

Colorado Mountain Gardening

With low humidity, fluctuating temperatures, a short growing season and poor soil makes gardening in the mountains a challenge. Plant selection is the key to success in mountain gardening. In general, choose plants that are hardy to zones 2 to 4, and are cool season. If someone would like to try warm season plants, they should try to make a microclimate on a southern face. With the poor soils raised beds will take care of a lot of problems. Before adding weed free soils consider laying wire mesh in the bottom to keep rodents out.

Central/Plains Gardening

When growing a garden on the Front Range or on the Plains you must keep in mind the soils, fluctuating temperatures and the low humidity. These will be the determining factors on which plants you can grow successfully. The soil condition can vary a lot within just a short distance; it's always a good idea to know what's in your soil. Best way to find out is run a soil test; these tests will look for available nutrients, organic matter and what type of loam the soil is. With this type of report you will be better equipped on picking out the plants you desire to grow. The fluctuating temperatures and low humidity can be overcome if you want to spend a bit of money and time building structures to house the plants. A faster and cheaper way is to take a look at your site. Try to plant in a sunny spot on a southern exposure with rows running from east to west.

West Slope Gardening

Gardening on the Western Slope of Colorado has a combination of both mountain and plains gardening. You have the fluctuating temperatures, low humidity, varying soil types, some locations have short growing seasons other are longer. The best part of living on the West Slope is the annual moisture. The West Slope receives 90% of water in Colorado. This may seem like a lot, but this moisture is not evenly distributed across the west side of the state. For those along the Colorado River Basin moisture is not an issue, for other it can be. For the best results in your garden mend the soils, choose plants that are hardy to zones 2-6, plant east to west and implement a good irrigation system.

Colorado Gardening In General

It doesn't matter what part of the state you live in you should ask your local Extension Office these questions: Which vegetables grow well in this area? What soil types are common? Are there unique conditions in the garden to consider, for example, high winds, compacted soils, poor drainage and wet spots? Finally, what are the first and last frost dates and the growing season?

For More Information on Colorado Gardening

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[Choosing a Soil Amendment \(2/13\)](#)

[Gardening for Newcomers \(3/13\)](#)

[Growing Plants From Seed \(10/09\)](#)

[Cucumbers, Pumpkins, Squash and Melons \(6/10\)](#)

[Fertilizing the Vegetable Garden \(2/09\)](#)

[Peppers and Eggplant \(4/07\)](#)

[Storing Vegetable and Flower Seeds \(9/13\)](#)

[Vegetable Gardening in the Mountains \(3/14\)](#)

[Vegetable Gardening - Nitrogen Recommendations \(12/11\)](#)

[Vegetables - Storing Home-grown \(3/08\)](#)

[Grasshopper Control in Gardens & Small Acreages \(1/13\)](#)

[Potato or Tomato Psyllids \(6/13\)](#)

[Spider Mites \(11/06\)](#)

[E. Coli Prevention from Garden to Plate \(7/12\)](#)

[Salad Greens: Health Benefits and Safe Handling \(6/12\)](#)

[Canning Tomatoes and Tomato Products \(5/12\)](#)

[Canning Vegetables \(9/13\)](#)

[Freezing Vegetables \(1/13\)](#)

[Drying Vegetables \(11/12\)](#)

[Making Pickles \(10/11\)](#)

[Guide to Washing Fresh Produce \(3/10\)](#)

[Cost of Preserving and Storing Food \(8/08\)](#)