

HAVE A GREEN THUMB



TIPS & TRICKS FOR
GARDENING IN GEORGIA



As it continues to warm up to Georgia's typical hot and humid climate, you may be thinking about getting your garden ready if you have not already. Gardening is a great way to relieve stress and boost your mood, but it can also provide other mental and physical health benefits. One health benefit from gardening is that it gets you outside and able to soak up some Vitamin D from the sun as you enjoy nature. In fact, approximately 35% of adults in the United States are Vitamin D deficient. Vitamin D helps to fight inflammation, keep bones strong, and support healthy tissue function, therefore, it is a very important vitamin that we cannot always get from the diet (1).

Gardening can also increase your level of physical activity as the act of moving plants, mulch, pulling weeds, digging, watering plants can be a great form of exercise. A study from 2006 even found that gardening and physical activity overall can lower your risk of dementia later in life (2).

Because of Georgia's warm climate, extreme temperatures are not (typically) as frequent as in other locations of the United States. This makes Georgia a great place to garden.

Remember, different plants need different soil, sun exposure, and tending to, therefore, here are some of the top flowering plants to try in your garden this year.





Begonia

This pink and sometimes white flower grows well in shaded areas and attracts pollinators from butterflies to hummingbirds.



Daylily

This flower is easy to grow and maintain and come in an assortment of colors. This flower grows best in partial to full sun.



Marigold

Another easily grown flower in the partial or full sun, Marigolds are an edible flower known for its bitter yet tangy flavor. It also attracts pollinators.



Wishbone Flower

Growing best indoors or outdoors, the Wishbone Flower is a beautiful two-toned flower. It grows best in adequate moist soil and is usually purple, lavender, blue or white (3).

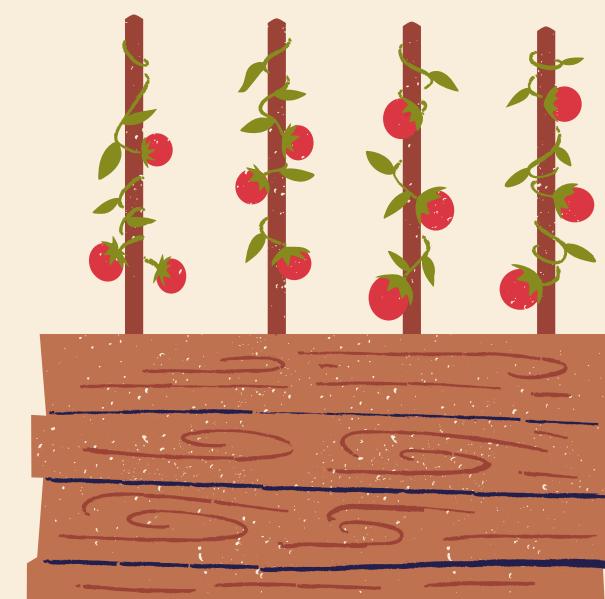


Not into gardening flowers? Here are some of the best produce items to try in your garden this spring/summer.

May: Plant beans (snap, pole and lima), cantaloupe, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, field peas, peppers, squash, tomatoes, and watermelon. Mulch well between rows. Apply extra mulch to any of your established plants including tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, potatoes, okra, and lima beans before any dry spells occur. Thicker mulch also helps to keep weeds to a minimum.



June: Perfect time to harvest your onions and potatoes when two-thirds of the tops have died down. Planting sweet potatoes and Southern peas are great for June as well.



July: Plant your last sets of tomatoes, okra, corn, pole beans, lima beans, cucumbers, squash, and snap beans no later than July 20. That way, they have enough time to mature before the first frost of fall. July is time to plant your pumpkins to ensure they're ready for Halloween (4).



Citations:

1 Vitamin D Deficiency. 2022. Cleveland Clinic. Accessed February 21st, 2023. <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/15050-vitamin-d-vitamin-d-deficiency#:~:text=About%201%20billion%20people%20worldwide,States%20have%20vitamin%20D%20deficiency.>

2 Simons LA, Simons J, McCallum J, Friedlander Y. Lifestyle factors and risk of dementia: Dubbo Study of the elderly. Med J Aust. 2006 Jan 16;184(2):68-70. doi: 10.5694/j.1326-5377.2006.tb00120.x. PMID: 16411871.

3 Harbor Club Blog. 2021. Accessed February 21st, 2023. <https://www.harborclub.com/blog/spring-gardening-georgia>

4 White, J. 2022. 17 Flowers That Will Thrive in Georgia's Hot, Humid Climate. All About Gardening. Accessed February 21st, 2023. <https://www.allaboutgardening.com/georgia-flowers/>

