

Oceana Garden Club (OGC) April 2020 Hilltop Highlights Newsletter for submission

### **The Garden Club welcomes new members!**

Bob and Patti Bishop, Sunshine and Ron Cook, Kathleen and Victor Zavala

It's so much fun watching the beds being turned over and soil prepared for a fabulous Spring and Summer harvest! **HAPPY GARDENING EVERYONE!**

### **RAISED BED GARDENS AND SMALL PLOTS 5 TIPS FOR SMALL SPACES**

**(Robin Sweetser January 29, 2019)**

Grow more in less space with raised garden beds. Here are five excellent tips for ensuring a bountiful harvest in a limited space.

#### **5 GARDENING TIPS FOR SMALL SPACES**

1. **Raise Your Beds** Forget about growing plants single file in long, parallel rows. You can grow up to 10 times the amount of produce in the same space by using raised beds and square foot gardening. In a raised garden bed, you keep outside weeds from your garden soil, prevent water runoff and soil compaction, and worry about less slugs and snails and other garden pests. Also, garden boxes allow you to concentrate your energy in a small area, meaning you can work, water, weed, and fertilize as economically as possible. You can make the most of the entire growing season by using season extending devices such as cold frames, cloches, row covers, and plastic tunnels, too.

<https://www.almanac.com/video/planning-square-foot-garden>

2. **Keep Seedlings Coming** Succession planting keeps the garden in continual production. Whenever one crop is harvested, have seedlings ready to transplant in its place. For the best results, use quick-maturing varieties to fit several crops into one season and spread out the harvest.

3. **Put Plants Close Together “Intercropping”** means growing two or more crops together to save space. Plants should be placed close enough so that their leaves will touch, shading the ground between them when they are fully mature. This will keep weeds down and conserve moisture, reducing the need to mulch and weed. As the plants begin to crowd out their neighbors, harvest the early-maturing ones, leaving room for the others to develop. For example, pair lettuce with longer-season vegetables such as broccoli, peppers, or tomatoes.

4. **Plant Companions**, Not Competitors Some intercropping partners thrive if their roots occupy a different depth of soil. Pairing shallow-rooted vegetables, such as bush beans, with deeply rooted beets makes good use of space without creating root competition. Similarly, planting heavy feeders such as cabbage or cucumbers with light feeding carrots or beans reduces the competition for soil nutrients. The best intercropping partners are companion plants that have different demands and complement each

other, such as the Three Sisters: corn, beans, and squash

<https://www.almanac.com/content/companion-planting-chart-vegetables>

5. Grow Up, Not Out Lay out your garden plot with the fence, trellis, or wall at the north side. By planting the tallest plants there, you will avoid shading the smaller ones. Vining plants, if left to sprawl, take up valuable space in a small garden, so help them grow up.

- Cucumbers will eagerly climb a nylon net fence, with the subsequent bonus result that the dangling fruits grow straighter and are easier to pick.
- Tomatoes produce more fruit and ripen earlier if kept off the ground on a trellis or in a wire cage.
- Peas and pole beans naturally reach for the sky and will cover a wire fence or twine around a tripod of poles. Some heavier plants, such as cantaloupes, melons, and winter squashes, may need help in climbing, so tie their vines to the structure to get them going in the right direction. Support the fruit with slings to keep them from tearing off the vine too soon.

**PLOT OUT YOUR GARDEN** Good soil, adequate sunshine, and enough drainage are the key requirements for a successful vegetable garden but planning your garden's layout shouldn't be a last-minute thought. Every garden—and every gardener—is different, so create a garden tailored to your space and needs. For example, a 100-square-foot garden (10x10 feet) can easily yield a wide variety of veggies. Bisecting it with two narrow paths forms four beds that are easy to reach into and tend. (One square = one square foot.) To plan out your own garden, use The Old Farmer's Almanac Garden Planner. You can try it free for 7 days—ample time to design your best garden yet! (SOURCE: Parts of this article originally appeared in the 2008 Old Farmer's Almanac)