

Edible Jasper

Plant Identification Guide

1st Edition, 2023



KeepPickensBeautiful.org

Please check the center of this
guide for a walking map
of the Edible Jasper garden
installations in downtown.

Some of the plants in the gardens are seasonal.
Not all plants in this guide are present at all times,
and other plants may have been planted that have
not yet been included.

Disclaimer

Keep Pickens Beautiful provides this guide as a service and educational reference tool.

While the information contained within the guide has been researched and is periodically updated, no guarantee is given that the information provided in this guide is correct, complete, and/or up-to-date.

The materials contained in this guide are provided for general information purposes only and do not constitute legal or other professional advice on any subject matter. Keep Pickens Beautiful does not accept any responsibility for any loss which may arise from reliance on information contained on this guide.

While the plants we have installed in the Edible Jasper gardens are edible, medicinal, or otherwise useful, we cannot monitor that they have not been sprayed with chemicals or other materials. Nor can we assure you that other unintended plants have not grown in the garden spaces that are not edible.

KPB encourages you to snack from our gardens, but only if you take the proper measures to ensure you do so safely.



Working Together To Edibly Landscape Jasper

Edible Jasper is a project that was started in 2011 by a small group of residents who wanted to promote sustainable and beneficial landscaping. The Pickens County Progress invited them to begin in their parking lot. Those original gardens still grow around the front two light posts at the Progress building; KPB has improved them and is growing more gardens around the other lights in the parking lot. Plants include a variety of herbs, figs, blueberries, and strawberries.

During the summer and fall of 2021, KPB installed a garden behind the Historic Kirby-Quinton Cabin. It contains a wide range of herbs including thyme varieties, rosemary, lavender, sage, oregano, blueberries, strawberries, garlic, onions, elderberry, and more! As the garden progresses, we will incorporate more period-specific plants.

The Edible Jasper team has also improved the gardens around our office at the south end of Main Street and is growing a community greenspace adjacent to our building under the arbors.

We continue to add more gardens - we recently added Edible Jasper plants to our Memorial Garden in Lee Newton Park near the Chamber of Commerce. And we have plans for more garden adventures throughout the community. Let us know if we can help foodscope your space!

Visit the various garden-specific pages on the Keep Pickens Beautiful website to learn more about the plants and their uses.

Arugula

Eruca vesicaria



Growing Conditions:

Arugula prefers slightly acidic soil with a pH between 6 and 7. Plant in a spot that gets full sun (six or more hours of sunlight) for best results. Arugula will grow in partial sun, but not as well. Avoid planting arugula in areas where its relatives (other Brassicas) have recently been planted, as pests and disease may spread. Keep soil moist in warmer weather when bolting may occur. (Bolting is when the plant skips right to producing flowers and seeds without developing much foliage.) The pale white to yellow flowers help attract beneficial pollinators including the swallowtail butterflies.

Health Benefits:

This vegetable is an immune boosting vegetable that packs a nutritional punch. Like other leafy vegetables, arugula is a dense-nutrient food. It is an antioxidant; studies have tied compounds to improved heart health and lowered inflammation. Arugula helps fight cancer and diabetes, and protects eye health and strong bones by providing healthy amounts of vitamin K. It aids in weight loss because it's a low calorie food, and it also improves digestion and reduces skin inflammation and infections. Arugula supplies important vitamins and minerals and, additionally, may act as a natural aphrodisiac!

Basil

Ocimum basilicum



Growing Conditions:

Basil, commonly known as sweet basil, is a tender annual that thrives outdoors in spring and summer. Basil prefers moist, fertile soil and grows best in a location that gets 6-8 hours of sun. The pH of the soil should ideally be at 6.0 to 7.5 (slightly acidic to neutral). After about six weeks of growing, pinch off the center shoot to prevent early flowering. If flowers do grow, just cut them off. In addition, pick the leaves regularly to encourage growth throughout the summer. The blooms will draw bees and other important pollinators. The leaves are harvested and used in culinary dishes and pesto.

Health Benefits:

Basil is used in a variety of recipes, but what may surprise you is the many health benefits of basil that make it well known for its immunity-enhancing properties. Sweet basil contains disease-fighting antioxidants which are proven to slow down the effects of aging. It acts as an anti-inflammatory, helps fight cancer, and contains antibacterial properties. Basil essential oil contains antimicrobial properties that fight viruses and infections. It combats stress by acting as an adaptogen (an herbal medicine that helps the body adapt to stress). It is good for digestion due to balancing acid within the body. Basil is beneficial for the nervous system and promotes cardiovascular health. This plant can help ease gas and relieve nausea and vomiting, as well as providing treatment for depression by positively impacting brain function, anxiety, and insomnia. The leaves can also be crushed and used as a poultice to help with insect bites.

