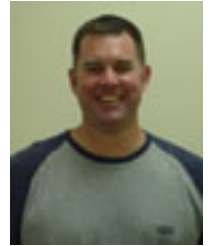


SUCCESSFUL GARDENING

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A successful home garden comes with careful planning and constant attention. Select the site carefully, plant at the correct time, use the right amount of fertilizer, use adapted varieties, and control pests.

Site. Select a site exposed to full sun. Too many gardeners try to grow vegetables in competition with trees, shade from buildings, or fences. The soil should be well drained and free of harmful chemicals, oil, ashes, mortar, etc.

Soil Management. You can improve your garden soil by adding organic matter--compost, leaf mold, or well-rotted sawdust. Work it into the soil in the late fall.

Lime And Fertilizer. A soil test is the best way to determine lime and fertilizer needs. Your county Extension office has information about soil tests. Testing at least every 3 years is a good idea.

For most vegetables, the soil pH should be around 6.0 to 6.5. To be effective, the lime must be mixed into the soil before planting.

If you don't soil test, use enough fertilizer to supply 120 pounds per acre each of nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P₂O₅), and potassium (K₂O). This could be supplied by using 1,000 pounds of 4-12-12 plus 250 pounds of ammonium nitrate. For each 1,000 square feet of garden area, use 25 pounds of 4-12-12 and 6 pounds of ammonium nitrate. On 100 feet of row, you would use 4 quarts (8 pounds) of 4-12-12 and 1 quart (2 pounds) of ammonium nitrate. When fertilizer is applied in the row, mix it thoroughly with the soil before planting.

Another method to get the same amount of plant food would be to use 1,500 pounds of 8-8-8 per acre. On 1,000 square feet, apply 25 pounds of 8-8-8 broadcast before land preparation; then sidedress each 100 feet of row with 2 quarts (4 pounds) of 8-8-8.

Long-season crops such as tomatoes, cabbage, pepper, okra, and potatoes need more fertilizer than short-season crops. Experience and close observation are the best guides for additional sidedressing.

Seed And Plants. Seed are cheap, so get the best available. Don't seed too thickly. Plant small seed, such as turnips and carrots, about 1/4 to 1/2 inch deep. Plant larger seed, such as beans, cucumbers, and peas, about 1 inch deep.

Use only stocky, healthy, fresh plants. Always water transplants to settle soil around roots. Set tall plants deeper in the ground than they grew originally.

ALSO:

Free trees are available from the Calhoun County Extension Office, National Tree Trust and Coosa Valley Youth Services. The trees are in 2 gallon size pots. The trees must be planted on public property such as parks, schools, or right of ways. call or email the ACES office for information or applications. 256.237.1621.