

Garden Layouts for Mecklenburg County, NC

Warm-Season Vegetables, Fruits, & Herbs

Terrific Tomatoes & Scrumptious Summer Veggies



































North Carolina's southern Piedmont has 3 growing seasons - spring, summer, and fall. Most vegetables are annuals that complete their life-cycle in one growing season. Some grow to maturity in cooler temperatures (cool-season vegetables), others prefer summer heat (warm-season vegetables), and a few are perennial, producing year after year. The two garden layouts provided here are designed for a **4' by 10' raised bed with a depth of 8" or more**, suitable for school gardens, community gardens, or back yards; **each garden square = 1 ft²**. Garden requirements: 6-8 hours of direct sunlight per day, easy access to water, healthy soil amended with finished compost, and top-dressing with organic mulch to conserve moisture.

Many warm-season crops (plant in spring for harvest before frost) are vine crops (like tomatoes and squash) that take up space unless grown vertically; so plant in a line at a trellis on the north side of garden as indicated in layouts. Train plants to climb by guiding the main stem through the trellis. For vining tomatoes, prune to limit plant to one or two main stems. Alternatively, select vegetables that are designated as determinate (tomatoes), dwarf, compact, or bush to make best use of limited space. Place taller or trellised crops on north side to prevent shade issues; install supports for plants that bear heavy fruit or to prevent sprawling growth while plants are small to avoid damaging feeder roots. As listed below, each garden layout offers suggested summer crops; other choices are available and gardeners must determine the quantities and varieties of crops best for them. A few specific compact varieties that are Mecklenburg Extension Master Gardener favorites are provided in the list.

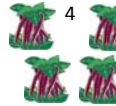

































Depending on their growth requirements, edible plants get their start in the outdoor garden as:

- Seeds (S) – direct sow seeds outside
 - Bulbs (B) – plant bulbs outside
 - Transplants (T) – start seeds indoors 4-6 weeks before time to transplant outdoors or purchase transplants (also called starts or sets)
 - Plants (P) – purchase plants (often advisable for certain perennials including some herbs)
- Basil** (S, T) – plant May-June for a summer supply of this annual herb; try aromatic 'Genovese' or 'Purple,' or spicy 'Thai'
 - Beans, snap bush** (S) – fast growing and no trellising; plant in succession for a continuous summer harvest; try 'Maxibel Haricot Vert' and 'Tavera Haricot Vert' stringless French filet beans with incredible flavor or compact, high yielding 'Provider Snap Bush'
 - Beans, snap pole** (S) – save space using trellis or pole tips; try stringless, reliable 'Kentucky Wonder' and 'Rattlesnake'
 - Chives** (S, P) – member of the onion family with edible purple to pink flowers; leaves add mild, subtle onion flavor to dishes
 - Cucumber** (S) – select bush varieties or trellis longer vines and sow two plantings for continuous harvest; try 'Bush Slicer,' 'Bush Pickle,' 'Green Fingers,' 'Lemon,' or 'Little Leaf Cucumber'
 - Eggplant** (T) – compact varieties of this garden beauty include 'Fairy Tale,' 'Hansel,' 'Rosa Bianca,' 'Gretel,' and 'Little Prince'
 - Garlic chives, Chinese leeks** (S, P) – young leaves add oniony flavor with garlicky overtone in many dishes; white, edible flowers in late summer attract pollinators and other beneficial insects
 - Lima beans** (S) – AKA butterpeas and butterbeans; harvest when young and tender for fresh shelling or let dry on plant for storage; try self-supporting 'Dixie Speckled Butterpea Bush' and 'Jackson Wonder Bush' or trellis 'King of the Garden Pole'
 - Marigolds** (S) – edible flowers with citrusy flavor; try 'Lemon Gem'
 - Okra** (S, T) – beautiful, heat-loving staple of southern dishes; try compact spineless 'Dwarf Green Long Pod' and 'Red Burgundy'
 - Onions, green** (S, T) – also called scallions, plant close together in March for summer harvest by pulling whole clump; try 'Beltsville Bunching' or 'Evergreen Bunching'
 - Oregano** (P) – evergreen, perennial Greek oregano has flavorful gray-green leaves useful in a variety of dishes
 - Parsley** (S, T) – try flavorful 'Italian Flat Leaf,' sharp, peppery 'Triple Moss Curled,' or vigorous 'Forest Green'
 - Peas, field/southern** (S) - AKA cowpeas, field peas, crowder peas, and black-eyed peas; harvest when pods are plump for cooking fresh or allow pods to dry on vine for storage. Try semi-bush 'Pinkeye Purple Hull,' or prolific, bush-type 'Big Boy Cowpeas'
 - Peppers** (T) – harvest peppers when green or when fully ripe and colored. Try red and yellow, sweet 'Baby Belle'; thick-walled, sweet 'Ashe County Pimento'; sweet orange 'Yummy Belles'; suggestions for hot pepper include 'Classic Jalapeno,' 'Charleston Hot Pepper' or 'Cayenne, Carolina Hot Pepper'
 - Sage** (P) - shrubby, perennial with spicy, gray-green leaves and spikes of purple flowers in mid-summer
 - Squash, summer** (S) – even compact zucchini, yellow crookneck and straight-neck, and pattypan benefit from supports; compact zucchini varieties - 'Gold Rush,' 'Eight Ball,' 'Raven,' and 'Sungreen'; compact crookneck varieties - 'Fancycrook,' 'Pic-N-Pic' and 'Sundance'; small straight neck varieties - 'Seneca Prolific' and 'Zephyr'; small pattypan - 'Balmoral' and 'Ronde de Nice'
 - Squash, winter** (S) – hard-shelled squash, like butternut, acorn, and spaghetti; stores well; try bush cultivars 'Discus Bush Buttercup,' 'Burpee's Butterbush,' or 'Cornell's Bush Delicata'
 - Thyme** (P) – aromatic evergreen, perennial herb
 - Tomato** (T) – nothing is more delicious than a fresh, home-grown tomato; indeterminate varieties require both pruning to limit vine size and trellising in small gardens; determinate or more compact varieties may also benefit from some support like cages; suggestions for raised beds include 'Gold Nugget,' 'Sungold,' 'Bush Champion,' 'Principe Borghese,' 'Matt's Wild Cherry,' 'Super Sweet 100,' 'Black Cherry,' 'New Big Dwarf,' and ' Rutgers'