Blueberries

Vaccinium sect. Cyanococcus



Growing Conditions:

Blueberries are one of the easiest fruits to grow, and there are many varieties you can add to your garden. While blueberries require a soil with a low pH (about 4.5 to 5.5) that is porous, you don't have to replace your clay soil. Just amend the planting area by adding a bale of peat and a cup of soil sulfur. This keeps the soil in the desirable pH level of 7.3 to 5.2. Blueberries have shallow roots and love moisture. Thick mulch ensures the roots stay healthy by keeping the soil moist. Very little pruning is needed and disease problems are non-existent. Bee pollen and nectar serve as food for the bees and their offspring.

Health Benefits:

This vibrant fruit may be tiny, but it packs a serious punch when it comes to nutrition. It is high in antioxidants that fight free radicals. Antioxidants not only prevent cell damage, but also protect against several types of chronic diseases including cancer, heart disease, and diabetes. Blueberries help to alleviate inflammation and boost brain health. If you're looking to lose weight fast, amp up on blueberries, which provide high fiber content and promote regularity and healthy digestion.

Chamomile

Matricaria chamomilla



Growing Conditions:

Chamomile can grow as an herb in an herb or vegetable garden, or it can be integrated into ornamental beds and borders. It grows in full sun and in well-drained soil, does not need much fertilizer, and has few pest problems (other than aphids). It is not preferred by deer. Chamomile attracts hoverflies, beneficial wasps, ladybugs, and honey bees.

Health Benefits:

Chamomile is a high source of antioxidant compounds. It helps relieve anxiety, depression, and insomnia. It aids in inflammation reduction and helps fight cancer, muscle spasms, PMS symptoms and other menstrual disorders. Chamomile helps with skin disorders, ulcers, wounds, congestion, gastrointestinal disorders, arthritis symptoms and rheumatic pain; it eases hemorrhoids, and it keeps gums and teeth healthy!

Chinese Cabbage

Brassica rapa



Growing Conditions:

Chinese cabbage, also known as tatsoi, prefers rich, moist, firm soil with plenty of well-rotted compost dug in. It does well in full sun and will tolerate light frost. Feed the plants with liquid plant food when they begin to form heads. Water often in order to keep the soil moist. In the fall, cut heads high, leaving the base of the plant intact. Small heads will often regrow from the base.

Health Benefits:

Chinese cabbage is a nutrient powerhouse and is nicknamed “vitamin green.” It contains high amounts of vitamin A, a nutrient that plays an important role in many body functions; it helps maintain strong bones, healthy skin, and a strong immune system. It’s also high in calcium and iron, as well as vitamin C, which can lower many chronic conditions such as heart disease, stroke, and cancer.

Chives

Allium schoenoprasum



Growing Conditions:

Chives are a perennial member of the onion family that sport beautiful, edible flowers. Chives grow best in full sun, though they will tolerate a light shade. Chives are considered a cool-season crop, meaning they grow best in spring and fall. Minimal care is needed for fully grown, established plants. Although they are drought resistant, it's important to give them consistent watering throughout the season. You can use mulch to conserve moisture. Chives are a wonderful companion plant that deters pests. They're a good friend to plant with carrots, celery, lettuce, peas, and tomatoes. Chives with pink blooms open early and provide food in the spring for pollinators. Chives with white blossoms attract bees and some butterflies.

Health Benefits:

Although Chives are usually consumed in a small amount, they pack a punch in nutritional value. Chives contain vitamin C, A, calcium, iron, potassium, folate, niacin, riboflavin, and thiamin. Chives contain quercetin, a flavonoid which may help reduce plaque buildup in arteries, and allicin, which releases nitric oxide to help relax blood vessels and lower blood pressure. Chives also boost bone health, contain cancer-fighting compounds, reduce inflammation, and aid in digestive disorder prevention. They play an important role in liver health, brain function, and fetal development. Last, but not least, chives are a good source of Choline, an important nutrient that helps cell structure and metabolism.

Cilantro

Coriandrum sativum



Growing Conditions:

Grow cilantro in an area that receives full sun and has rich, well-drained soil with a pH of 6.2 to 6.8. Cilantro frequently self-sows. As seeds (coriander) fall to the ground, little plants may pop up during the season and the following spring. The cilantro flowers attract honey bees and the flower fly.

Health Benefits:

Cilantro rids the body of heavy metals, protects against oxidative stress, reduces anxiety and improves sleep, lowers blood sugar levels, supports heart health, prevents urinary tract infections, settles digestive upset, protects against food poisoning, supports healthy menstrual function, prevents neurological inflammation, protects against colon cancer, and soothes skin irritation. Amazing!

Creeping Thyme

Thymus serpyllum



Growing Conditions:

Creeping thyme enjoys dry, fast-draining soil and full sun conditions. It does not need to be fertilized. You can grow it in sandy, rocky, or otherwise poor soil in areas that receive six or more hours of sunlight each day. While creeping thyme could be a good nectar source for bees, we recommend that you not let it take over as a border in your yard because it can be a little too effective of a ground cover. It is commonly called wild thyme, mother-of-thyme, or Breckland thyme.

Health Benefits:

The flowering parts of creeping thyme are used to make medicines. People take wild thyme for breathing problems including cough, bronchitis, and swollen airways. Thyme is a health benefit for kidney and bladder disorders, and it helps in improving circulation. Thyme has been known to lower bad cholesterol and treat intestinal gas and colic. Remember to use in moderation because excess consumption may cause irritation of the mucous membrane, abdominal cramps, headaches, and dizziness.

