

# Herbs & Companion Planting

by  
Sister Suzanne Donner, OP



## JUBILEE FARM

Just west of Springfield, IL  
6760 Old Jacksonville Rd.  
New Berlin, IL 62670

## CROPS AND THEIR COMPANION PLANTS\*

*While it is not an exact science, any practitioner of companion planting will tell you that individual crops have their “preferred companions”. Experience is the best guide, but the list below outlines some plant combinations that work well in most situations.*

**Apples** Chives, foxgloves, wallflowers, nasturtiums, garlic, onions

**Apricots** Basil, tansy, wormwood

**Asparagus** Tomatoes, parsley, basil

**Beans** Carrots, cucumbers, cabbages, lettuce, peas, parsley, cauliflower, spinach, summer savory

**Beans (broad/fava)** Potatoes, sweetcorn (corn).

**Beans (dwarf)** Beetroot, potatoes Beetroot Onions, kohlrabi, lettuce, cabbage, dwarf beans

**Brussels sprouts** Nasturtiums Cabbages Beans, beetroot, celery, mint, thyme, sage, onions, rosemary, dill, potatoes, chamomile, oregano, hyssop, wormwood, nasturtiums, tansy, coriander (cilantro)

**Carrots** Peas, radishes, lettuce, chives, sage, onions, leeks

**Cauliflowers** Celery, beans, tansy, nasturtium

**Celery** Tomatoes, dill, beans, leeks, cabbage, cauliflowers

**Chives** Parsley, apples, carrots, tomatoes

**Courgette (zucchini)** Nasturtiums

**Cucumbers** Potatoes (early crop only), beans, celery, lettuce, sweetcorn, Savoy cabbages, sunflowers, nasturtiums

**Kohl rabi** Beetroot, onions Garlic Roses, apples, peaches

**Grapevines** Geraniums, mulberries, hyssop, basil, tansy

**Leeks** Carrots, celery

**Lettuce** Carrots, onions, strawberries, beetroot, cabbages, radishes, tagetes

**Onions** Carrots, beetroot, lettuce, chamomile, kohlrabi, courgettes

**Parsnips** Peas, potatoes, peppers, beans, radishes, garlic

**Peaches** Tansy, garlic, basil, wormwood

**Peas** Potatoes, radishes, carrots, turnips

**Potatoes** Peas, beans, cabbage, sweetcorn, broad beans, green beans, nasturtium, marigolds, foxgloves, horseradish, aubergine (eggplant)

**Pumpkin** Sweetcorn

**Radishes** Lettuces, peas, chervil, nasturtium

**Raspberries** Tansy

**Spinach** Strawberries

**Squash** Sunflowers

**Strawberries** Borage, lettuce, spinach, sage, pyrethrum

**Sunflowers** Squash, cucumber

**Sweetcorn (com)** Broad beans, potatoes, melons, tomatoes, cucumber, squash, tansy

**Tomatoes** Asparagus, celery, parsley, basil, carrots, chives, marigolds, foxgloves, garlic, sweetcorn

**Turnips** Peas, nasturtiums



# HERBS

## WHEN TO PLANT HERBS:

**March:** Looking at your garden plans and at this time make any changes or additions. If you are starting seeds, please keep them warm and moist and put the date on the plant markers. Some herbs are very difficult to start from seed, so the best thing is to buy them.

**April:** Have your soil tested and make a commitment to adding organic matter for a healthier soil. Propagate perennials by root division, cutting, or layering at the first sign of new growth. Start warming your soil for planting such as location, mulch, cover crops and plant covers. In the middle of April Green houses will start having Herbs for sale.

**May:** Make sure soil is turned and compost mixed in for active nutrients before planting. Review your garden plan to include companion planting. You can begin planting making sure that your herbs have plenty of sun.

**June:** Plant the balance of your garden, including basil, and any other kitchen herbs. Water daily all newly planted transplants for several weeks until plants are established. Water potted plants frequently as well. Begin to enjoy your herbs when plants are well established.



## WHERE TO PLANT

Most people try to plant their herbs near their house, so that they have easy access to the herbs, especially herbs used everyday in the kitchen. Most herbs need a sunny location for most of the day, but there are some herbs that just like the morning sun (parsley, chervil, cilantro). For my convenience, I use square 4 by 4's decorative timbers to separate each of the herbs that I planted. This permits easy care, less weeds, and you don't need to use mulch. When using mulches, it is too difficult to add compost to the herbs, so I don't use it.



## HERBS SEEDS THAT CAN BE STARTED INDOORS

Chervil, Chives, Cilantro, Dill best sown into the soil, Parsley, Rosemary (takes a month to seed), Sage, Savory, Basil, Sweet Marjoram, Thyme (slow to germinate)

## HERBS YOU CAN BRING INDOORS FOR THE WINTER

Lemon Grass, Lemon Verbena, Pineapple Sage, Rosemary, Scented Geraniums Chives, Greek Oregano, French Tarragon, Sage, Thyme can be brought indoors but even Perennials will take a rest.

## WATERING

Water late in the afternoon with a hand sprayer is the best time because the plant can hold the water most of the evening. Watering in the morning can cause the plant to lose its moisture rapidly. Watering to late can cause mildew.

