



Homesteading with Vegetables By Jessica Holmes

Vegetable gardening is a great place to start your homestead. No matter what your scale, there are ways to grow vegetables or herbs to suit your needs. You can grow on the ground, in pots, you can grow using vertical gardens and more.

Planning is an important part of starting a garden. You should start by making a list of your favorite vegetables, there is no point in growing something that will go to waste or that you don't like. Figure out where you want to plant them and what spot would provide the best sunlight-at least six hours a day, make sure it is warm enough and the last frost has passed. When choosing where to grow your vegetables, remember to check the size of the plant to decipher where to grow. If growing in containers, make sure your containers have drainage on the bottom; this prevents root rot, insect and disease problems later down the line. You can also add a few inches of rocks to the bottom, so there is a place for the water to go if you are not able to have holes in the bottom of your container. Your crop is going to need well-draining soil with a pH close to 6.5. Use a mixture of equal parts of compost, perlite, and garden soil when using containers and make sure to fertilize during the course of the growing season.

Many vegetables like lettuces and greens, carrots, onions, peas, peppers, radish, and more are easily grown in smaller containers (one gallon) as well as most herbs such as basil, parsley, thyme, cilantro, rosemary. Vegetables that need a three to five gallon container to grow in include, tomatoes, cucumbers, squash and eggplant.

Using decorative, fun containers can also be a great way to decorate your porch or the outside of your home, while at the same time producing enough food to sustain your lifestyle.