Dill

Anethum graveolens



Growing Conditions:

Dill grows best in a well-drained, slightly acidic soil, rich in organic matter. Plant in full sun-six to eight hours a day; it does not require frequent fertilizing. It is often grown in herb, vegetable, and flower gardens not only for harvest of its aromatic leaves and seeds, but also for ornamental display of its attractive foliage and flowers. Dill is in the same family as parsley, cumin, and bay leaf. Dill flowers attract lacewings, ladybugs, hoverflies, braconid wasps, tachinid flies, and the most beautiful pollinator - Black swallowtail butterflies.

Health Benefits:

Dill may help reduce menstrual cramps, reduce depression, and lower cholesterol. It may act as a natural bug repellent, may treat epilepsy, provides a source of energy, aids in digestion through beneficial fatty acids, contains antimicrobial effects, and protects against free radicals.

Fennel

Foeniculum vulgare



Growing Conditions:

Plant fennel in the spring after the last frost. It is a great option for growing in raised garden beds, containers, or in-grown gardens. Space fennel plants 4-12 inches apart, depending on the variety. Grow them in an area that gets six hours of sun and has fertile, well-drained soil. It is related to other stalk vegetables, such as parsnips, carrots, and celery. Fennel attracts honey bees, wild bees, bumble bees, beetles, and various groups of wasps and flies.

Health Benefits:

Fennel has anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, antiviral, anti-tumor, and antispasmodic properties, just to name a few. According to Chinese medicine, fennel helps with congestion and helps increase the flow of breast milk. It also helps with an upset stomach, insect bites, and soothes a sore throat. Fennel can help maintain bone stretch and health, improve skin conditions, lower blood pressure, aid in digestion, and increase satiety due to the high fiber content. It also improves colic, eases menopausal symptoms, and improves vision.

Fig

Ficus carica



Growing Conditions:

Fig trees need warm conditions of six hours of sun, plenty of elbow room and well-drained soil to thrive, but will tolerate low temperatures as long as it remains above 15 degrees F. You can grow figs in big pots and protect them during the winter by storing them in a cool garage or basement. Fig trees are excellent for bees because they produce a significant amount of flowers that provide an ample source of nectar and pollen. Common figs grow on the ficus tree, which is a member of the mulberry family.

Health Benefits:

Figs provide antioxidant capabilities and have a reputation in traditional medicine as a remedy for many health problems, including acting as a natural cancer treatment. They are a good source for the treatment of anemia, diabetes, leprosy, liver disease, paralysis, skin diseases, ulcers, and gastrointestinal tract and urinary tract infections. Figs are a natural antifungal and antibacterial agent. They're an immune system booster and help overcome low potassium levels.

Garlic

Allium sativum



Growing Conditions:

Garlic grows best in well-drained, moisture-retentive soil with a pH of 6.0 and 7.0. Improve your soil's organic matter content by adding well-rotted manure or compost in spring and fall. Garlic needs six or more hours a day of direct sunlight. Because this crop takes a long time to mature, you won't harvest until next summer. Plant it somewhere where it won't be disturbed, such as the edge of a garden. You can grow garlic in pots; simply place cloves in a south-facing window, and once the leaves push through the soil surface, keep the pot well watered.

Health Benefits:

Eating garlic has been linked with reducing or even helping to prevent heart disease, stroke, cancer, and infections. Garlic has also been shown to help control high blood pressure, treat colds, help hair loss, help improve Alzheimer's dementia symptoms, and also treat diabetes.

Hardy Kiwi

Actinidia arguta



Growing Conditions:

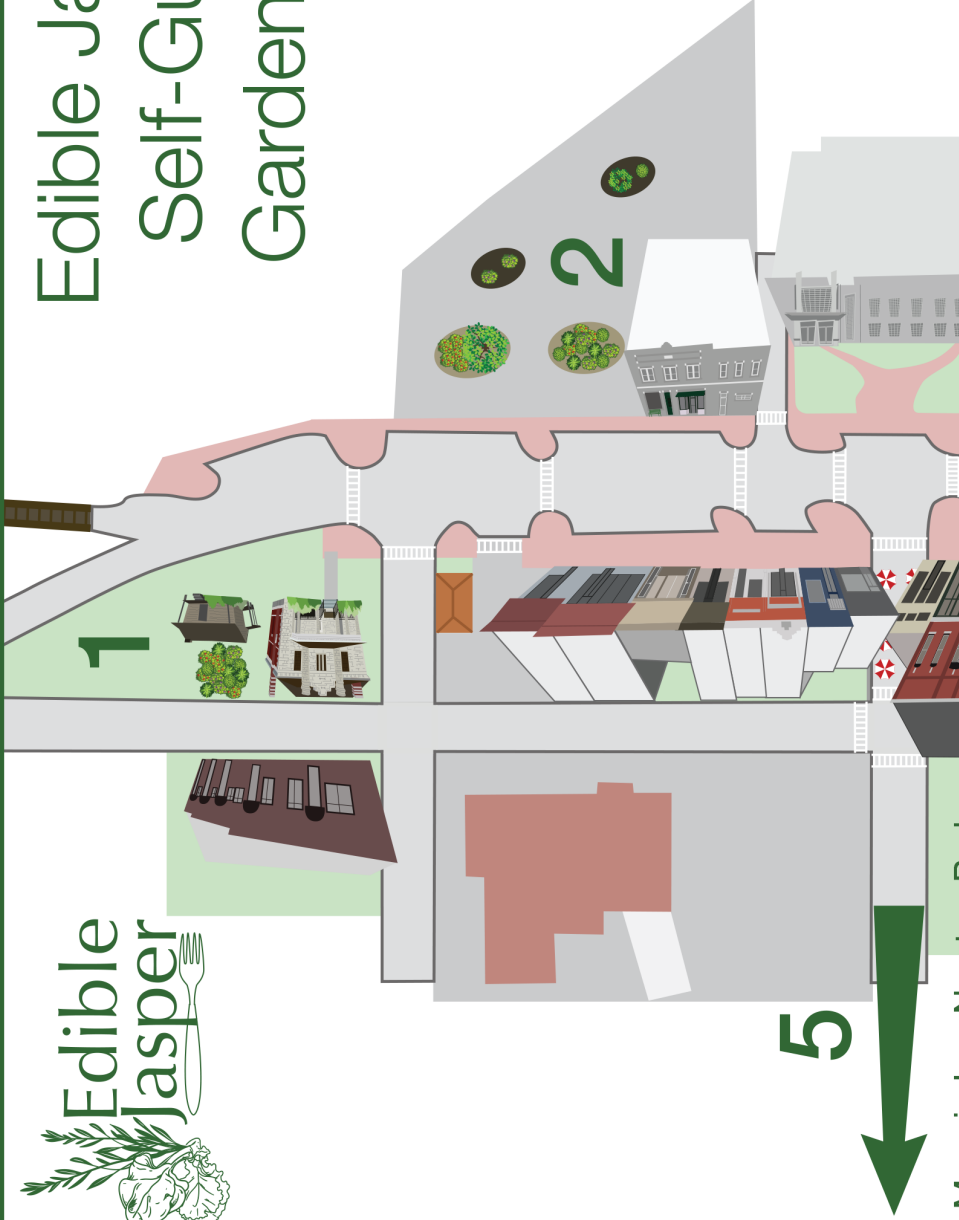
This fruit is referred to as the Siberian gooseberry, hardy kiwi fruit, kiwi berry and several more names. Often sweeter than the kiwifruit, hardy kiwi can be eaten whole and you do not have to peel it! It is a fast growing, climbing, twining vine and is very hardy. It is capable of surviving low temperatures although young shoots are vulnerable to frost in the spring. They flower in May or June and can withstand a certain amount of shade. They prefer well-drained, slightly acid soil (pH 5.5-6.5), need lots of water, and are relatively free of garden pests. While hardy kiwi can be grown from seed, propagating from cuttings is also possible. A trellis can be used to encourage vertical growth for easy maintenance and harvesting. Vines grow quickly and can grow up to 20 feet in a single season, given ideal conditions. For vines to bear fruit, both male and female must be present to enable pollination. Watch your cat! They are attracted to the catnip-like smell produced by the vines.

Health Benefits:

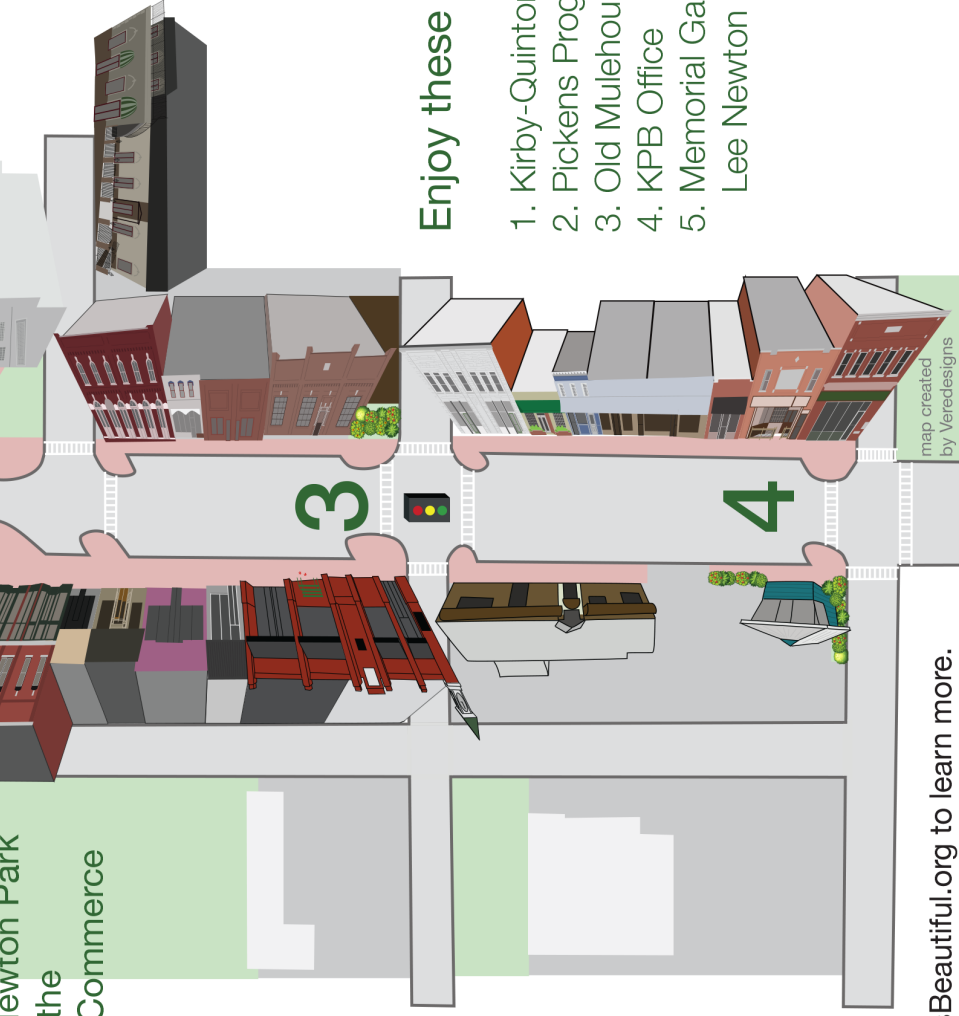
According to the National Library of Medicine, hardy kiwi fruit contains over 200 essential nutrients and a range of vitamins. It is one of the richest sources of vitamin C and lutein (suppresses inflammation, enhances the sharpness of vision, protects eye tissue from sunlight damage, and reduces cell loss and death related to eye disease). It also contains myo-inositol (helps the body with mental conditions such as panic disorders, depression, and obsessive-compulsive disorder). Furthermore, it's high in potassium, calcium, and zinc, so it is rated as a "super food." Hardy kiwi is high in antioxidant effectiveness, anti-tumor, and anti-inflammatory properties. It also contains pectin (thickener in cooking and baking) and fiber.



Edible Jasper Self-Guided Garden Tour



More In Lee Newton Park
near the
Chamber of Commerce



map created
by Veredesigns

Enjoy these gardens!

1. Kirby-Quinton Cabin
2. Pickens Progress
3. Old Mulehouse
4. KPB Office
5. Memorial Garden in Lee Newton Park



Visit KeepPickensBeautiful.org to learn more.

Hyssop

Hyssopus officinalis



Growing Conditions:

Hyssop is part of the mint family and prefers to be grown in areas with full to partial shade. It makes a great edging plant when grown in masses, but it can also be grown in containers. Make sure to have well-drained soil, a bit on the dry side, amended with organic matter. Hyssop is great for attracting important pollinators to the landscape. Hyssop is highly attractive to bees and a diversity of pollinators, as well as an occasional hummingbird. It is generally ignored by rabbits and deer.

Health Benefits:

Hyssop oil dates back thousands of years. There is even reference to hyssop oil in the Bible. Today, hyssop is used for digestive and intestinal problems, including liver and gallbladder conditions, intestinal pain, and loss of appetite. It's also used to treat respiratory problems in various ways, such as eliminating coughs, helping to prevent the common cold and respiratory infections, soothing sore throats, and acting as one of the natural remedies for asthma. It helps to fight parasites and to heal deep cuts, scars, insect bites, and even acts as a great home remedy for acne. It is a natural remedy for gout, rheumatism, arthritis, and swelling. Hyssop oil is also a home remedy and treatment for hemorrhoids.

Lavender

Lavandula angustifolia



Growing Conditions:

Lovely lavender adds aroma and soft beauty to the garden, and also has culinary and medicinal uses. Best seeded indoors (in late winter), lavender is planted outdoors in early spring. The commonly-cultivated lavender is the common or English lavender; it is hardy to USDA Zone 5. A bushy perennial, lavender grows from 1 to 3 feet tall, bearing small blue-violet flowers on spikes with blue-green needle-like foliage. The oils in the flowers give the herb its distinctive balsam-like fragrance. Called “English” lavender because it proliferates in the English climate, this plant’s main requirements are lots of sun and good drainage. It is not fussy about soil, and its presence lures bees, butterflies, and pollinators to the garden.

