



WINTER HERB GARDENING

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Winter Herb Gardening

- Gardening is pleasant again!
- Many herbs do well in cooler conditions
- Gardening is cyclical, many will last through summer
- Less humidity means less disease issues
- Lower pest pressure
- Cooking for the holidays is a great way to feature home grown herbs!
- Many herbs attract and feed pollinators



Containers

- 3-5 gallons is best
- Small pots dry out quickly
- Run drip irrigation to each pot for best results
- Good soil is a must!
- Pots may need more holes drilled in them
- Mint and other aggressive plants will need screen covering drainage holes
- Terracotta is best, black plastic gets too hot
- Composite materials and fiberglass work well



Raised Beds

- Beds should be at least 12" deep
- 18"-24" is better
- Be sure that they drain!
- Width should only be what you can comfortably reach across
- Use treated wood (food safe now) or cinder block painted with Kiltz on the inside
- Mulch with pebbles if possible to prevent rain splashing soil onto leaves



Layout and Location

- Full sun is best for most herbs
- Sun and airflow help prevent disease
- Well drained location a must!
- Design to be easily covered for frost
- Design only as large as you can maintain!
- Access to water- drip irrigation is best



Soil

- Extremely important
- Most herbs love well drained soils
- Poor or sandy soils are preferred by Mediterranean herbs
- Containers or raised beds require attention to soils
- Test soil yearly to determine what is needed
- Soil test kits are available at many garden centers and all LSU AgCenter offices



Soils- Herb Mix Recipe

- 2 Bags Peat Moss (3 cu. foot bags)
 - 2 Bags Black Kow Compost (50 lb. bag)
 - 1 Large Bag Perlite (2 cu. Feet)
 - 4 Bags Miracle Grow Cactus, Palm and Citrus Potting Mix (8 quart bags)
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- Makes enough to fill 16 five gallon pots
 - Will make 11 cubic feet of soil



Soil Testing

- Test by taking samples 4-6" deep in a zig-zag pattern
- Mix dry soil in bucket
- Add a small scoop to a bag
- LABEL WELL!
- \$15 for up to three tests
- Be sure to indicate that you are growing herbs on the test sheet



Soil Amendments

- Existing beds and pots may need a recharge
- Empty spent potting mix onto a tarp
- Mix in a bag of compost and some peat, break up clumps
- Beds that are compacted- add soil conditioner and a little sand
- Light, well drained friable soil is the goal



Cleaning Up Existing Herbs

- Many are perennial
- Trim out any dead sections
- Lightly fertilize with slow release 8-8-8
- Remove dead plants
- Remove warm-season plants that are finished (Basil)
- Save seeds from fennel, basil, cilantro, and others
- Weed and smooth beds and pots for planting



Frost Protection

- Be ready to cover your herbs, many are not frost-proof
- Use old sheets, newspaper, cardboard, pine straw, or tarps
- Remove covering at sunup to avoid overheating
- Wait a week to prune damaged tissue, some may regenerate
- Water lightly after and before frost to help plants recover and provide insulation



Where to Buy Herb Transplants

- Bonnie Plants (Home Depot)
- Sunrise Trading (Kenner)
- Harold's Plants (St. Claude, carries Sunrise Plants)
- Perino's and Charvet's (Metairie)
- Pelican Greenhouse Sales (City Park)



**NEW ORLEANS CITY PARK
BOTANICAL
GARDEN**

The Pelican Greenhouse is located just off Henry Thomas (Golf) Drive south of the I-610 underpass. Bring a wagon and arrive early.

For additional information, call 504-623-9464, visit our website at neworleanscitypark.com or e-mail plants@nocp.org.

Plants are now available for sale in the Garden Gift Shop located in the Tolmas Center

2017 PLANT SALES

MARCH 11 Rose Sale - Pelican Greenhouse 9:00 a.m. - Noon	JULY 1 Pelican Greenhouse 9:00 a.m. - Noon
APRIL 8-9 Spring Garden Show 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	AUGUST 5 Pelican Greenhouse 9:00 a.m. - Noon
MAY 13 Pelican Greenhouse 9:00 a.m. - Noon	SEPTEMBER 9 Pelican Greenhouse 9:00 a.m. - Noon
JUNE 3 Pelican Greenhouse 9:00 a.m. - Noon	OCTOBER 7-8 Fall Garden Festival 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 pm



Planting Now

- Choose strong transplants
- Look for plants that are free of disease and pests
- Seeds may be purchased from many companies (Johnny's, Territorial, Ball)
- Plant and water deeply!
- Seeds vs. Transplants, a matter of thyme!



