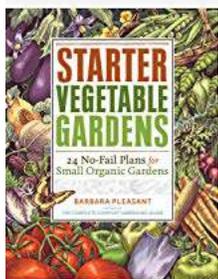


# Preparing for a spring garden?

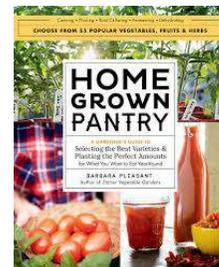
By Jane Cundiff, updated Feb 27, 2020



Spring is coming on quickly now and it is time to plan our gardens. If you hope to order seed, young bushes or trees it is a good idea to order NOW before they run out of your favorites. Most trees will be delivered at the beginning of March.

Whether a beginner or experienced, the **BEST** gardening books are written right here in Floyd by our very own Wild Gardener, Barbara Pleasant – “**Stater Vegetable Gardens**” and “**Home Grown Pantry**”.

She includes tons of tips on seeds to buy, how to grow, how to prepare and store veggies, fruits and herbs. You may even get her to sign a copy if you catch her at the Wild Garden meetings! Find them on Amazon. I love Barbara’s books and learn more every time I pick them up – which is often. She knows WAY more about gardening than I do – so come and ask questions!



**Vegetable Seed** – you can order online now but they may not be locally available till March. my favorite seed sources are:

- Floyd Farmer’s Supply for bulk beans, bulk Siberian kale & a few flowers
- Floyd C. W. Harmon’s or Ingram’s for bulk kale, lettuce, Waltham butternut squash, sweet corn, clover
- Online, Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds – for just about everything else that I haven’t saved from my own garden. <https://www.rareseeds.com/>

We gardeners put a lot of time and effort into growing from seed, so make sure you start with good, fresh seed that has been stored properly (cool, dry) and will produce a worthwhile product. Check a seed viability chart if you have saved seed. If you only have a small garden, or don’t have a place to start seeds inside - I recommend buying young plants instead – from Slaughters or Dulaney’s Nursery or the Saturday Farmer’s Market, opening in May.

**Draw a map** of your garden plan so you plant taller plants to the north and have plenty sun for the others and to rotate your veggies different from last year. Be sure you have plenty space for all those seeds. You might want to include short fences or trellises within your garden to grow vine crops or tie tomatoes.

**Prepare your soil** – I add composted manure every year – about an inch thick. The first few years I had to add 4- 6 inches to mix into my hard red clay. I got it by dump truck for my large gardens. Find a cattle or horse farmer near you or ask the local farm supply stores how to get it in bulk.

**Fortify your fencing.** Wild critters just love our garden foods so if you hope to get any for yourself you really must have a good fence plan. High to keep out deer, low & tight to keep out rabbits and groundhogs. Look at it for the long term. A sturdy fence can last a lifetime. Anybody who says gardening is cheap or easy hasn’t done it much. We do it because we love working with nature and eating healthy food.

**Start Inside.** It is nice to get a jump on the season by starting seeds inside in March. I do it mostly to make weeding and spacing a whole lot easier. Barbara Pleasant and Maya & Ed Skopal from I-Tal Acres have given us some great tips – see their handouts.

