

Flowercraft Garden Center

San Francisco's #1 Nursery

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HOME

JULY/AUGUST 2010
Vol. 28 No. 6

GARDENER'S NEWSLETTER

Gardening Tips

1. **Enjoy this season**, and the bounty of food and flowers that your garden provides!
2. **Trim off flowers** that are past their prime to keep annuals and other plants blooming longer.
3. **Mulch flower and vegetable beds** and around other plants. This will help reduce water usage, protect roots, keep out weeds, and make your yard look more attractive and 'finished.'
4. **Plant an edible yard**—we carry *herbs, organic vegetables, berries, artichokes, citrus, olives, figs, and deciduous fruit trees!*

Plant for Fragrance!



Day and warm evenings on the patio are more pleasant when you have a few aromatic plants strategically placed. Here are some pretty

plants that have that added benefit of fragrance. Don't forget to place some of these near your entryway to greet guests!

Star jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*) is not a true jasmine, but it is extremely fragrant and very versatile. Plant it on a trellis, old tree stump, or a fence for fragrance from above. It also can be planted for a sprawling ground cover.

Nicotiana, an annual flower and distant relative of tobacco, offers masses of bright blooms in a variety of colors such as wine, lime green, scarlet, and white.

Citrus plants have attractive deep green leaves and sweetly perfumed blossoms that grow into luscious fruit. The citrus family includes a wide assortment including *lemons, oranges, limes, tangelos, and grapefruits.*

Plant some *fragrant herbs* between stepping stones and alongside walkways, so that they release their scent as you walk by and brush them.

For other deliciously fragrant shrubs, some of which bloom in the day, choose *jasmines, daphne, sarcococca, honeysuckles, gardenias, and brugmansia.*

Flowers That Love Heat

Here's just what that hot spot in your garden ordered—*some fantastic hot-weather flowers!* All of these keep their bright color without fading, bloom beautifully through summer and fall and can be planted in containers or in the ground. We have many that work well, and every garden should have at least one of the following star performers:



BEAT HEAT

☼ **Red Salvia** (*sopensis*) will be the brightest red in your garden. Plant with gray-foliated plants to really show off their color, as well

as their deep green leaves. **Blue salvia** (*farinacea*) needs to be planted in a mass to be noticed. Salvias make a lovely accent in a cut flower bouquet.

☼ **Portulaca** provides a rainbow of brilliant color in a hot, dry location. They bloom profusely and are ideal for lining walkways and driveways, as well as between stepping stones and in rock gardens.

☼ **Coreopsis** is a star repeat performer and the most vibrant yellow daisy-like flower in your garden. Available in double or single flowers, tall or dwarf heights, they look great and perform well everywhere in your yard. Plant them as a perennial border or add to containers.

Also plant some *celosia, lantana, marigolds, gaillardia, gloriosa daisy, ageratum, petunias, dahlias, phlox, sweet alyssum, verbena, and zinnia.* These plants will bloom nicely with average water and regular feeding.

Easy Care Mints

Mints are one of the 'most' herbs—they are one of the most popular, productive, and useful. They are perfect for *sachets, potpourris, jellies, teas, and cooking.*

Mints are so easy to grow; once established, you may have to contain them to keep them from invading other parts of your garden! The low-growing mint family includes *spearmint* and *peppermint* as well as the more unusual chocolate, apple, and orange aromas. Unlike most other herbs, mints do well in light shade.



Plan for a Large Colorful Container!

CENTER
Compact White Daisy
~or~
Blue Felicia
~or~
Red Geranium



TRAILING
White Alyssum or Bacopa
~or~
Blue Lobelia

MID-HEIGHT
Phlox, Zinnia, Celosia
Vinca, and/or Aster

Grow Your Own "Square" Watermelons

Perhaps you received one of those forwarded emails with pictures of square watermelons and immediately thought, "This is a hoax!" Snopes.com confirms that these images are legitimate and that Japanese farmers started growing the watermelons in tempered glass cases so that the cube-shaped fruit could be easily packed and stored, and fit snugly into small refrigerators without rolling around. It's a wonderful idea, but in 2007, the price was an *astounding* \$82.00 per melon!



You too, can grow square watermelons—for a reasonable cost—by following the simple 9-step directions found on at:

www.instructables.com/id/Grow-a-square-watermelon/

Hey—tie a bow to the top stem and you'll have a unique party present already gift-wrapped by mother nature!

New Gardeners Resource

After two years of development, a new FREE website www.yourgardenshow.com has been launched, where "gardeners [can] find inspiration, grow a garden, and share with others."

Be sure and check out this interactive website which features the vegetable database developed by Cornell University and ornamental plant database from Missouri Botanical Garden (use these for general reference only as both are out-of-area resources).

You may become inspired to post and share your own garden pictures, advice, and utilize the Garden Log (or 'GLOG') to track your garden's progress. HAVE FUN!



Kid's Garden Humor

- Q. Why did the Tomato go out with a prune?
A. Because he couldn't find a date!
- Q. What did the baby porcupine say to the cactus?
A. "Is that you, Mama?"
- Q. What's your pet's favorite veggie?
A. The pet-atoe.
- Q. How do you fix a broken pizza?
A. With tomato paste!



Landscaping for Value



'Landscaping for value' makes sense whether you intend to remain in your present home for many years, or hit the lottery and move into a mansion. Use the following checklist along with our recommendations for your particular yard requirements, and you'll be sure to get the most for your dollar!

- ✓ Choose the proper plants for your yard so you won't have to baby them to keep them alive. Ask us for our expert recommendations—it pays to start with the right plants, for best performance and the least amount of care.
- ✓ Pay particular attention to your entrance. Make it a grand entrance with lots of shrubs, color, and potted plants to welcome you home after a tough day at work and a visual feast for your guests.
- ✓ Plant trees—they add considerable value to a property!
- ✓ An excellent value are low-maintenance perennials and bulbs which provide color for many years.
- ✓ Plant to create privacy. You will enjoy it now, and it becomes a good selling point in the future.

Refreshing Corn and Tomato Salad

A great way to use these healthy vegetables and herbs—fresh from your garden!



- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 6 ears, husked and cleaned | ¼ c. olive oil |
| 3 lg tomatoes, diced | 2 Tbs. balsamic vinaigrette |
| 1 bell pepper, diced | Salt & pepper to taste |
| 1/3 c. fresh basil, chopped | |

Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Cook corn in boiling water 7-10 minutes (or desired tenderness). Drain and cool. Slice off kernels with a sharp knife. In a large bowl, toss together corn, bell peppers, basil, oil and balsamic vinaigrette, salt, and pepper. Chill. Just before serving, mix in diced tomatoes.



'People's Gardens' are Catching On!

Consider collaborating with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to create a 'People's Garden' in a vacant lot, or at a church or school in our community.

This movement began when Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack broke ground on February 12, 2009, for the first 'People's Garden' at USDA Headquarters in Washington, DC. As of June, over 400 USDA People's Gardens have been established in all 50 states (13 here in California), two U.S. territories, and three foreign countries. Not bad for just 17 months!

Each garden is specifically created to benefit its community through recreational or leisurely respites; form wildlife habitats; or to provide fresh produce for food banks and shelters. A People's Garden must also incorporate sustainable practices and be a collaborative effort. For example, the first 124 Peoples Gardens worked with local charities by growing and donating 134,000 pounds of produce!

To learn more, check out the multiple links under "Resources" at www.usda.gov/peoplesgarden.

A PEOPLE'S GARDEN

- IS A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT
- BENEFITS THE COMMUNITY
- IS SUSTAINABLE