Rosemary

- Enjoys being planted now
- Can grow up to three feet or more!
- Perennial
- Plant 2-3 feet apart
- 1 plant per 5 gallon pot
- Full sun, light, well drained soil
- Slow release fertilizer in fall and spring
- Mulch, but keep it away from crown of plant
- Dry out between waterings



Mint

- Many types!
- Aggressive, grow in pot with screen over holes
- Bury pots to keep contained
- Perennial
- Likes wetter soil, but can tolerate dry soil, mulching helps
- Fertilize monthly if harvesting frequently
- Replant every 3-4 years
- Full sun to part shade



Thyme

- Dry conditions with lots of sun!
- Dry out between waterings
- Crown rot is a concern with rain/humidity
- Mulch with gravel or builder's sand
- Plant directly into Miracle Grow Palm and Citrus mix
- Clipping tops of stems encourages healthy growth
- Annual in our area, rarely survives summer
- Many flavors! Try them all!



Lavender

- Challenging to grow in New Orleans
- Succumbs to humidity
- Full sun
- Extremely well drained area
- Space plants 3 feet apart for good airflow
- Plant into Miracle Grow Citrus and Palm mix with some compost and builders sand
- Raised beds/containers improve your odds
- Treat as an annual
- Fernleaf and English varieties seem to do better



Mexican Tarragon

- Easy to grow! Makes gardeners look good!
- Perennial
- Attracts pollinators
- Full sun to part shade
- Trim older plants back and fertilize
- Keep moist with mulch, but soil must drain well
- Succumbs to root rot in wet conditions



French Tarragon

- Challenging to grow
- Gets eaten alive by fungal issues
- Part sun, good airflow
- Try in hanging basket
- Soil must be well draining
- Treat as a winter annual
- Don't get mad if it dies



Dill

- Super easy!
- Provides food for Swallowtails (plant lots!)
- Plant 2 or 3 successive plantings
- Start from seed, it is easy
- Fernleaf and Bouquet do well here
- Plant 12-18" apart (thin seedlings)
- Water in dry weather, can tolerate drought
- Likes well draining soil
- Full sun



Parsley

- Easy to grow!
- Also feeds Swallowtails!
- Start from seed (soak overnight in warm water) or transplants
- Biennial, flowers and dies second year
- Full sun to part shade
- Well draining soil, can dry out
- Keep mulch away from crown (crown rot)
- Italian flat leaf does better than curly leaf here (humidity)
- Fertilize monthly if harvesting frequently



Cilantro/Coriander

- More of a winter herb (sorry salsa lovers)
- Plant 2-3 successive plantings
- Flowers are good for pollinators
- Coriander is the dried seed of cilantro
- Seeds can be eaten or replanted
- Treat as a cool season annual
- Full sun
- Well drained soil, water during dry spells



Sage

- Difficult to grow due to humidity
- Treat as annual
- Plant in full sun, good airflow
- Well drained soil, add soil conditioner
- Different varieties to choose from
- “Bierstadt” does well here
- Mildew is an issue, keep plants spaced 18” apart in good moving air
- Mulch with pebbles to keep leaves dry
- Water from bottom!!



Pineapple Sage

- Leaves taste like pineapple
- Flowers are edible
- Great in salads
- Easy to grow, full sun
- Attracts hummingbirds
- Gets large, 3' diameter, 4' tall
- Perennial
- Well drained but moist soil
- Mulch
- Look for crown rot or root rot



Calendula

- Grown for edible flowers (hay taste)
- Attracts pollinators
- Full of vitamin C
- Full sun, well drained soil
- Plant 12" apart
- Direct sow seed or purchase transplants
- Fertilize heavier than other herbs (compost in hole)
- Water during dry conditions



Nasturtium

- Plant from seed, easy to grow!
- Edible peppery flowers and leaves
- Repels aphids, attracts pollinators
- Full sun, well drained soil
- Water during dry spells
- Many colors and variegated leaf patterns to choose from
- Treat as annual, will disappear in hot weather
- Save seeds for next season!



Fennel

- Fronds and bulb are edible
- Feeds Swallowtails also!
- Easy to grow, biennial
- Can grow large, plant 12" – 18" apart
- Fertile soil that drains well
- Fertilize as needed (bi-weekly)
- Keep soil consistently moist
- Full sun
- Tolerates light frost



Bronze Fennel

- Relatively new!
- Grow just like regular fennel
- Foliage looks great contrasting with greens



Borage

- Grown for cucumber flavored flowers
- Attracts pollinators
- Easy to grow from seed
- Full sun, well drained soil
- Watch for mildews and fungal rots
- Plant one seed per inch, thin to one per 8"-12"
- Grows sort of leggy, stake as needed
- Water when conditions are dry



Stevia

- Naturally sweet
- Easy to grow
- Becoming easier to find transplants
- Kids love it!
- Full sun, well drained fertile soil
- Water in dry conditions, mulch!
- Plant 18" apart
- Treat as perennial, replant after second year
- Root rot is common, watch for wilting in the presence of ample water



Sorrel

- Red-veined and green varieties available
- Sour, bright taste
- Add to salads and pesto
- Full sun, well drained soil
- Water in dry conditions
- Mulch helps!
- Treat as perennial, will bolt, reseed or replant after bolting



Walking Onion

- Also known as perennial or Egyptian onion
- Easy to grow, will spread, dedicate patch just for it
- Better than green onion, will regrow
- Full sun, rich, well drained soil
- Mulch to keep soil moisture right
- Replant bulblets to regrow crop
- Fertilize monthly if harvesting
- Tolerates frost



Chervil

- Treat as winter annual
- Anise seed taste
- Plant seeds or transplants
- Thin seedlings to 8" apart
- Sow every 3 weeks
- Full sun to part shade
- Well drained, fertile soil
- Water in dry conditions
- Add lots of compost!



Garlic Chives

- Aggressively perennial
- Easy to grow!
- Nice garlicky flavor
- Plant in unused corners or pots
- Full sun to part shade
- Well drained rich soil
- Water or mulch well
- Flowers attract bees and are edible
- Fertilize monthly if harvesting



Chives

- Hard to grow, susceptible to crown rot
- Full sun, well draining soil
- Plant 12" apart for good airflow
- Amend soil with lots of compost
- Watch for aphids in spring
- Treat as an annual, may survive summer if moved to shady location
- Remove and eat flowers to encourage leaf growth



Chamomile

- Grown for tea
- Somewhat easy to grow
- Treat as an annual
- Bees and pollinators love it!
- Grow from seed (need light! surface planting) or transplants
- Plant 6" apart
- Stake as needed
- Humidity and heat destroy it, enjoy in the cooler weather



Yarrow

- Easy to grow, very aggressive
- Attracts pollinators
- Use as a tea, flowers are edible
- Grow from transplants
- Space out 12" apart
- Full sun, tolerates dry soil
- Good in compacted poor soil
- Appreciates feeding monthly
- Yellow, pink and white flowers



Winter Savory

- Perennial, though not in our area
- Summer savory is an annual and short-lived
- Thyme-ey flavor
- Requires six hours of full sun
- Well drained soil is a must!
- Season bean and meat with it
- Flowers attract pollinators



Bay Laurel

- Easy to grow in New Orleans!
- Used in many cuisines
- Grows in the ground (good drainage) or in a pot, makes a great topiary
- Harvest large leaves
- Root rot can be an issue
- Full sun to part shade
- Well drained fertile soil



Kaffir Lime

- Used in Indian cooking, adds lime flavor, great in many dishes!
- Easy to grow as a small tree in a pot
- Lime fruit is inedible
- Harvest large leaves
- Use fresh or dry
- Relatively few pests, leaf miners can be an issue
- Full sun, well drained fertile soil
- Prone to root rot, good drainage is key



How to Harvest Herbs

- Use sharp scissors
- Harvest early in the day before sun is strong
- Harvest after sunset if needed
- Cut before flowers begin to form
- Cut in bunches to promote regrowth
- Never harvest more than 1/3 of the plant
- Harvest basil, cilantro, parsley and similar herbs near the base
- Rosemary, thyme, and similar herbs can be cut by the sprig



Storing Fresh Herbs

- Wash if needed, dry in salad spinner
- Most herbs do better unwashed
- Damp paper towel wrappings work all herbs, shelf life varies (store in fridge)
- Small jars of water work well for hardier herbs such as rosemary, sage, thyme, etc. Don't let leaves cloud the water
- Change water in jars daily. Store on countertop or in fridge (last longer in fridge)



How to Store Dry Herbs

- Dry on racks in non-humid conditions out of light
- Airflow is important!
- Dry on cookie sheet in oven set at lowest temperature, turning every 15 minutes until dry
- Use dry, sterile jars with airtight lids
- Label jars with harvest date and contents (herbs can look the same!)
- Store in room temperature out of light for up to a year
- Best if used before a year



Freezing Herbs

- Use ice cube trays
- Coarsely chop herbs, removing stems and seeds
- Pack ice cube trays and fill with water or oil
- Freeze until solid, pop out and store in freezer bags
- Label your bags with content and date of production
- Freeze edible flowers in water for use in cocktails



Cooking with Fresh vs. Dry Herbs

- Fresh herbs are less strong than dried herbs
- Dried herbs are more potent and concentrated
- Use 1/3 less dry herbs than the recipe calls for fresh herbs
- Dried herbs are best added DURING cooking
- Fresh herbs are best added AFTER or right before cooking ends
- Use fresh herbs to garnish dishes



Resources

- www.lsuagcenter.com
- www.bonnieplants.com
- www.johnnysseeds.com
- www.rodaleinstitute.org
- www.herbsociety.org
- www.herbsocietynola.com



Questions?

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