## INVASIVE HERBS

Mints: In small gardens they can be confined to small tubs or pots that can be sunk into the ground. This will contain the roots and runners. 🌿

*Sister Suzanne Donner, OP, Spring 2012*



# COMPANION PLANTING\*\*

It takes more than good soil, sun, and nutrients to ensure success in a garden. Time-honored gardening wisdom says that certain plants, when grown together, improve each other's health and yields. For instance, some plants attract beneficial insects that help to protect a companion, while other plants (particularly herbs) act as repellents. Additionally, plants that require a lot of the same nutrients as their neighbors may struggle to get enough for themselves, producing lackluster crops.

Which vegetables should you plant next to each other? Which shouldn't you plant together? Let's take a look at the benefits of companion planting, then a list of the best companion plants.

## BENEFITS OF COMPANION PLANTING

There are plenty of reasons to plant certain crops together. For example...

- **Shade regulation:** Large plants provide shade for smaller plants in need of sun protection.
- **Natural supports:** Tall plants like corn and sunflowers can support lower-growing, sprawling crops such as cucumbers and peas.
- **Improved plant health:** When one plant absorbs certain substances from the soil, it may change the soil biochemistry in favor of nearby plants.
- **Healthy soil:** Some crops, such as bean and peas, help to make nitrogen available. Similarly, plants with long taproots, like burdock, bring up nutrients from deep in the soil, enriching the topsoil to the benefit of shallow-rooted plants.
- **Weed suppression:** Planting sprawling crops like potatoes with upright plants minimizes open areas, where weeds typically take hold.

## COMPANION PLANTS FOR VEGETABLES

Some plants, especially herbs, act as natural insect repellents. They confuse insects with strong odors that mask the scent of the intended host plants.

- Dill and basil planted among tomatoes can protect from tomato hornworms.
- Sage scattered about the cabbage patch reduces injury from cabbage moths.
- Marigolds are as good as gold when grown with just about any garden plant, repelling nematodes which attack vegetable roots, especially tomatoes.
- Some companions act as trap plants, luring insects to themselves. Nasturtiums, for example, are so favored by aphids that the devastating insects will flock to them instead of other plants.
- Carrots, dill, parsley, and parsnip attract beneficial insects—praying mantises, ladybugs, and spiders—that dine on insect pests.
- Much of companion planting is common sense: Lettuce, radishes, and other quick-growing plants sown between hills of melons or winter squash will mature and be harvested long before these vines need more leg room.
- Leafy greens like spinach and Swiss chard grow in the shadow of corn.
- Bush beans tolerate the dapple shade that corn casts and, since their roots occupy different levels in the soil, don't compete for water and nutrients.
- Tansy discourages cutworm, which attacks asparagus, bean, cabbage, carrot, celery, corn, lettuce, pea, pepper, potato, and tomato plants.
- Catnip, hyssop, rosemary, and sage deter cabbage moth, which is detrimental to a host of edible crops, including broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, turnip, and radish.
- Mint wards off cabbage moth and ants.
- Thyme thwarts cabbageworm, which munches broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collard, horseradish, kale, and kohlrabi.
- Lavender is known to deter codling moths, which wreak havoc on apple trees.
- Zinnias attract ladybugs, so when planted near cauliflower, which is susceptible to cabbage flies, the ladybugs are there to control the pest population.





**Flower:** Cosmos

**Keep in mind:**  
Attracts beneficial insects.

**Keep near:** Corn



**Sources:**

*The Organic Garden by Christine and Michael Lavelle, 2003 \**

*Companion Planting Guide\*\**

<https://www.almanac.com/content/companion-planting-guide>

*Flower Companion Planting Guide*

<http://www.terramatergardens.com/resources-guides/flower-companion-planting-guide/>

**INCOMPATIBLE EDIBLES**

Plants that are not compatible with each other are sometimes called combatants. Here are a few:

- White garlic and onions repel a plethora of pests and make excellent neighbors for most garden plants, but the growth of beans and peas is stunted in their presence.
- Potatoes and beans grow poorly in the company of sunflowers, and although cabbage and cauliflower are closely related, they don't like each other at all.

One of the keys to successful companion planting is observation. Record your plant combinations and the results from year to year, and share this information with other gardening friends. Companionship is just as important for gardeners as it is for gardens.

**MORE COMPANION PLANTINGS**

Even plants in the woodlands are companions:

- Blueberries, mountain laurel, azaleas, and other ericaceous (heath family) plants thrive in the acidic soils created by pines and oaks.
- Shade-loving plants seek the shelter provided by a wooded grove. The shade-lovers in return protect the forest floor from erosion with their thick tangle of shallow roots.
- Legumes and some trees, such as alders, have symbiotic relationships with bacteria in the soil that help them to capture nitrogen from the air and convert it to fertilizer, enriching the soil so plants can prosper in their presence.



**Flower:** Marigold

**Keep in mind:**  
Attracts snails and slugs, but repels, Root-knot nematodes, leaf hoppers, cucumber beetle, squash bug, onion fly, cabbage root fly.

**Keep near:**  
Most plants especially Tomatoes, Peppers, Cucurbits, Squash, Potatoes, Rose, Alliums, Brassicas, Zucchini.