Health Benefits:

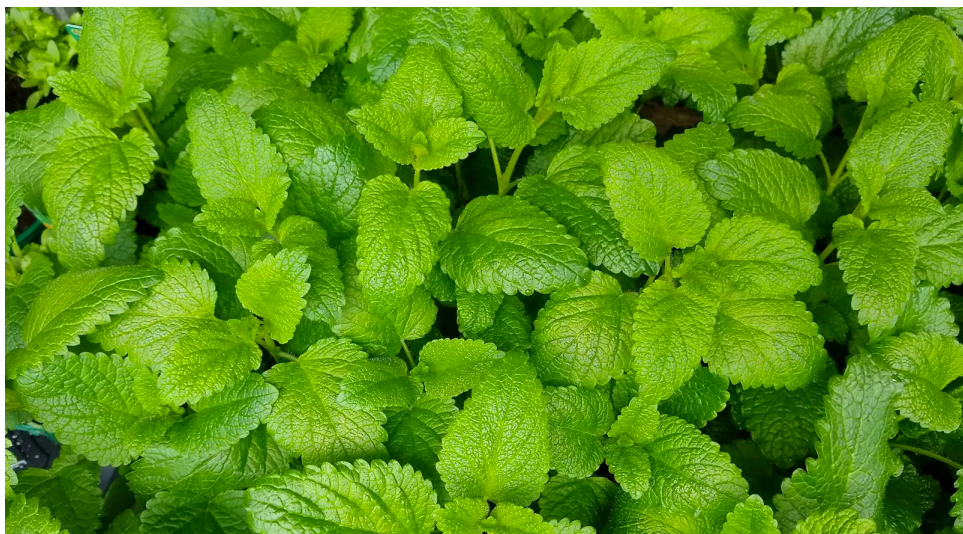
Interestingly, the name lavender comes from the Latin root lavare, which means “to wash,” because it was used in baths to purify the body and spirit. Today, it’s often used in soaps and shampoos.

In addition, lavender has proven medicinal uses. When the essential oils are inhaled, lavender has calming properties that reduce anxiety; it’s also used as a gentle sedative for insomnia. In ancient times, lavender flowers were sewn into sachets to aid with sleeplessness.

Lavender is even useful in the kitchen in baking and drink recipes!

Lemon Balm

Melissa officinalis



Growing Conditions:

Choose a planting site in sun or light shade, with soil that is moist but drains freely. While it does best in soil with a pH of 6.5 to 7.0, lemon balm can also be planted into large pots filled with soil-based compost. Space the plants 20 to 24 inches apart. Harvest lemon balm leaves anytime once your plant reaches 6 to 8 inches tall; avoid harvesting more than one-third of the plant at a time. The lemony scent brings in bees, butterflies, and other beneficial pollinators.

Health Benefits:

What is lemon balm good for? It's used in teas, cooking, and to make Melissa essential oil. It's a natural remedy to improve sleep, mood, and concentration, and it reduces anxiety. Lemon balm helps heal wounds and promote longevity. Lemon Balm can protect against heart and liver problems. It functions as a natural antibacterial agent. It may be useful to fight diabetes and herpes. In addition, it can regulate an overactive thyroid and help to soothe PMS symptoms.

Lemon Thyme

Thymus citriodorus



Growing Conditions:

Lemon thyme demands bright sunny locations. It will tolerate some shade, but it will never thrive and give its best foliage or aroma in anything but full sun. It will grow wonderfully in containers and can be kept in sunny windowsills. Growing to about 6-12 inches tall by 12-18 inches wide, the compact aromatic nature of lemon thyme enables it to serve as a nice border plant along your garden beds or edging paths. Thanks to its small roots, it can also establish easily in rock gardens or retaining walls.

Health Benefits:

Lemon thyme is rich in iron, as well as vitamins C, D, and B-complex. Adding thyme to your ingredients also provides vitamin B6, which when taken daily, keeps up GABA levels (beneficial neurotransmitters in the brain) and plays a role as a stress buster. It is a rich source of potassium (helps control heart rate and blood pressure), iron, calcium manganese, magnesium, and selenium (increases immunity, takes part in antioxidant activity, and defends against free radical damage and inflammation). It plays a key role in maintaining a healthy metabolism. The essential oil in lemon thyme contains natural compounds that provide antioxidants and antiseptic properties, notably a compound called thymol, which also gives the herb its citrusy flavor.

Marigolds

Tagetes spp.



Growing Conditions:

No annual is more cheerful and easier to grow than marigolds. They thrive in full sunlight and can often withstand very hot summers. Though they grow in almost any soil, they do best in moderately fertile, well-drained soil. They bloom in the summer and throughout the fall. Once they have established themselves, they are usually maintenance free. Pinch off the top of the plant to encourage them to grow bushier. This will keep the plant from becoming 'leggy' and will encourage more blooming. Marigold flowers can be yellow, orange, white, red, gold and bicolor. Marigolds are a popular annual to add to the garden due to their ability to help with pest control. They are attractive to bees provided you choose a variety with open centers. Due to their short growth size, they are usually used for borders or on the edge of gardens. With its pungent odor, marigolds can be used to naturally repel mosquitoes, pests and other insects.

Health Benefits:

Marigold ointment can be used to soothe sunburns, warts, bug bites, acne, and ulcerations. In addition, it helps heal wounds, dry skin, and blisters. Marigold flowers can be made into tea that lowers symptoms caused by inflammatory bowel diseases/colitis. It's also beneficial for treating gastritis, acid reflux, and ulcers, as well as stomach cramps and menstrual cramps. Drops or extract are sometimes used to manage symptoms of coughs, sore throats, and fever. Marigolds have natural antiseptic properties, so marigold salve is a good treatment for eye, genital, and skin infections.

