

Harvey's Gardening 101 Guide: Veggies & Herbs



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Location & Scale – Where Will Your Garden Be Located? How Big or Small? What is the approximate square footage?

- Movable Containers or Planted in the Ground/Raised Beds?
- The More Sun in the Area, the More Choices You Have of What to Grow
- Start small and build on SUCCESS!
- Tall Plants (like tomatoes) should be placed on **north side of the garden**, so their shadow leaves the garden vs shading valuable space. Don't Save Space for Lettuce, use it as a "plug-in" crop in between your taller plants; the shade will help keep it cool & happier too!
- Consider Planting a Spring, Summer & Fall Garden in the same space; have the same real estate provide more "bang for your buck."

Mr. Sun, Sun, Mr. Golden Sun

- Sun Exposure? From what time to what time is that area getting DIRECT sunlight?
- **Full sun** - more than 6 hours of direct sun per day
- **Part sun** - 4 to 6 hours of direct sun per day, including some afternoon sun
- **Part shade** - 4 to 6 hours of direct sun per day, mostly before midday
- **Full shade** - less than 4 hours of direct sun per day

Plant Selection

- Selecting Plants that are appropriate for the sunlight you have.
- What do you like to eat? How big is your family?

The "Dirt" About Soil – Soil Testing - When in doubt, find out!

- Is this a NEW garden/area or An Existing/Established?
- What is the TEXTURE/Condition of your soil? Fluffy? Compacted? Sandy? Old, Compacted Dirt → Change It and Add Recommended Amendments & Nutrients
- You Want To: Add Essential Nutrients (organic fertilizer + pelletized lime), Organic Matter
- You DO NOT WANT: ~~Horse Manure~~ (no agricultural value)

- **ADD Nutrients** (Coast of Maine Stonington Organic Plant Food or Coop Poop) & **Calcium** (Mag-i-Cal) are water-soluble need to be applied at the time of planting and recommended to be reapplied every 4-6 weeks through the growing season. Every time it rains, or the garden is watered, the concentration of the nutrients is diluted. Also, as the plants mature and take nutrients up, they'll be reaching for more so need it present within the soil. We recommend reapplication of these products every 4-6 weeks as a topdressing.
- "Healthy Soil → Healthy Plants → Healthy You!" = **Feed the Soil** so it Feeds You!

OPTION A: Coast of Maine Raised Bed Mix- Easy to Use Option is the Coast of Maine Organic Raised Bed Soil is a complete planting mix (2cu ft bags). It's still recommended that additional organic fertilizer (Coast of Maine Stonington Organic Fertilizer or Coop Poop) and additional lime (Mag-i-cal) are reapplied every 4-6 weeks throughout the growing season, as the raised bed mix only contains ingredients for **the initial planting**. The frequency for reapplication is dependent on how much rainfall we have.

OPTION B: Farmer Harvey's "Garden Cart Combo" suggested application for approx coverage of 100-150ft²

- 1) **1 bale - Peat Moss** (3.8 cubic ft) – Using an iron rake/pitch fork, break apart compressed bale of peat moss, spread evenly over entire garden
- 2) **2 - 40# bags Dehydrated Cow Manure** - Use both bags, spread evenly over peat moss
- 3) **1- 25# bag Coop Poop** (pelletized, dehydrated chicken manure): sprinkle full bag over cow manure
- 4) **1 - 1M bag of Mag-i-Cal:** Sprinkle full bag over COOP POOP.
- 5) **Incorporate/Mix/Rototill**
- 6) **Plant-** There's no sense in having a garden full of water-soluble nutrients, then it rains, and the nutrients aren't feeding any plants.
- 7) **Re-Apply Fertilizer & Lime-** Reapply Every 4-6 weeks (or more frequently if we have had a lot of rain)
+ Additional Mag-i-Cal (Lime) + Additional Organic Nutrients (COM Organic Plant Food or Coop Poop)

Other Options Available for smaller/larger areas. Ask a farm team member for assistance in custom calculations.

Watering- Farmer Harvey says, "**A human with a hose is the kiss of death.**"

The problem with watering is typically too much frequency and not enough volume. It's far better to be out once per week for 30 mins (if it hasn't rained 1" or more that week) than 7 days a week for 5 mins. Watering less often but more deeply allows roots to follow the moisture deeply. Deeper roots lead to healthier plants. If shallow watering is routine, roots will remain shallow, and plants will be more disease-prone and addicted to unnatural watering habits.

- Is this a Newer Planting or a more established/existing garden?
- Don't rely on wilt alone. The time of day and sunlight exposure can make a difference. Many plants lower their profile to retain moisture on hot, humid, sunny

days. When the sunlight is no longer intense, many of these plants “pop back” without any additional watering.

