



VERONA COMMUNITY GARDEN



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 18, 2025

Garden Activities



To open the front gate, push down on the handle.

All refuse and plant waste must be taken away from the garden. The black municipal trash can is not for garden waste.

The shed bulletin board has information regarding bed assignments, plot map and planting calendars. Be sure to check it often.

Tools and gloves in the shed are community property. Tomato cages, fertilizers and certain other items are for executive committee and school use only.

The metal beds in the public park area are maintained by committee members and students. The crops from these beds are donated to Hillwood Terrace apartment residents and others.

You can use the back gate if it is easier for you to park in the gravel lot.

When purchasing plants, please patronize our partners Hillcrest Farms and Pleasantdale Nursery. Just because it is on sale at the garden center does not mean it is time to plant outside.

Check the planting calendars sent to you and posted on the shed bulletin board.

Each gardener should have a bucket or tote containing the following:
Gloves, a pruner, a snip (small pointed shears), a trowel, a claw rake, string, bags for harvest and bags for waste. A spray bottle of alcohol is very useful for cleaning tools. Alternatively, something along these lines are useful. Garden tools and Tote Set.

https://www.homedepot.com/p/Pure-Garden-8-25-in-Garden-Tool-and-Tote-Set-8-Piece-75-08002/206726394?source=shoppingads&locale=en-US&srsId=AfmBOoowDXbX33JdkaRJOcUA9MAXxydCs4c_FJ_w7sFfnOuc0b1zzFincXw&gQT=1#overlay

Reminders



Double check your bed number before you start to plant.

The ground is still very cool. Planting late is always better than early.

As you start to think about what you want to grow, remember that indeterminate tomatoes, cucumbers and pole beans and snap peas must be staked.

Research square foot gardening and companion planting as you make decisions about what to plant and where to plant it.

The rescheduled Orientation, Work Day and mini-workshop/Q&A is SATURDAY, APRIL 26TH, not the 27th. Sorry

A workday is an opportunity for you to fulfill our volunteer requirements for the garden. We still need to complete filling the garden park beds and multiple pots with fresh soil.

Plan on only one cherry tomato plant per bed. Those of you in shared beds may even want to share a single plant. Cherry tomatoes are prolific producers.

Only OMRI labeled fertilizers are allowed. Miracle-gro is not organic.

This week in the garden...

Companion Growing

Growing a thriving garden takes time, effort, and plenty of patience, but there are a few things you can do to set yourself up for success. Understanding the type of soil your plants prefer, how much sun they require, and how much water they need are all keys to successful gardening. Pairing plants with mutually beneficial crops—also known as companion growing—is another tried-and-true way to grow the best garden possible. Planting the right crops next to each other not only helps each plant thrive, but it can also deter pests and attract pollinators.



What Is Companion Growing?








Companion planting is the act of growing certain plants together, usually for their mutual benefit. This practice is particularly well suited to edible plants and vegetable gardens that may attract pests. Choosing the right companion plants can help keep pesky animals and insects away from your crops and allow them to ripen. But keep in mind that some plants don't make great companions and therefore should not be planted next to each other. Companion growing is also said to improve the flavor of some plants, though scientific evidence of that is lacking.

Benefits of Companion Growing

There are multiple use cases for companion growing. You can grow companion crops



THE HB GUIDE TO **COMPANION GROWING**

 carrots ✓ beans garden peas lettuce onions tomatoes ✗ dill parsnip parsley	 corn ✓ beans cucumbers garden peas melons potatoes squash ✗ tomatoes
 onion ✓ beets carrots cole crops lettuce ✗ beans peas	 peppers ✓ basil onions ✗ beans
 summer squash ✓ beans corn garden peas radishes ✗ potatoes	 tomatoes ✓ basil cucumbers squash ✗ cole crops corn potatoes
 garlic ✓ beets carrots corn eggplant radishes ✗ spinach tomatoes cucumbers peppers ✗ beans peas	