Oregano

Origanum vulgare



Growing Conditions:

Oregano prefers a sunny spot. However, in zone 7 and farther south, it benefits from a little afternoon shade. Set plants in well-drained soil with a pH of 6.5 and 7.0. Because oregano can be invasive, it is an excellent choice for growing in containers. It is a member of the mint family. The herb got its name from the Greeks; it means, “joy of the mountain.” Oregano attracts beneficial insects, such as lacewings, that are voracious predators of aphids, whiteflies, cabbage moth caterpillars, and many other garden pests.

Health Benefits:

Oregano is an antioxidant powerhouse that positively impacts your skin, eyes, heart, brain, and cells. Oregano oil treats fungus and even the common cold, has antibacterial properties, and reduces inflammation.

Pak Choi/Bok Choy/Pok Choi

Brassica rapa



Growing Conditions:

Bok choy is a type of Chinese cabbage that does not form heads; instead it forms clusters reminiscent of mustard greens. The green leaves have a stronger flavor than the bulb. It needs rich soil with plenty of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. Be sure to add plenty of compost and some organic fertilizer to the soil at planting time. It grows best in full sun, but can tolerate some shade. As a fall crop, bok choy care is simple. The flower structure of bok choy makes both pollen and nectar available to bees.

Health Benefits:

Bok choy has one of the top aggregate nutrient dense index, meaning it delivers one of the highest levels of nutrients per calorie. It has been shown to help prevent cancer and is one of the top anti-inflammatory foods on the planet, giving it the ability to reduce the risk for conditions like heart disease. Bok choy provides healthy digestion and a hefty serving of many vitamins and minerals, such as Vitamin A and C.

Parsley

Petroselinum crispum



Growing Conditions:

Parsley is a biennial plant with bright green leaves. It is in the same family as dill and carrots. It prefers a spot that gets 6 or more hours of sunlight, but will also tolerate light shade. It should be grown in moist, fertile soil, and should be kept watered during dry spells. It prefers temperatures between 50-70 degrees Fahrenheit, but will tolerate as low as 10 degrees Fahrenheit. Soil pH should ideally be around 6.0-slightly acidic. Parsley doubles as a host plant for swallowtail butterflies in pollinator gardens. Varieties include curly and flat leaf. The leaf is used in many different types of cuisine and often as a garnish.

Health Benefits:

Parsley contains a range of protective vitamins and antioxidants that are responsible for many of the disease-fighting benefits. The essential oil contains elements that fight cancer, improve digestion and kidney health, and contains antibacterial and antifungal properties. Parsley is a good source of vitamin K to help protect bones, vitamin C for immune building, and vitamin A for eye and skin health. It provides Folate which is needed for the heart, and helps to balance hormones. Parsley acts as a diuretic and can be used to treat painful urination, amenorrhea, gas, and infant colic (via breast milk). It is also used in remedies for gout and gouty arthritis. It even works as a breath freshener!

NOTE- Large quantities should not be used during pregnancy since it naturally has an effect on hormone levels and the menstrual cycle.

Rosemary

Rosmarinus officinalis



Growing Conditions:

Rosemary is a small, perennial evergreen native to the Mediterranean region. It belongs to the mint family. It is drought resistant and thrives in dry, rocky, sandy, and poor soil with a pH of 6 and 7. Rosemary prefers full sun and light, does well in Zones 7-10, and can live quite a long time! Rosemary is a favorite pollinator plant. It pulls double duty- feeding both people and bees. It provides an important early nectar source for emerging spring bees, like bumble and masons.

Health Benefits:

The rosemary leaf is used as a culinary herb and the essential oil is for topical use only. Rosemary acts as an anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial agent, a circulatory stimulant, and an antioxidant. Additionally, the oil extraction has cancer fighting properties. Common uses for rosemary include fighting headaches and possibly improving memory and depression. Rosemary discourages hair loss and boosts growth. It helps to lower Cortisol levels, which is the stress hormone. It is also beneficial for arthritis and nervous tension, as well as in aiding in fat and starch digestion.

NOTE-Rosemary is not recommended during pregnancy beyond its normal use in food due to potential abortifacient effects.

Sage

Salvia officinalis



Growing Conditions:

Sage is an attractive culinary herb. It is an aromatic, rather woody perennial shrub in the mint family. Sage is easy to grow. It needs full sun and well-drained soil. Optimal growth occurs in pH 6.0 and 7.0. If you're planting in clay soil, mix in organic matter and sand to provide better drainage. Plant sage after ground temperature reaches 65 degrees Fahrenheit. It grows well with broccoli, cauliflower, or cabbage. Sage attracts bees, hummingbirds, and butterflies. Healthy sage can help support the pollinator population while ensuring that other plants get pollinated.

Health Benefits:

Sage helps with Alzheimer's and dementia symptoms. It treats diabetes symptoms and balances cholesterol. Sage combats obesity due to the methanolic extract that inhibits the absorption of fat in the pancreas, leading to a decrease in body weight in mice fed a high-fat diet. Sage helps treat menopausal symptoms. Sage has anti-diarrheal effects. Data shows that it can curb spasmodic activity in the gut.

