Plant a Garden

### Why we care

Conventional food production is efficient when it comes to land use but consumes 17% of our fossil fuels, much of it for synthetic fertilizers. These fertilizers produce excess nitrogen which, along with pesticides, contaminates water supplies. Industrial agriculture also causes large-scale erosion and depletes the soil of nutrients.

Homegrown vegetables, on the other hand, are tastier and more nutritious. They don't require synthetic fertilizers, long-distance shipping, or packages to preserve freshness. They save you money and increase self-sufficiency.

### Simple, practical steps

For new gardeners:

1. Start small, perhaps just tomatoes and cucumbers the first year.
2. Choose a garden spot that receives at least 6 hours of sun.
3. Make sure soil is dry enough to work.
4. Add up to 3 inches of high quality organic compost.
5. Break up and turn the soil at least 1 foot deep.
6. Add organic fertilizer.
7. Check planting guides for your location or talk to experienced gardeners to determine what to plant when.
8. Plant seeds or plants according to directions.
9. Keep soil moist with a soft spray. After plants come up, water deeper and less frequently using a soaker hose.

Go to <http://extension.oregonstate.edu>, "Publications," "Gardening," "Vegetables" for these two publications: *Vegetable Gardening in Oregon*, EC 871 (13 pages) and *Preparing Your Vegetable Garden Site*, EC 1228 (brochure) or call your county extension office at (503) 640-1150 (Washington), (503) 655-8631 (Clackamas), (503) 445-4608 (Multnomah).

**Questions or feedback? Contact Jeanne Roy at [info@earthleaders.org](mailto:info@earthleaders.org).**