

## **Edible Landscapes** **Just grazing through**

There's nothing better than picking and eating right from your own garden. The plants you enjoy this way don't have to be confined to your vegetable plot, however. Here's a look at helping traditional vegetables make their way in ornamental beds, and discovering ornamental plants whose qualifications as fruits and vegetables you may have overlooked. Garden designer and writer Janet Macunovich will have you grazing through your whole landscape this year.

Graze (grayz) verb; Feed on growing herbage..... Touch lightly

### **I. The joy of being surrounded by food**

### **II. Practical considerations, when mixing the edible and ornamental**

#### **A. Can annual veggies adjust to living among older plants?**

1. Companions cast big shadows and have a head start!
2. Competition for water; sometimes unfair chemical tactics
3. Strong stems to lean on...  
..blocking the breeze, too. Which is good and bad.
4. Pollinators a-plenty...  
...if the bloom time's right.

#### **B. Pest control**

1. If we disperse a crop, a pest may not find it all...  
...but it might mean more time for you, or more materials.
2. Crop rotation still important.  
What ornamental was or is in that soil? From what family / crop rotation group?
3. Chemical controls used for ornamentals may be undesirable as fall-out on edibles.

#### **C. Other breaks in routine**

1. No mulch!
2. Harvesting basket in your standard kit of tools
3. Watering: Timing and method, trickle vs. overhead
4. Fertilizer: Nitrogen, timing and effect on fruit and nitrates.

### **III. Aesthetic considerations of mixing the edible and ornamental**

A. Considering the vegetable, herb or fruit as a shape, color and texture

B. Space: A veggie essential and a design "plus."

C. Structures to provide form, increase interest...  
...and facilitate growing.

### **IV. Ideas...**

A. Fruit borders

B. Truly luscious groundcovers

C. Ornamental grass substitutes

D. Easiest fruit

E. Containers/changeables

### **V. Choice edibles**

A. Some need no introduction...

...but you may want to know their relatives and problems (chart)

B. Others might surprise

**Choice annual edibles: Michigan** (SE: ave.185-195 day growing season, ave. last frost 5/12, first freeze 10/9, 1.5" to 3" rain per month)

crop	family	start seed in-doors	set out/sow, for <u>summer crop</u> - fall crop	spacing between plants x rows	days to harvest	yield per row of given length	problems	ornam. relatives
peas	legume	4/1	4/1 - 5/15	1" x 8"	70	5 lb/ 25'	mildew, wilt, pea curculio	sweet pea, locust tree, baptisia, true clover, peanut
beans		5/1	5/10 7/4	2" x 24"	55	30 lb/ 25' pole, more	leaf spot, aphids, bean beetle	
broccoli	mustard	4/ 15	4/15 7/1	12" x 24"	70	20 lb/ 10'	flea beetle (leaf, early), aphids, cabbage looper, cabbage maggot (roots, summer) aphids, slugs, clubroot	kale, collards, rock cress, candy tuft, money plant, kohlrabi
cauliflower		4/1	4/15 6/20	12-18" x 24"	75 90	15 lb/ 10' 7 lb/ 10'		
cabbage			4/1, Aug	1" x 12"	30	bunch/1'	flea beetle flea beetle, cabbage maggot	
Brussels sprout			4/15	2" x 18"	30, 60			
radish								
turnip lf, root								
lettuce, leaf -head	daisy	4/15	4/15 - 8/10 4/15 - 8/1	4" x 12" 12" x 18"	45 70	5 lb/ 10' 1 head/ 1'	aphids, slugs, cutworm	daisy, aster, Joe Pye, <i>Liatris</i> , many
spinach	goosefoot		4/1 - 6/15	3 x 18"	50	10 lb/ 25'	aphids, harlequin bug	beets, chard
squash	cucurbit	5/15	6/15	36" x 60"	90	10 lb/ 10'	squash bug, squash vine borer, mildew, cucumber mosaic, wilt, scab, cucumber beetle anthracnose, leaf spot	wild cucumber
cuke/zucchini		5/10	5/20 - 6/15	12" x 48"	60	15 lb/ 10'		
pumpkin			5/20 - 6/15	36" x 60"	90	50 lb./ 50'		
waterm/cant		5/15	6/10	30" x 48"	90	10 lb/ 25'		
tomato	night-shade	5/15	5/15 - 6/10	18" x 36"	80	10 lb/ 10'	verticillium & fusarium wilt, nematodes, tobacco mosaic virus (V, F, N, T), early blight, cuc. mosaic, leaf spot, fruitworm, hornworm, potato beetle, spider mite	petunia, nicotiana, nierembergia, datura
pepper		5/15	5/20 - 6/15	18" x 30"	75	6 lb/ 10'		
eggplant		5/15	5/20 - 6/1	18" x 30"	70	10 lb/ 10'		
potato			4/15 - 6/1	12" x 30"	90	10 lb/ 10'		
carrot	umbel	4/1	4/20 - 7/1	2" x 15"	65	10 lb/ 10'	parsley worm (black swallowtail btrfly)	parsley, Qu Ann Lc, dill, celery, bishops weed
celery			4/20	12"	90	1 head		
sweet potato	morning glory		6/1	12" x 30"	115	10 lb/ 10'	wilt, nematodes, scurf, pox, stink bugs	morning glory
okra	mallow		5/20	12" x 36"	60	10 lb/ 10'	Japanese beetle	hibiscus, hollyhock
corn	grass	5/10	5/10 - 6/20	10" x 30"	80	5 doz/ 50'	corn earworm, borer	grasses