Spearmint

Mentha spicata



Growing Conditions:

Spearmint prefers partial shade and moist soil with a neutral to slightly acidic pH. Mulching around the plant will keep the soil cool and also help you keep an eye on any errant stems to prevent rooting. Spearmint can be grown indoors under a grow light or on a bright windowsill. The pink or lilac flowers grow on spikes and bloom in the summer and fall, typically from June to October. Spearmint and peppermint are reputed to work well against insects like mosquitoes, flies, and spiders.

Health Benefits:

Both the smell and taste of spearmint are pleasantly uplifting. Both the leaves and oil are used for medicinal products. Spearmint oil is known for its ability to decrease inflammation, destroy bacteria, and may even fight off cancer when used internally. One of the active components in spearmint is carvone, which has an antispasmodic effect in the intestines, and can therefore improve upset digestion and flatulence. It is also rich in polyphenols which benefit memory, especially in older adults. Nausea and vomiting are common side effects of chemotherapy; Spearmint oil studies reveal spearmint helps with these symptoms. The oil has anti-tumor properties against four cancer cell lines. It fights bacteria and fungi, balances hormonal functions, and reduces Hirsutism, which is a health problem for women where hair grows excessively where it shouldn't (such as jawline and neck). Last, but not least, Spearmint is generally calming and a possible sleep aid.

Strawberries

Fragaria x ananassa



Growing Conditions:

Strawberries are one of the easiest fruits to grow. They grow in almost all climates and soil, as long as you place them in a location that gets full sun. They require 6-10 hours of direct sunlight. Strawberries are tolerant of different soil types, although they prefer loamy soil that is well drained. Plan to plant in the spring. If you have clay soil, work in aged manure or compost a couple of months before planting. Soil pH should be best at 5.5 to 7. Raised beds are a great option for strawberry plants. Strawberry pollination is best accomplished by bees and other insects. Although the flowers do not produce a lot of nectar, bees will still visit the flower and ensure complete pollination.

Health Benefits:

Strawberries have been proven to help improve immune system function and to fight cancer and heart disease. They boost skin health and benefit cognitive functions. Eating one cup of strawberries per day provides your daily intake of vitamin C, as well as manganese, folate, potassium and magnesium. Just like other berries, strawberries are loaded with health promoting antioxidants, contain disease-fighting phytochemicals, and provide fiber, amino acids, and micronutrients. Adding them to your diet supports a healthy immune system, along with digestive, cardiovascular, and cognitive functions, all while keeping you full and boosting energy levels!

Swiss Chard

Beta vulgaris



Growing Conditions:

Chard does best in full sun, although it tolerates partial shade. It likes fertile, well-worked soil with good drainage and high organic matter. It grows best in soil pH between 6.0 and 7.0 (slightly acidic to neutral). Plant the seeds an inch deep and 4-6 inches apart. Similar to beets, both the stems and the leaves can be eaten cooked or raw. Use scissors to trim leaves in order to not disturb nearby plant roots. The vivid pigment may attract insects and bees to encourage pollination.

Health Benefits:

Chard is a nutrient-dense vegetable. The range of antioxidants can be seen both in its deeply colored leaves and in the red, purple, and yellow stalks. Chard is a super-food, high in vitamin A, C, and K, which are needed for blood clotting and building of bones. On top of this, chard packs an impressive amount of potassium, magnesium, calcium, and copper. It is high in antioxidants that help protect against cancer, heart disease, eye health, and skin conditions. Chard also benefits healthy brain, nerve, and muscle function.

Yarrow

Achillea millefolium



Growing Conditions:

Yarrow performs best in well-drained soil. It thrives in hot, dry conditions; it will not tolerate constantly wet soil. Loamy soil is recommended, but it can also be grown in clay soil as long as it does not stay saturated with water all the time. Yarrow is a flower in the sunflower family that's closely related to chamomile and chrysanthemum. Other common names for this plant are devil's nettle, milfoil, nosebleed plant, old man's mustard, and soldier's woundwort. Yarrow attracts butterflies, bees, and other insects, making it a nice addition to a pollinator garden.

Health Benefits:

The Yarrow flowers can be steeped in tea. They are rich in nutrients and phytonutrients. Yarrow helps promote skin health and treat wounds; it possesses an anti-inflammatory agent that has a positive impact on the skin's pH and moisture content. It's a natural antiseptic so it can prevent wounds from getting infected. It is known to help stop bleeding and dull pain. It may help treat widespread skin conditions, including hemorrhoids, rashes, and slow-healing broken skin. It has mild sedative effects for sleep and anxiety, can reduce inflammation and support immune function, may naturally treat Mastitis (a breast infection that occurs in women who are breastfeeding), and offers gastrointestinal benefits. It may help blood pressure and asthma, and may possess antitumor properties. Surprisingly, yarrow has also been used to actually encourage bleeding in certain health conditions. Women on their monthly cycle should use with caution.



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