



INDOOR WINTER GARDENING



Written by Dale Neves, TEEA Education Chair, District 2

September 11, 2019

Goals and Objectives

- Goals
 - Provide information on how to grow plants indoors that can be used in everyday meals.

- Objectives
 - Describe supplies needed to create an indoor Garden area.
 - Plants or seeds?
 - Plants that can be started from cuttings
 - Plants that can be started from roots
 - Care of plants
 - Safety of people and pets around your plants in your home

Materials Needed (available from <http://teea.tamu.edu>)

- Indoor Winter Gardening PowerPoint
- Indoor Winter Gardening Handout
- Matching Game Icebreaker
- Indoor Winter Gardening Evaluation

Ice Breaker:

Hand out Matching Game, and have participants work in teams to match the pictures with the plant names.

Some Great Articles from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension (also at <http://teea.tamu.edu>)

Joe Masabni, EHT-079 Growing Herbs in Texas

Larry Stein and Joe Masabni, Fall Vegetable Gardening Guide



**Curly
Parsley**

Peppermint

Lemon Balm

Chives

Rosemary

**German
Thyme**

ICE BREAKER

MATCHING GAME

Prepare before hand:

Print the game pieces from the PowerPoint or make color copies of the attached - One page each of pictures and plant names. Cut apart on the lines and place one complete set in each ziploc baggie. This game is shared between two people. If you have ten people, have five sets of the game.

Before starting the PowerPoint Presentation, hand out the Ice Breaker Game.

Have two people work together to match the pictures with the plant names. After the group has had enough time to try to match the pictures and plant names, show the group the correct matches.

Growing Herbs in Texas

Joseph G. Masabni*



Herbs are plants that are used as flavoring agents. The common herbs used in cooking are referred to as culinary herbs. Mild or savory herbs impart a delicate flavor to foods, and the pungent herbs add zest.

For most herbs, the part of the plant that is used is the leaves; the seeds or roots of some herbs can also be used. Because herbs are used in small amounts, only a few plants are usually needed to provide enough fresh and dried herbs for an entire season.

Herb gardening is popular throughout Texas (Table 1). New enthusiasm for “natural” foods has heightened this interest. In addition, most food recipes can be accentuated with the proper use of culinary herbs.

Although many herbs are used for medicinal or ornamental purposes, this publication deals mainly with culinary herbs used in cooking.

Location

Herbs may be grown in flower beds, in rock gardens as borders, or as corner plantings. Some herbs are annuals, meaning that they grow from seeds and complete their life cycle in 1 year; others are perennials that return year after year.

Annual herbs may be planted in annual flower gardens or in vegetable gardens. Plant perennial herbs at the side of the garden where they will not interfere with next year’s soil preparation.

Many gardeners establish a small herb garden near the home. Generally, a 6- to 10-foot square or rectangular area is sufficient. Circular or free-form designs can also be used. Plant the tallest herbs to the back of the plot.

*Assistant Professor and Extension Horticulturist, The Texas A&M University System

Fall Vegetable Gardening Guide

Larry Stein and Joe Masabni*

Most gardeners plant their vegetables in the spring to harvest in late spring to early summer. In most areas of Texas, it is possible to have a fall vegetable garden also, but it will need to be managed somewhat differently than a spring garden.

Locating the garden

If your spring garden was successful, the same location should work well in the fall. When planning a new garden, keep in mind that vegetable crops must have at least 8 hours of direct sun each day and should be planted where the soil drains well.

Preparing the soil

If you're using an established garden area, pull out all plant material—the remains of your spring crop and any weeds that have grown up in the garden. Don't put plant residue from a spring garden into your compost bin because it is likely to be contaminated with insects and disease pathogens.

For a new garden site, remove all the grass. Just tilling it into the soil will not eliminate all the grass sprigs; they will continue to grow and interfere with the garden. Likewise, for a raised garden, remove all turf before building the frame and filling it with soil.

Grass and weeds can be killed with an herbicide that contains glyphosate. Several products are available, including Roundup® and Kleenup®.

*Professor and Extension Horticulturist, and Assistant Professor and Extension Horticulturist—Vegetables; The Texas A&M University System

After removing the grass, shovel the garden area to a depth of 10 to 12 inches. Rototillers will not penetrate adequately, but they can be used to loosen and mix shoveled areas.

Spread 1 to 2 inches of coarse, washed sand and 2 to 3 inches of organic matter on the garden surface and till it into the soil to improve the soil's physical quality. The soil will need to be improved over time rather than in just a season or two. If you are building a raised bed garden, don't skimp on the soil. Use weed-free loam or sandy loam soil.

Adding fertilizer is the next step. You have two options:

- Apply 1 pound of ammonium sulfate (21-0-0) per 100 square feet (10 feet by 10 feet) before planting. Then sprinkle 1 tablespoon of ammonium sulfate around each plant every 3 weeks and water it in.
- Or, apply 2 to 3 pounds of a slow-release fertilizer (19-5-9, 21-7-14, or 25-5-10) per 100 square feet of garden area. Apply 1 tablespoon of ammonium sulfate (21-0-0) around each plant every 3 weeks and water it in. This second method should produce a more abundant harvest, especially with hybrid tomatoes and peppers.

Do not add too much ammonium sulfate, and do not put it too close to the plants. It can seriously damage them.

Horse or cattle manure may be substituted for commercial fertilizer at a rate of 60 to 80 pounds per







There are many benefits to having plants in your home.

The plants give off oxygen. Some of the plants are calming. Many can be used in teas. Many of these plants can be used in cooking.

Supplies:

Soil, Rocks and Containers



Plants



Seeds



Make sure your container has holes in the bottom. Add some gravel to help with drainage. Then add some good potting soil. Add the plant and more soil as needed. Water as needed, but do not overwater.