Summer Garden #1 Pasta, Pizza, Pesto
Ideal Ingredients to Inspire Incredible Italian Cuisine

Tomato Vine - 1 	Pole Beans - 4 	Pole Beans - 4 	Bush Beans - 4 
Bush Tomato - 1 		Bush Tomato - 1 	
Marigold - 4 	Bush Tomato - 1 	Marigold - 4 	
Winter Squash Bush Butternut - 1 		Summer Squash Bush Zucchini - 1 	
Green Onions - 16 	Summer Squash Bush Yellow - 1 	Green Onions - 16 	
Parsley - 2 	Parsley - 2 	Eggplant - 1 	Eggplant - 1 
Basil - 2 	Basil - 2 	Eggplant - 1 	Eggplant - 1 
Oregano - 1 	Basil - 2 	Sweet Pepper - 1 	Sweet Pepper - 1 
Oregano - 1 	Basil - 2 	Sweet Pepper - 1 	Hot Pepper - 1 
Chives - 1 	Thyme - 2 	Thyme - 2 	Garlic Chives - 1 

Summer Garden #2 Tomato Pie to Cucumber Salad
Sensational, Soulful Southern Traditions

Southern Peas - 4 	Lima Beans - 4 	Pole Beans - 4 	Bush Beans - 4 
Bush Tomato - 1 		Bush Tomato - 1 	
Bush Tomato - 1 		Bush Tomato - 1 	
Marigold - 4 	Basil - 2 	Basil - 2 	Marigold - 4 
Hot Pepper - 1 	Sweet Pepper - 1 	Sweet Pepper - 1 	Sweet Pepper - 1 
Cucumbers - 2 	Cucumbers - 2 	Cucumbers - 2 	Okra - 1 
Green Onions - 16 	Green Onions - 16 	Okra - 1 	Okra - 1 
Summer Squash Bush Zucchini - 1 		Summer Squash Bush Yellow - 1 	
Parsley - 2 	Parsley - 2 	Sage - 1 	Sage - 1 
Chives - 1 	Thyme - 2 	Thyme - 2 	Chives - 1 



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