**Woody and perennial edibles and herbs: Michigan** (USDA hardiness zone 5)

crop	family	new plants: time/ notes	min. space	harvest time	yield/area or plant	problems	ornam. relatives
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**Edible perennials, biennials** ("Vegetable": Usu. herbaceous/ non-woody and grown for food. Vs. fruit, herb/spice; grain grown for seed)

chard	goosefoot						beets, spinach
asparagus	lily	3/10 - 4/30	12" x 36"	2 yrs.	8-12 spears	asparagus beetle	daylily, hosta, hyacinth, <i>Liriope</i> , Solomon seal, toadlily, tulip
garlic		4/1	3" x 15"	140	varies	bulb fly	
onions		4/10	3" x 15"	100	1 lb/ 1'		
rhubarb	buck-wheat	4/1	36" x 36"	2 yrs.	3-4 lbs.		kiss me o' gdn gate, lady's thumb, knot weeds, weed dock
sorrel		hardy perennial	12"	spring & fall			
Jerusalem artichoke	daisy	hardy perennial	3'	any	1 qt, tubers	runs amok	mum, aster, yarrow, marigold, zinnia
burdock		biennial	3'	fall	1 root	self sows	

**Soooo many fruits!** ("Fruit": Edible plant's fruit usu. produced on tree, shrub or woody vine. Few exceptions; e.g., strawberry.)

grape	grape	4/1 - 5/30 2 yrs. to crop	48" x 48"	fall	+10 lbs.	birds, Japanese beetles, aphids, leaf spots, twig blight	VA creeper, porcelain vine
raspberry	rose	4/1 - 5/30 2 yrs. to crop	30" x 36"	Aug-Sep or everbea	1 qt/ plnt	cane borer, Japanese beetle, virus	rose, <i>Cotoneaster</i> , <i>Aruncus</i> , blackberry, ninebark, <i>Filipendula</i> , flowering almond, mt. ash, <i>Potentilla</i>
strawberry		4/30 - 5/30 1 year to crop	12" x 36"	June or fall	1 pt - 1 qt./plant; renew after 3rd crop	slugs, birds, animals	
apple		need x-polli var. or crab.	varies 10-15' dwarfest apples; stone fruits 15-20'	fall	1-8 bu.; 4-8 yrs. to crop	many insects, animals like rose family plants and fruit diseases - apple & serviceberry: scab; pear & quince: fire blight; peach/apricot: brown rot/gummosis	
pear							
cherry		sweet, need x-pollinator			cherry, serviceberry 50 lbs.; peach/plum 2-5 b u., quince 1 bu. 3-6 yrs. to crop		
peach, plum, apricot		plum needs x-pollin					
serviceberry		self fertile	20'				
quince		self fertile		fall			

elderberry	honeysuc	fast crop!	8'	August	5-10 lbs.	birds, cane borer (regularly prune to renew)	<i>Viburnum , Weigela</i>
mulberry	mulb.	males and weeper fruitless	15' x 15'	August	to 10 bu.	birds	figs, osage orange
blueberry, lingonberry	heath	3 yrs. to good crop	5'	Aug-Sept.	3 yrs 1 pt. 10 yrs 1-8 qts	birds!	rhodo., azalea, mt. laurel, heather
currants, gooseberries	currant, saxifra.	3 yrs. to good crop	5'	Jul-Aug	3-5 qts.	birds; rust	
nut trees oak, chestnut, hickory, walnut, hazel / filbert	beech	plant in fall start small for fastest growth!	varies	fall	after 10 yrs. 4-10 lbs.	aphids, mites, blights, leaf tiers. For these and all fruit/nut plants: avoid control issues by siting the trees well and keeping them growing vigorously	
	walnut						butternut
	birch						alder, hornbeam

**Herbs: Woody, perennial and annual** ("Herb": Grown for seasoning. Spice usu. tropical/sub-tropical.)

lemon balm, mints, oregano, sage, savory, thyme	mint	hardy perennial	8-24" depends on degree of harvest/ clipping	all summer	varies	four lined plant bug	<i>ajuga, bee balm, Coleus, Lamium, obedient plant, Russian sage, salvia</i>
		tender perennial					
		annual					
bay, lemon verbena, rosemary							
basil, perilla							
tarragon	daisy	perennial	18"	all summer	varies		artemisia, thistle, coneflower, many
dill, fennel, lovage, parsley	umbel			all summer		parsley worm (black swallowtail btrfly)	carrot, celery, Queen Ann Lc,