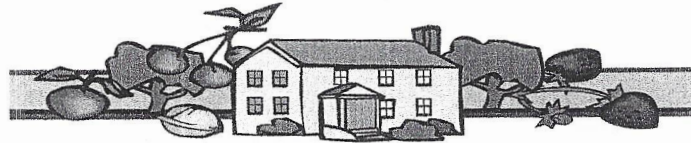


# Landscaping

## with Edible Plant and Shrubs

*Written by Deanna Hadley*

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**A Definition** by the Oregon State University: Landscaping with edible plants and shrubs is the use of food-producing plants in the residential landscape.

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/html/ec>

It combines fruit and nut trees, berry bushes, vegetable, herbs, edible flowers and other ornamental plants into aesthetically pleasing designs. These designs can adopt any garden style and may include anywhere from 1-100% edible specimens.

Edible landscaping offers an alternative to conventional residential landscapes. Edible plants can be attractive while producing fruits and vegetables. Growing vegetables and fruits does not mean contained rows inside a dug up square hidden in the back yard. A successful harvest can be obtained from pots and hanging baskets off a patio or from trellises and arbors which can also provide shade. Is it time to replace an overgrown hedge? Why not try blueberry bushes or a row of raspberries instead.

### Why Landscape with edibles?

- Beauty with edible returns
- Grow unusual varieties not available in stores and regional plants are less susceptible to pests and disease. Indigenous plants are climate tolerant.
- Reduce grocery costs and enjoy the freshness and flavor of home-grown, fully ripened fruits and vegetables.
- Control the quantity and kind of pesticides and herbicides used on the foods you consume.
- Attracts beneficial insects and migratory birds (you might have to share a little).

## Growing Fruit In Pots!

Container gardening is a very popular way to grow food. It can be the answer to homes with limited space. It can also be a convenient way to add beauty as well as food to your patio and deck. Along with such attributes comes their dependence on you for their nutrients and sufficient moisture. The following are some guidelines when choosing and caring for potted plants.

- Choose the right size pot. Your plants roots will grow inside the vessel and it should be large enough to contain it for several years. It will need to have drainage holes. Look for a 7 to 15 gallon container for 3 to 8 years of growth. When growth slows and plant becomes weak it has likely become root bound. Sever pruning of roots and top will be necessary.
- Choose the correct soil. A course mix containing bark and pumice will help prevent root rot for trees and shrubs. Also available are premixed soils for particular plants like blueberries which prefer a more acidic nutrient base.
- Water well and wait. It is important to not let your plant dry out, it is especially important to not overwater it. A deep watering once a week is usually enough for a healthy potted plant even in hot weather.



## What is a Miniature or Dwarf Fruit Tree?

Miniature or Dwarf fruit trees produce regular sized fruit on smaller trees. A three to four foot high apple tree might produce up to 45 apples of a regular apple variety. A two foot high peach tree in a pot can produce 25-30 fresh peaches. Miniature trees are popular with backyard and balcony gardeners who want small amounts of several fruit varieties. There may also be an opportunity to find more than one fruit *grafted* into one tree.

## Fruiting Plants For Pots:

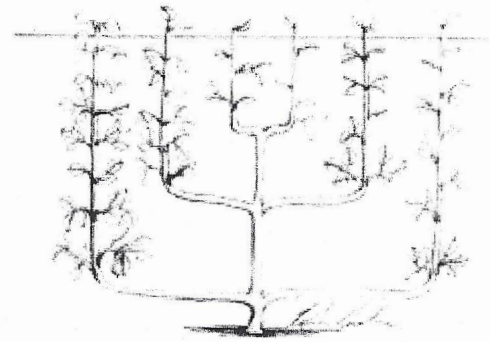
The above information (and more) can be found at, [www.onegreenworld.com/garden.php?g=5](http://www.onegreenworld.com/garden.php?g=5). Here is a list of some successful plants for pots. By no means is this list exclusive. Almost any plant can be grown in a container.