House Beautiful

Companion Growing to Attract Pollinators

Rosemary
Nasturtium
Basil
Calendula
Zinnias
Snapdragons
Sunflowers
Mint
Borage
Marigolds
Cosmos

Companion Growing to Deter Pests

Cilantro
Sage
Thyme
Chives
Dill
Garlic
Oregano
Lavender
Petunias
Marigolds
Chrysanthemums
Borage
Chamomile

This week in the garden...

near edible plants to draw pests—typically insects—away from your main crop. This practice, also known as “trap cropping,” essentially sacrifices the secondary crop for the health of the primary one.

But drawing insects away from plants is far from the only benefit of companion growing. Doonan says many companion plants can “attract beneficial insects,” and flowering plants in particular can “attract pollinators to improve the yield and health of plants and crops.” Companion planting can also be used to improve the quality of your soil. Both nitrogen-fixing plants and cover crops “can return nutrients to the soil.”

A good rule of thumb when planting different kinds of plants together is that they must have similar water and soil needs so that all the plant types can thrive.

These popular combinations are a great place to start.

CROP	COMPANION PLANTS
Asparagus	Tomato, basil, oregano, parsley, petunias
Beans	Most vegetables and herbs, including cabbage, carrots, cucumbers, radish, eggplant, peas, pumpkin, tomatoes, squash
Beets	Garlic, lettuce, onions, cabbage
Broccoli	Cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, oregano
Cabbage	Potatoes, onions, kale, kohlrabi, Brussels sprouts, turnips, rutabaga, dill, sage, beets, peppermint, sunflowers, corn, nasturtium
Carrots	Onions, leeks, peas, chives, rosemary, radishes, nasturtium, sage, cilantro
Cantaloupe	Sunflowers, corn
Celery	Cabbage, onions, tomatoes, bush beans, nasturtium
Corn	Beans, marigolds, peas, potatoes, sunflowers, cucumber, nasturtium, squash
Cucumber	Beans, corn, cabbage, marigolds, dill, peas, sunflowers, radishes, beets, zucchini, cabbage, chives, onions
Eggplant	Beans, marigolds, peas, catnip, peppers
Kale	Sage, garlic, cucumbers, dill, beet, peppermint, rosemary, celery, beans, potatoes, corn, spinach, peppers, lettuce, onions, sunflower, peas, nasturtium
Lettuce	Carrot, radish, strawberries, pumpkin, cucumber, onions, garlic, peas, onions, chives
Onions	Beets, asparagus, carrots, eggplant, lettuce, cabbage, tomatoes, strawberries, watermelon
Peas	Apples, corn, spinach, carrots, eggplant, tomatoes, radishes, raspberries, turnips, beans
Peppers	Basil, garlic, onions, radishes, nasturtium, okra, cilantro, marigold
Potatoes	Beans, corn, cabbage, marigolds, lettuce, horseradish, cilantro, peas, radishes, beans nasturtium
Radishes	Peas, lettuce, nasturtium
Spinach	Strawberries, cilantro, peas, beans, eggplant, rosemary, oregano
Squash	Dill, basil, nasturtium, corn, sunflowers, radishes, marigolds, beans, mint
Strawberries	Chives, spinach, bush beans, onions, borage, lettuce, squash, chives
Tomatoes	Basil, dill, garlic, parsley, carrots, cucumbers, chive, marigolds, nasturtium, squash

Verona Community Garden Walkway-

Building a Legacy One Brick at a Time

Verona Community Garden and That's My Brick!® have joined forces to raise money for our project! The Verona Community Garden is located near HBW middle school. The goal of this space has been to create a multi-use community centerpiece. The garden has given community members an opportunity to learn, connect and grow together. This cherished spot has grown over the last 4 years and is fully funded by grants and donations. As the demand for the garden has grown we are in need of a walkway in our public section of the garden. We are asking for your support through an engraved brick fundraiser. Help us create a legacy for the community by showing your support with this fundraiser.