- Plants in Containers vs. Planted in the ground – Are containers able to be lifted to test their weight? Most of a plant’s weight is the water. If a container is heavy = lots of moisture, light= may need a drink (depending on the plant). Wilted and heavy is typically a sign of over-watering and a plant may be starving for oxygen. Plants typically recover from a dehydrated state more successfully than a plant that has been watered too frequently, often leading to soggy soil, disease and insect issues.

“Feed Me” – Plants Need to be Fed, Just Like People

- **Flowering Annuals** -Proven Winners **Water-Soluble** Plant Food (necessary application weekly; 1 scoop diluted per gallon of water) for Flowering Annuals vs. Proven Winners **Continuous-Release** Plant Food (the “insurance policy”- Monthly Application; heat AND water-activated)
- **Veggie & Herb Gardens** -Be sure to reapply fertilizer and lime at least twice or three times during a season. We recommend re-application every 4-6 weeks for “annual” crops. As the season progresses, it’s rained/you have watered, the plants have taken up nutrients and are getting bigger, but less nutrients are present in the soil...time to FEED & LIME! Only feed with organic plant foods.
- **FOR FRUIT TREES & PLANTS-** Where these are perennials, we only want to feed early in the spring and only up until the beginning of summer. We don’t want to stimulate new growth leading into cooler months to help avoid winter damage. These plants should only be fed organically. Just a reminder, many of the fruit plants and trees need cross-pollination. Even self-pollinating varieties will produce better having another variety to cross pollinate with. With blueberries, you need to cross-pollinate with two different early varieties, two different mid-season varieties or two different late-season varieties to cross-pollinate and have productive plants.

Planting Suggestions-

Onion Sets

Heavy Feeders

Push the onions into loose soil with just the tops showing

Do not bury the onions beneath the soil

They need Lime (Mag-i-Cal Plus) and Organic Plant Food

Seed Potatoes

Create a trench approximately 6” deep

Be sure to cover/bury any emerging foliage if there’s going to be a frost as this is the most tender part of the plant.

Remove any micro weeds by shallow scraping of the soil surface.

The trench becomes a hill of potatoes over time and repeating the covering of emerging foliage. Harvest when plant dies back.

Asparagus

Heavy Feeders

Create a trench approximately 6” depth. Start as a trench and end up in a hill. Plant asparagus plants at the same depth they’re currently planted at.

Try not to cover foliage.
Use lots of Lime (Mag-i-Cal Plus) and Organic Plant Food

Carrots & Radishes

Long germination process. Always directly seed as they do not transplant well. Consider planting some radish seeds in the same row as the carrots (ex: plant 3-5 carrots and then one radish seed). Radishes are quick to germinate so will be harvested before the carrots. Harvesting the radishes will help loosen the soil around the carrots, making the carrots grow more successfully. Lastly, the radish foliage will help remind you where the carrots are planted, knowing the carrots are in that row and not mistake them for weeds.

Sugar snap Peas & Tomatoes

Since sugar snap peas can be planted so early in the season (March 17th is typically the safe start), we often recommend planting them where the tomatoes or peppers are ultimately going to be located. Sugar snap peas will flourish in the cooler, wet conditions of early spring. They'll also add lots of nitrogen into the soil, which will benefit the area where tomatoes will grow (think free fertilizer). Plant peas in a grouping vs a long row to aid in weed control as well as make harvesting more efficient. By the time the peas are harvested, it should be the perfect time to replace them with tomatoes and/or pepper plants.

Mulching/Weed Control- Although there is no requirement to top-dress or mulch your garden, open soil exposed to the elements can often be a magnet for any and all "bonus plants" (i.e. weed seeds) to join the party. Many customers choose to add a top layer of mulch for not only weed control but moisture retention.

- **For Veggie & Herb Gardens: Rye Straw / Chopped Straw** – Our farm-grown WEEDLESS rye straw or packaged kiln-dried chopped straw are both great options for natural weed control, moisture retention and heat retention in the veggie garden. Apply straw mulch so water can percolate through to the soil, but soil isn't exposed to keep chances of weed growth to a minimum. Straw also acts as an insulating blanket keeping soil temps warmer, which helps promote germination for seeds and production for starter plants. **DO NOT USE HAY as it contains weed seeds!**
- **For Perennial Beds: Enriching Mulch with Kelp & Buckwheat Hulls** Coast of Maine's Enriching Mulch with Kelp is a great bark mulch alternative for top-dressing perennial beds. This all-organic option has a nice finished appearance, but also adds moisture into the existing flowerbeds and helps add organic matter to the soil. Another very popular option are the buckwheat hulls mulch. They are extremely light weight making them a breeze to install and have great coverage and give a beautiful finished look.
- **Pine Needles for Blueberry Plants-** Since blueberries are acid-loving, we want to avoid adding lime to their drip edge. Pine needles work as a great mulch around their base for weed control and moisture retention.

Questions / Resources

Email Us: Emily@harveysfarm.com
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