

BASIC GARDENING VOCABULARY

Amending: Means to repair your soil quality by adding in compost, manure or another natural fertilizer.

Annual: An annual plant is one that completes the life cycle in one season. They must be planted each year from seed and will die at the end of the season.

Biannual: Important for seed savers. A biannual is a plant that doesn't go to seed until its second year of growth. Carrots and most root crops are a good example. You can still harvest the vegetable in the first year.

Bolting: Is when a plant goes to flower and begins to produce seeds. This is what we want for our fruit producing vegetables, but not for our leafy greens, herbs and lettuces. Once a plant bolts, the flavor of the plant can become bitter and unappetizing.

Compost: Compost is organic fertilizer composed of decomposed organic plant matter.

Deadheading: Refers to pinching of flowers and stalks on a plant to prevent it from bolting.

Suckers: Are shoots that grow from a plants stem or roots that do not produce flowers or fruit. Suckers can be easily pruned to encourage productive plant growth.

Direct Sow: Direct sowing involves planting seeds outdoors directly into your garden bed.

Germination: Is the process of a seed becoming a plant. A germination rate usually refers to the time it takes from a seed to be planted before it emerges through the surface of the soil.

Heirloom: Are special variety seeds that are handed down from generation to generation.

Humus: Decomposed organic matter that helps to improve soil structure and moisture retention.

Organic: At its most basic, organic means "derived from organic matter." For an organic gardener, that means that all the processes we use to grow

healthy plants are taken from decomposed living matter and natural systems rather than from chemical sources

Ornamental: Are non-edible plant varieties grown for their looks and not their use.

Perennial: Perennial plants are planted once and survive for many seasons while still producing a harvest.

Pollination: Pollination is the method by which plants reproduce. Pollen from the male anthers of a flower are captured by the female ovary of the plant. Once this fertilization takes place, the flower will begin to produce seeds. The seeds develop inside a fruit or a pod which grows from the flower. Many vegetables are self-pollinating but wind, weather, bugs and other animals all play their part in the process.

Pruning: To cut back unnecessary parts of a plant to encourage more productive growth.

Staking/Caging: Staking and Caging is when we tie larger plants to a stake or a cage to improve their stability and encourage good growth. Commonly Staked and Caged plants include tomatoes, cucumbers, some squash, pole beans and peas.

Transplant: Are plants started indoors or in a seed starting area and later transplanted into the garden bed when they become more mature.

Thinning: Is when we remove seedlings that are growing too close to one another. Often times when we plant seeds, we plant more than we actually need to ensure a good growth. Its important to thin these numbers as they start to grow so that your plants have enough space. A good rule to follow is to allow for a space between your sown plants that is about equal to the distance between your forefinger and pinky.

Zone: Refers to the "Growth Hardiness Zone," that is, the temperature range where certain plants will grow. The Zone for Southwestern Ohio is "6a." A map on the back of most seed packets will allow you to see what plants fall within our zone and when they should be planted.

BASIC GUIDE TO GARDENING HANDTOOLS

The Bare Necessities:

Round Shove: Has a long handle and a rounded head that comes to a point so that it looks like a shield. Good for digging into wet or moist soils and for moving materials in your bed space.

Garden Spade Shovel: Has a flat, rectangular head. Use this shovel to bust up hard surfaces or to edge around your bed to prevent weeds.

Square Shovel: Has a short, square head with rounded edges. Good for moving loose materials like compost or manure, or for digging into soft surfaces.

Hard Rake: A long handled rake with short metal tines. Good for smoothing out the surface of your bed or for raking out hard debris or patches of weeds.

Trowel: A trowel is a small handled tool with a sharp point that is typically used to dig holes or trenches for planting seeds or seedlings. This is also a valuable tool for removing weeds from your bed by digging out the root.

Draw Hoe: A long handled tool that helps with weeding, turning soil and drawing soil around the plants. It has a flat head with sharp corners that allow for an easier job chopping at weeds and for unearthing their roots. A draw hoe is also a good tool for removing debris from your bed space at the end of the season.

Stirrup Hoe: A long handled hoe with head that looks like a cowboy's stirrup. Use to draw across the surface of your bed and cut down smaller weeds without disturbing your plants' root structures.

Garden Fork: A short handled fork with four hard, long and sharp tines. Use this for loosing compacted soil and for turning and aerating soil in your bed.

Pitch Fork: A long handled fork with narrow tines spaced a few inches apart. Use to move bulky loose materials like manure, compost, hay or mulch.

Hand Pruners: A short pair of clippers used to prune and trim plants. Substitute a a short, sharp knife if hand pruners are unavailable.

Wheelbarrow: Wheelbarrows are used to move soil, compost, dead plants and mulch with little effort. They have a front wheel and two back resting legs. Simply, load the tub space with as much material as you can handle, lift the two handles and move forward at a regular walking pace.