How to Order:

Just follow the simple step-by-step process below to place your order in the link below. Be sure you are happy with your brick design as it will look very similar to the image on your computer when completed.

<https://www.thatsmybrick.com/veronagarden>



This week in the garden...

Do NOT Grow These Plants Together: Incompatible Garden Plants - Plants that can be Harmful to Other Plants

Incompatible garden plants are those that should not be grown together because they may interfere with each other's growth or cause harm.

Some plants dislike each other and can be harmful in several ways, including:

Competing for resources:

Plants with a similar root system, such as trees and shrubs, may compete for water and nutrients in the soil. This can cause one plant to grow poorly and become more susceptible to diseases.

Releasing allelopathic chemicals: Some plants

release chemicals into the soil that can be toxic to other plants. This is known as allelopathy, and it can occur with many types of plants, including trees, shrubs, and flowers.

Spreading disease: plants can spread disease to other plants through contact, soil, or airborne spores.

Attracting pests: Plants can attract pests like insects and rodents that can damage nearby plants.

It is important to consider plant interactions when designing a garden or landscape to avoid these negative effects. Companion planting is one way to help mitigate the impact of harmful interactions and promote healthier plant growth.

What Plants Should Not Be Grown Together?

Some plants should not be grown together due to their incompatible growing conditions or allelopathic effects. Here are classic examples:

Asparagus and onions:

Onions can inhibit the growth of asparagus

Beans and onions: Onions can inhibit the growth of beans

Brassicas and nightshades:

Brassicas, such as broccoli and cabbage, can stunt the growth of nightshades, such as tomatoes and peppers

Potatoes and tomatoes:

Both plants are susceptible to the same disease, such as blight, so planting them together can increase the risk of infection.

10 Fun Facts About Lettuce!

1. Lettuce shouldn't be stored near apples, bananas, or any other ethylene-emitting fruits. Ethylene causes lettuce to ripen super fast and start to decay rapidly!
2. Lettuce is the second most popular fresh veggie in the US, behind only the potato! (And yes, potatoes are botanically classified as veggies, even though they are classified nutritionally as a starch.)
3. The average American eats about 30lbs of lettuce a year! That's a whole lotta salads!
4. About 70% of the lettuce grown in the US comes from California (except from November through March when 90% of the nation's lettuce come from Yuma, Arizona) and about 75% of all lettuce grown in the US is iceberg lettuce. Outside of the US, China is the world's largest producer of lettuce, with almost half of the lettuce being consumed today grown by the Chinese.
5. Because lettuce is about 95% water, it has to be eaten fresh and cannot be frozen, dried, pickled or canned.
6. There are hieroglyphic records of lettuce being grown over 6000 years ago. Wowza!
7. Christopher Columbus was the person who actually introduced lettuce to America during his second voyage to the New World in 1494.
8. Dark green lettuce leaves are more nutritious than light green leaves.
9. Calling lettuce "rabbit food" dates back to the 1930s.
10. Many ancient Greeks believed that lettuce made you sleepy so they served it at the end of the meal. However, the super mean Roman Emperor, Domitian, served it at the beginning of his feasts to try to torture his guests by forcing them to stay awake in his presence.

This week in the garden...

Examples of Plants that Should Not Be Grown Together

Asparagus	Fennel, Garlic, Onions, Potatoes
Beans	Broccoli, Cauliflower, Kale, Chives, Garlic, Leeks, Onions, Pole Beans
Beets	Pole Beans
Cabbage	Strawberries, Lettuce, Corn, Dills, Eggplant, Peppers, Radishes, Rue, Tomatoes
Carrots	Dill, Celery, Parsnip
Chives	Beans, Peas
Chrysanthemum	Lettuce
Cilantro	Fennel
Cucumber	Basil, Rosemary, Sage, Fennel, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Potatoes
Corn	Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Celery, Eggplant, Fennel, Tomatoes
Dill	Carrots, Tomatoes, Onions, Lettuce, Cabbage

Gardeners do all they can to keep their plants happy and healthy, but sometimes, no matter what you do, certain plants just don't go together. Plants that don't like each other may be responding to different environmental needs, could be in direct competition with one another for major resources or one may attract insects that severely harm the other. Determining plant incompatibility can be a guess and check situation since soil types also have an influence on what plants should not be planted together.

