

Home & Garden

To ensure successful gardens, make sure plants get lots of sunshine, good soil and regular watering

If a busy schedule prevents you from planting a colorful bed of annuals or growing your own tasty garden-fresh vegetables, don't throw in the trowel just yet.

Ready-to-plant seedlings offer an easy way to start a garden. There's no mystery to growing perfect annuals or vegetables. To ensure success, start with healthy seedlings, fertile soil, lots of sunshine and regular waterings.

Choose a planting site that receives at least six to eight hours of sunlight a day for best results. Equally

important is soil that drains well and is full of organic matter. You can nurture soil to perfection by applying three to six inches of peat moss or compost over the existing soil. Then, till or spade all materials to a depth of eight to 12 inches.

Apply a balanced fertilizer, one that is rich in the nitrogen, phosphate and potash needed to produce vigorous plant growth.

The first application should be added before tilling, so that the proper nutrients will be well mixed in with the soil. Check planting instructions for each annual or vegetable to determine its specific fertilizer needs.

Nurseries and garden centers stock a wide variety of seedlings that can be set directly into the garden. Set seedlings just slightly deeper than they were in their original container. Then, water each plant thoroughly. Check the garden soil regularly for moisture, especially if temperatures are warm. As a rule, plants need about one inch of water per week.

Versatile Annuals

Annuals add dramatic color to the garden. These versatile plants are perfect in flower beds, borders, window boxes and planters, as well as cut flower arrangements.

A well-stocked garden center carries a wide variety that are ready for planting, weather permitting. Here are several options:

Zinnias

Hot weather and zinnias go together. These plants are easy to care for and thrive in any soil. In full sunshine, colors of white, pink, yellow, orange, violet and darker shades of red and bronze glow from early morning into night, from mid-summer until frost.

Geraniums

They are at home in full sun, yet will tolerate light shade where temperatures skyrocket.

Keep the soil well drained because geraniums don't tolerate water-soaked roots. Both single- and double-flowering varieties fill the garden with white, pink, red or salmon color.

Marigolds

These plants stretch from a few inches to a stately four feet. Colors range from deep maroon and red through bright orange, gold, creamy yellow and white.

There are single and double flowers, dwarfs and giants, and blooms that resemble carnations, mums and daisies.

Delicious Vegetables

Eggplant

Ranging in color, from black to purple, white, yellow and red, as well as in size, eggplants require long periods of warm weather to mature.

After planting, water generously and protect from high winds or glaring sun for the first few days.

Tomatoes

Also known as love apples, tomatoes come in various sizes, shapes and colors.

Plant these vegetables after the last frost when evening temperatures are 55°F. Tomatoes also should be planted deep into the ground, so the first leaves are just above soil level.

Peppers

Finger-shaped or blocky bells, green, red, yellow or orange, sweet or hot, there are peppers to please every palate.

Their shiny green leaves and white blossoms make them a decorative addition to the garden.

Easy to handle and quick to grow, once placed in the ground, annual and vegetable seedlings are the logical choice for gardeners on the go.

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Presenters:
Ken Prentice BA MFS CFP, CLU ChFC CCRM FIC, Owner/Manager, Ross Dixon Financial Services, Stouffville
Paul Walsh MA Med CFP, Retired Superintendent of Schools, Halton Board of Education

DATE: Wed., May 13, 1998 TIME: 7-9 p.m.
LOCATION: Christian Blind Mission, 3844 Stouffville, Ontario (North side Stouffville Rd., east of Kennedy Rd.)

RSVP: Ken or Thelma at (905) 642-9507. (Seating is limited)
(If numbers warrant a second session will be added 5-7 p.m.)

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