



Container Gardening

If you have not tried container gardening yet, what are you waiting for? You are putting off no more weeding, no more waiting for soil to warm up, you can have good weather protection, no more watering worries and maybe no more critters beating you to the harvest. If all that doesn't do it, let us try to convince you to give it a try in a few easy steps.

Your container choices: Try to match the container to the crop. A deep rooted plant such as a tomato needs a deep container, at least 18 inches. A shallow rooted crop such as lettuce can grow in a container as short as 4 inches. Some crops such as corn don't make good container choices but generally most vegetables adapt readily to container growing.

The material the container is made of can make a difference. Unglazed terra cotta draws moisture from soil and can need frequent watering. Or they can be used for crops that enjoy dry conditions such as herbs. Plastic containers work for all kinds of crops and come in many sizes. Glazed pots can make your garden extra attractive but be careful about overwatering. They can hold moisture in and sometimes do not have good drainage holes. Wooden containers work for most crops and can be left out all winter unlike ceramic or plastic containers. Specialized growing systems work great and there are many out there. Plant Land carries ones we think are easy to use and grow great plants. Whatever type you chose make sure it has holes for drainage.

Your soil choices: Use the best potting soil you can buy. Potting soil differs from garden soil in composition and typically contains materials for good drainage plus organic matter for soil health. Soil can be refreshed and used for several years. If you keep your soil dump it out in spring, remove any large roots and mix new soil or compost in 50/50.

If you are using large containers for shallow rooted crops you may save on soil by adding filler material to the bottom of the pot. We suggest aluminum cans in plastic bags to take up space. Don't worry about adding rocks for drainage if you have holes. Rocks can be used to add weight for top heavy crops such as peppers that don't need deep pots.

A few advantages: There are some advantages to containers that are unique and make them well worth using.

Container gardens can be moved in and out of a garage or other protected sites when spring weather refuses to settle down. They are also easy to drape with frost covering in fall when needed.

Garden aids such as Wall o' Waters are fantastic for containers. Sturdy tomato cages fit into containers and you won't run into rocks trying to push them down!

You can control your chemical use with containers. Good, rich soil will only need modest fertilizing and organic choices provide plenty of nutrients. Pests or disease are usually confined to one container so treating for them can be easier than drenching the whole garden. Isolate a troubled container and treat it away from the others.

Lastly, just a few containers can provide a modest harvest for small families or single adults. You will find your green thumb and have tasty vegetables to boot! Give container gardening a try this year. Plant Land's garden experts will help you every step of the way!