There are a few basic rules of thumb when it comes to plants to avoid near one another. First, check that your garden plants are all about the same size and have the same light requirements. Planting very tall plants like tomato next to bush beans, for example, is a very bad idea since the tomatoes will very likely shade out the beans.

When planting taller and shorter plants together, make sure that the shorter plants are spaced far enough away and oriented so the sun will shine on them during the day.

This week in the garden...

Fennel	Asparagus, Beans, Cilantro, Corn, Cucumber, Peppers
Garlic	Asparagus, Beans, Peas, Sage, Strawberries
Hyssop	Radishes
Kohlrabi	Tomatoes, Peppers, Pole Beans
Larkspur	Beets
Onions	Asparagus, Beans, Dill, Peas, Sage
Peas	Chives, Garlic, Onions, Potatoes, Pumpkin
Peppers	Cabbage, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Fennel, Kohlrabi
Potatoes	Asparagus, Cucumbers, Peas, Radishes, Pumpkin, Tomatoes, Spinach, Sunflower, Turnip
Pumpkin	Corn, Peas, Radishes, Potatoes
Radishes	Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Hyssop, Potatoes, Turnip
Tomatoes	Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Corn, Dill, Fennel, Potatoes

Many gardeners solve this problem by putting the shortest plants in their own row on the edge of the garden, or plant them as a border planting.

Plants that need a lot of water will cause those water haters nearby a great deal of discomfort; the same goes for fertilizer. It's always a good idea to plant things with similar nutritional and water needs together, unless they're fiercely competitive. Even then, you can often compensate by spacing them extra wide and providing enough fertilizer and water for both types of plants.

Last but not least are the plants that are allelopathic. Allelopathic plants have the capability to chemically impede the vital systems of competing plants. These plants are usually weeds, but many landscape and crop plants have been observed leaving behind allelopathic chemicals. Plant scientists are using these observations to develop better methods of weed control for farms and gardens alike.

This week in the garden...

How to Grow Lettuce: The Complete Guide

Seeds for hardy lettuce and other greens can be planted in late March.

Plant lettuce under or next to tomatoes in its shade.

Lettuce needs little introduction. Grown for its luscious leaves, there's a cornucopia of both hearting and loose-leaf varieties to explore. Lettuces that form dense heads for harvesting whole include creamy butterhead types, upright romaine and cos lettuces, and the classic, crunchy iceberg. Looseleaf lettuces can be harvested whole or a few leaves at a time, 'cut-and-come-again'-style. Choose from the classic salad bowl lettuce, handsome oakleaf types, or any number of other colorful leaves that'll brighten vegetable beds and ornamental borders alike.

Lettuce is a cool-season crop growing well in most regions in the spring and fall. This crop is perfect for beginners; it's easily sown by seed directly in the soil as soon as the ground can be worked. Because lettuce

grows quickly, the best approach is to plant a small amount of seeds at a time, staggering the plantings.

Lettuces are a great leafy green because they grow quickly, produce for a long time, and are not very demanding if you keep the plants sufficiently watered. Plus, lettuce grows great in raised beds, making it ideal for small spaces. Lettuces are perfect for containers, which can be placed on decks, patios, balconies, and porches.

Lettuce prefers a location with 5 to 6 hours of sun, but can benefit from afternoon shade when temperatures soar. Soil should be loose, well-draining, and moist but not soggy. In the weeks prior to planting, amend with plenty of compost for added fertility. Or grow lettuces in pots or tubs of potting soil. Lettuce prefers a bright, open position with good air circulation to promote strong, disease-free growth.

Lettuce is a cool-season crop, so in hot climates, you may get better results growing it in a cooler, shadier spot, especially as the young plants start out. Either way, lettuces don't take long to reach maturity, which makes them an excellent choice for growing in between slower-to-establish crops such as corn or

leeks.

When to Plant Lettuce:

- Soil temperatures between 45°F and 65°F (7°C and 18°C) are ideal. Cold-adapted varieties can survive much lower temperatures.
- Make the earliest sowings under cover from late winter to grow on in greenhouse for a super-early harvest. Then, from early spring, it's time to sow for growing outside.
- Direct sowing is recommended. Sow seeds in the ground 2 to 4 weeks before your last spring frost date or as soon as the ground can be worked.
- Or, to get a head start, start seeds indoors about 1 month before your last spring frost date. Harden off seedlings for 3 days to a week before setting outdoors.
- If you are buying transplants (small plants) from a garden center or nursery, you may plant between 2 weeks before your last spring frost to 2 weeks after your last spring frost.
- In most regions, it's possible to plant another crop of lettuce in the fall or even early winter.

This week in the garden...

How to Plant Lettuce:

- Sowings may be made directly into prepared soil or into module trays of multipurpose potting soil. To sow directly, remove any weeds, then rake the soil level to a fine, crumbly texture. Mark out shallow drills, 8 to 12 inches or 20 to 30cm apart, using a string line as a guide if this helps. Then, sow the tiny seeds in clusters—a pinch of seeds every four inches or 10cm. Backfill the seed drills, label with the variety and water.
- Since the seed is so small, a well-tilled seedbed is essential. Stones and large clods of dirt will inhibit germination.
- Plant seeds 1/8 to 1/4 of an inch deep. Lettuce seeds need light to germinate, so don't sow them too deep.
- Seeds may be sown in single rows or broadcast for wide-row planting (loose-leaf varieties are best for this). When broadcasting, thin 1- to 2-inch tall seedlings for the proper spacing.
- Spacing between plants depends on the variety:

- **Loose-leaf lettuce:** *Plant or thin to 4 inches apart.*
 - **Romaine (cos) and butterhead (loose-head, Bibb, Boston) lettuce:** *Plant or thin to 8 inches apart.*
 - **Crisphead (iceberg) lettuce:** *Plant or thin to 16 inches apart.*
- cloche made from bottomless milk cartons or plastic bottles. These will keep the chill off your seedlings just enough to help them acclimatize. Newly planted lettuces may also be helped with a simple row cover or fleece.

- Set rows of lettuce 12 to 15 inches apart.
- Sow additional seeds every 2 weeks for a continuous harvest.
- Consider planting rows of chives or garlic between your lettuce to control aphids. They act as "barrier plants" for the lettuce.
- Water thoroughly with a mist nozzle at the time of transplanting or seeding.

For a fall crop, cool the soil in August by moistening it and covering it with a bale of straw. One week later, the soil under the bale should be a few degrees cooler than the rest of the garden and ready to be sown with a 2-foot row of lettuce. Repeat the process every couple of weeks by rotating the straw bale around the garden. As autumn temperatures decline, seed as usual for a fall harvest.

You can help transplants along at the start of the season by covering them with a temporary

- Fertilize 3 weeks after transplanting with organic alfalfa meal or another slow-release fertilizer to provide a steady stream of nitrogen.
- Make sure the soil remains moist but not overly wet. It should drain well. Overwatering leads to disease or soft growth.
- Lettuce will tell you when it needs water. Just look at it. If the leaves are wilting, sprinkle them anytime, even in the heat of the day, to cool them off and slow down the transpiration rate. Using row covers can also help to keep lettuce from drying out in the sun.
- An organic mulch will help conserve moisture, suppress weeds, and keep soil temperatures cool throughout the warmer months.
- Weed by hand if necessary, but be careful of damaging your lettuce plants' shallow roots.

This week in the garden...



Spinach Salad

Servings: 4-6

This easy spinach salad recipe is a fresh, delicious side dish or lunch! To get ahead, prepare the candied pecans and apple cider vinaigrette. Store the pecans at room temperature for up to a week and the dressing in the fridge for up to 5 days.

Ingredients

- 5 ounces fresh spinach
- 1 Gala or Honeycrisp apple, thinly sliced
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup thinly sliced red onion
- Apple Cider Vinegar Dressing
- 1 heaping cup Candied Pecans
- 2 ounces crumbled goat cheese or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup shaved pecorino cheese
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup dried cranberries
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Instructions

In a large bowl, place the spinach, apple, and onion. Add some of the dressing and toss to combine.

Add the pecans, goat cheese, and cranberries and gently toss. Add more dressing, as desired. Season to taste and serve.

Spinach Salad Dressing

Ingredients

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon maple syrup or honey
- 1 garlic clove, grated
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon Dijon mustard
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon sea salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil

Instructions

In a small bowl, whisk together the apple cider vinegar, maple syrup, garlic, mustard, salt, and several grinds of pepper.

Drizzle in the olive oil while whisking and continue to whisk until the dressing is emulsified. Alternatively, combine everything in a jar with a tight-fitting lid and shake to combine.



Deviled Eggs

Servings: 6

Learn how to make the BEST deviled eggs! This recipe is easy to make with basic ingredients, and it's always a hit at the holidays, Easter, and other parties and gatherings.

Ingredients

- 6 large eggs
- 3 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar or dill pickle brine
- Hot sauce, such as Tabasco, optional
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Paprika, chives, and/or fresh dill, for garnish

Instructions

Place the eggs in a medium pot and cover with cold water by 1 inch. Bring to a boil, then cover the pot and turn off the heat. Let the eggs sit, covered, for 10 to 12 minutes, depending on your desired doneness.

Transfer the eggs to a bowl of ice water and chill for 14 minutes, or until cooled completely.

Gently rap the eggs on the counter to crack the shells,

This week in the garden...



then peel. I like to do this under cool running water to help the shells slip off. Pat dry if necessary.

Slice the peeled eggs in half lengthwise. Use a small spoon to carefully scoop out the yolks and transfer them to a medium bowl. Set the egg whites aside.

To the bowl with the egg yolks, add the mayonnaise, mustard, apple cider vinegar, and a dash of hot sauce, if using. Mash with a fork until creamy, then season to taste with salt, pepper, and more hot sauce, as desired. For a smoother deviled egg filling, pulse the mixture in a food processor.

Divide the filling among the egg whites and garnish with paprika, chives, and/or fresh dill.



Bloody Mary

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Total Time: 10 minutes

Servings: 1

Ingredients

- Bloody Mary salt or kosher salt, for glass
- 2 lemon wedges, divided
- 4 oz. tomato juice
- 2 oz. vodka
- 2 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- 2 tsp. horseradish
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 tsp. celery salt
- 1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 tsp. hot sauce
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- Celery stalks and olives, for serving (Or get creative with the garnishes)

For virgin Bloody Mary's just do not use the Vodka.

Directions

Step 1: Pour Bloody Mary salt onto a shallow plate. Rub a lemon wedge around rim of a Collins glass, then dip into salt.

Step 2: In a cocktail shaker, combine tomato juice, vodka, lemon juice, horseradish, Worcestershire, celery salt, pepper, hot sauce, and kosher salt. Fill shaker with ice and vigorously shake until outside of shaker is very frosty, about 20 seconds.

Step 3: Pour into prepared glass. Garnish with celery stalk, olives, and remaining lemon wedge. Or get creative as in image below :)