- Columnar Apples and Wynooche Early, Liberty, Spartan and other apple varieties as well as peaches.
- Figs: Negronne, Lattarulla and Peter's Honey
- Plum: Green, gold, red and purple fruits. Brooks and Italian varieties are easy to grow

## How about hanging pots or baskets?

Think about *no weeds* and the plant can hang chest high. There is more air circulation and direct watering to the roots. It can be fun and create conversation from passersby.

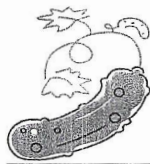
**Espalier:** The objective in espalier is to train trees flat in a two-dimensional manner along a wall or trellis. To do this a very aggressive pruning is required to remove the stronger limbs in order to help along weaker ones to give the tree it's shape.



Six-Armed palmette verrier espalier growing along a wall

### **Vines and Climbers:**

- **Grape:** Attractive foliage makes good summer shade over arbor or patio.
- **Kiwi:** Exotic foliage, white flowers in May, fruit in fall.
- **Marionberry:** Developed at OSU, a blackberry that does not get out of control.
- **Cucumber:** Allow to climb to make a nice background plant.
- **Pole bean:** Use in a children's area to make teepees and tunnels. Especially fun when paired with sunflowers.



### **Ground Covers:**

- **Strawberry:** White flowers and red fruit. Needs replaced every 3-4 years.
- **Lingonberry:** A delicate looking evergreen ground cover which yield high in full sun (yet will tolerate part shade)
- **Lettuce, Kale and Swiss chard:** Range in color from red, green, blues and can be frilly and lacy. Be aware lettuces will bolt (go to seed) in hot weather and should be planted every two weeks for continued harvest. Kale is a good fall/winter crop and Swiss chard is the queen of edible ornamentals.

### **Shrubs** (woody perennials, annuals. 3-10 feet)

- **Blueberry:** Easy to grow and has few disease problems. Abundant fruits and beautiful fall color.
- **Current and Gooseberry:** Tart berries for jam and jellies. Grows easily.
- **Evergreen Huckleberry:** Evergreen shrub with bronze colored foliage.
- **Rhubarb:** Large interesting (poisonous) leaves and red stems. Eat only the stalks.
- **Tomato:** Attractive, edible fruits in a wide range of color and shapes. Tomatoes should grow better in flower beds than they do in the traditional vegetable garden because they should be moved to a different location each year to prevent disease. They also do better isolated from other tomato plants because disease can't hop as easily from plant to plant.

## Things to Consider

**Location:** Although some berries tolerate some shade (Salmonberry and Thimbleberry), most fruits and vegetables require 6-8 hours of sun to produce well.

**Space:** Trellises, fences, and arbors make use of vertical space but the plants mature size still needs to be taken in consideration.

**Time and Care:** An edible landscape still needs care to remain productive. Good soil, careful watering and fertilizing and vigilant management of disease and insects.

**Use:** Know when to harvest and be prepared to use the abundance from your garden. OSU Master Food Preservers can help you with your food preservation questions.

**Beauty:** It is possible to find edibles with the characteristics you value in ornamental plants.

- Black elderberry mimics the lacy blackish leaves of the Japanese maple.
- Blueberry bushes have the bright red fall color like that of the Burning Bush.
- Pink blossoms of an apple tree are similar to that of the dogwood.
- Love big leaf Hostas but don't have shade? Rhubarb plants add drama, with big leaves in the sun.



Remember too!!! Some flowers are edible. Nasturtiums and violas help to make a pretty salad. Just toss in a few petals and enjoy a peppery flavor.



### Some references:

*"The encyclopedia of Organic Gardening"*; Rodale Press

*"Sunset Western Garden Book"*; Lane Magazine and Book Company

*"Square Foot Gardening"*; by Mel Bartholomew; Rodale Press

<http://www.onegreenworld.com>

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu>

[www.clackamascountymastergardeners.org](http://www.clackamascountymastergardeners.org)

[www.homeorchardsociety.org](http://www.homeorchardsociety.org)

### Notes: