

What is Edible Landscaping? by Lynne Brosch

Edible landscaping is merely the use of food plants as part of your landscape. You may want to try adding them into established flowerbeds or starting a new raised bed with both flowers and vegetables. You may see them in the front yard among the shrubs or in the back yard with the perennials. The fun of edible landscaping is the exciting new textures, colors and usefulness of plants in your landscape.

This is not a new idea in landscape design but one that is having a resurgence. Some of you may remember hearing of the "Victory Gardens" of World War II. With the government rationing of foods and the lack of transport from farm to market people were encouraged to plant their own gardens. Almost 20 million people planted gardens in backyards, empty lots and even on rooftops. Everyone pooled their resources and shared their successful crops to provide food for all in the name of patriotism.



Why would you want an edible landscape?

- Edible landscapes are sustainable, water efficient and result in the saving of fossil fuels required to truck all that food to your market.
- Your homegrown vegetables are fresher than anything you can get in the supermarket and will taste so much better.
- You can plant different varieties of your favorite edibles, many of which would not be available in the store.
- You can't beat the availability. Feeling like a squash side dish tonight? Grab a quick salad from the garden. Pick some parsley, basil or sage for your dinner recipe. Grab some mint to drop in your beverage for extra flavor. If only the growing season would last longer....

It's time to think about all the time and money you are putting into those plants and that they should be giving you something in return (not just holding down dirt)!

Watch for the next article in this series in our next newsletter. It will cover choosing and preparing your site and your best choices for edibles in the Tahoe basin.

Check out the Victory Grower website link on our Master Gardener web page http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.edu/Master_Gardeners/LTMG/, as well as other links to information on edible landscaping.