I like to use established plants in the house. Growing your plants from seeds takes longer to grow, but it can be done.

I prefer to buy Organic Heirloom seeds. When I am looking for seeds, I read the information on the stand and the seed packets.

I try to buy organic Heirloom seeds every chance I get. I read the seed packets to see what type of seeds are in the packets.

Plants or Seeds?

Plants
Faster – Ready to use

Seeds
It takes longer to grow

If you want to start using your plants right away, start with plants. If you don't mind waiting for the seeds to sprout and grow, use seeds.

Cuttings

Rosemary



German Thyme



Peppermint



Propagate –to reproduce

Peppermint can be propagated from cuttings and from roots. Other plants can be propagated from cuttings.

Roots



Peppermint

German Thyme

Chives



Plants can be propagated from roots.

Care of plants

Peppermint



Lemon Balm



Some insect enjoyed nibbling on the Lemon Balm. I placed the container of plants outside when we were going to be gone for a week. I placed the pot in my flower bed where the sprinklers would water the plants.

A natural way to keep insects and animals from eating your plants is to put some dish soap in a spray bottle with water. Spray your plants. It helps repel the animals and insects. If the soapy water is washed off by rain or sprinklers, you need to spray the plants with soapy water again.

Safety of plants and others in your home.

Do you have any small children or pets in your house?

Make sure your plants are a safe distance from your
Small children and your pets.

I cut the roots plus almost an inch of the green onions off the rest of the green onions. I planted those pieces in a pot. The green onions were growing back nicely. Then my dog decided to eat my green onions that were re-growing. I didn't think my container of green onions would be eaten by my dog.



Growing Herbs in Texas

Joseph G. Masabni*

Potted herbs

Some herbs can be planted in pots and grown indoors during the winter. Those best adapted to pot culture are basil, chives, mint, parsley, rosemary, and sweet marjoram.

Either start herbs from seeds indoors or dig up herbs from the garden toward the end of the growing season and place them in pots. Set them in a sunny south window, and care for them as you would houseplants.

Information

Several sources of information are available on herbs. Books on herbs are available at local libraries. Organized groups interested in herbs and their culture and uses include:

- ◆ Herb Society of America: www.herbsociety.org
- ◆ National Herb Day: herbday.org/
- ◆ Herb Association of Texas: texasherbs.org/
- ◆ American Botanical Council: abc.herbalgram.org

- ◆ United Plant Savers: www.unitedplantsavers.org
- ◆ American Herbal Products Association: www.ahpa.org
- ◆ American Herbal Pharmacopoeia: www.herbal-ahp.org

Seeds/plants

Among the many the catalog sources are the following firms:

- ◆ Burpee: www.burpee.com
- ◆ Organica Seed: www.organicaseed.com
- ◆ Harris Seeds: www.harrisseed.com
- ◆ George Park Seed Company: www.parkseed.com
- ◆ Nichols Herb and Rare Seed: www.nicholsgardennursery.com
- ◆ Garden of Herbs: www.gardenherbs.org

Table 3. Perennial herbs. These grow from seed the first year, but grow year after year. Some are propagated by other means. A straw or leaf mulch through the winter is recommended to protect from winter damage.




Herb	Height (inches)	Description	Culture	Harvest	Use
Anise hyssop (<i>Agastache foeniculum</i>)		36–60 Tall, upright plants with angular stems and tooth-edged leaves; flowers usually white or pink	Grow from seed or divisions in sun or partial shade; space 12–24 in. apart	Harvest ripe seeds before seed heads open; store dried seeds in an airtight container	Attracts bees; flowers edible; leaves: flavoring for tea, crafts; seeds: cookies, cakes, and muffins
Bee balm (<i>Monarda didyma</i>)		24–30 Square stems; leaves opposite with reddish veins; rhizomes are invasive and grow in dense clusters	Grow from seed or divisions in sun or part shade; space 12–15 in. apart; may be difficult to grow in Texas	Harvest leaves in spring or just before flowering in summer for fresh use or for drying	Attracts bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds; leaves: tea (Oswego tea), jelly, soup, stew, and fruit salads; flowers edible; dried flowers: crafts
Catnip (<i>Nepeta cataria</i>)		36–48 Square stems and small, purple flowers	Grow from seed or divisions in full or partial sun; space 12–18 in. apart	Harvest mature leaves and dry	Dried leaves: tea, recreational substance for cats

Table 3 is part of Growing Herbs in Texas. This table is very informative.

References

Larry Stein and Joe Masabni, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Publication # EHT-056 Fall Vegetable Gardening Guide (Available on the TEEA website)

Joe Masabni, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Publication # EHT-079 Growing Herbs in Texas (Available on the TEEA website)



Texas Extension Education Association, Inc.
INDOOR WINTER GARDENING

Please take a moment to provide feedback on this program.

1. Regarding the overall program/teaching (rate your response by circling a number):

Table with 2 columns: Statement and Scale (1= Worst, 5 = Best). Rows include: The value of the lesson was, The overall teaching was, The teacher's knowledge of the lesson was.

2. Regarding what you know and actions you plan to take (circle your response):

- I learned new information today. YES NO
I plan to use the information I learned today. YES NO
I feel this information was helpful. YES NO
I think I now know how to repot my plants. YES NO
I know how to start new plants from cuttings. YES NO

3. This lesson was delivered by a(n) (check only one):

TEEA Member. Extension Agent/Specialist Other Speaker.

4. Please tell us about yourself.

I am a Woman. Man.

I am in District: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

I have been a member of TEEA for years.

My age is years-old.

5. Additional Comments.

Large empty rectangular box for additional comments.

Thank You For Completing This Form!