

Introduction to Gardening

How to Garden in California Schools



40 Years of Service

Master Gardener Association of San Diego County
UCCE Master Gardener Program of San Diego County



Who are the Master Gardeners?



- ❑ 6,154 current volunteers in California
- ❑ 350 active members in SD County
- ❑ 450,000 hours donated in 2022
- ❑ Trained by University of California Cooperative Education
- ❑ Supported by County Extension Offices
- ❑ 70+ MGs serving 300+ SD schools



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How to Grow Vegetables

Plant, Grow, Eat, Compost, Repeat



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Basic Needs of a Garden

1. The Right Plant in the Right Place
2. Container or Bed
3. Nutritious Soil (Amended)
4. Sunlight
5. Water



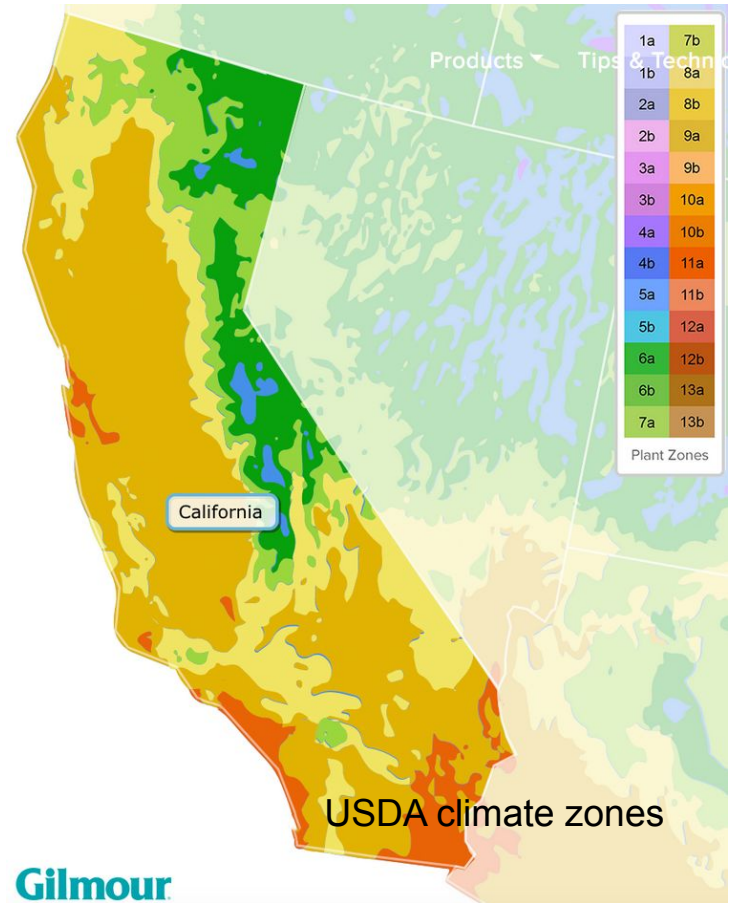
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California Climate Zones

- 13 zones mean a wide range of growing conditions
- Subzones within zones



Two Planting Seasons for Most Areas

Warm: Plant March - Summer



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Warm Season Plants

Grown from Spring through Summer

For example:

- Beans
- Eggplant
- Melons
- Peppers
- Tomatoes

You eat the reproductive, seed bearing parts



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Cool Season Plants

Grown in late summer through February or March

For example:

- Beets
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Lettuce
- Peas

You eat the vegetative parts



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Container Ideas

- Half wine barrel
- Grow bag
- Large pot (5 gallon)
- Bigger container the better
- Drainage holes required



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Soil



Amended soil is dark, earthy and pliable



Clay



Sandy



Rocky



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Soil Triangle

To Assess your Soil

A Soil Jar Test
Ribbon Test



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Amendments



- Soil amendment: 20%
 - Amendment could include compost, worm castings, fertilizer and *composted chicken manure*. I recommend a mix of all ingredients
- Potting soil (bagged or by the cubic yard): 80%
 - Mix well and fill soil to top of container
 - Water well before planting
 - Plan to amend soil annually



Sunlight

- Edibles need 6-8 hours of direct sun to grow fruit



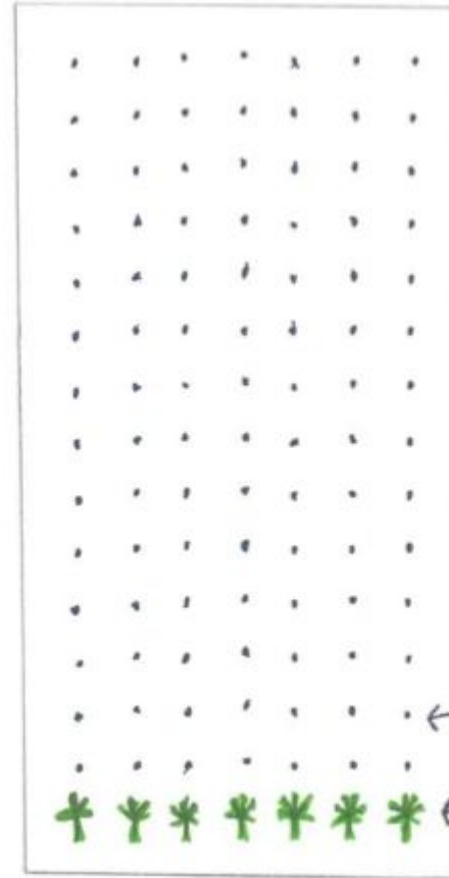
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How to Plant

- Moisten the soil before planting
- To extend the harvest, plant a plant and sow the same seed behind it
- Starts are 1-2 months older than seeds
- Sow seeds 4x deep its width, pat down
- Do NOT let seeds dry out = certain death
- Cover seeds with burlap to aid germination
- Thin seeds when 1-2 inches tall to give them room to grow



plant the seeds behind the starts.
plant the starts at the front of each row.



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Water & Irrigation



Veggies aren't drought tolerant!

Keep root ball moist but not too wet;
Water deeply

Inline drip irrigation provides reliable
irrigation and is most successful

Avoid wetting the leaves

Water in the morning



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Inline Irrigation

1/4 inch tubes emit
water every 6
inches



Inline drip irrigation provides reliable irrigation and is most successful



It wets the soil, not the leaves which abates disease

Use with a battery
operated controller



Know How to Work your Controller



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Raised Bed Irrigation

Vegetables thrive when given a consistent, reliable source of water.

In a sunny raised beds during growing season:

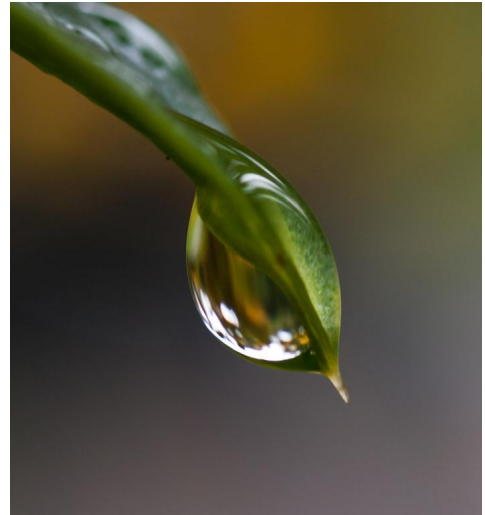
Sown seeds likely need watering twice daily

Young plants daily

Most established vegetables every other day

Turn off irrigation in the rain

Don't water empty beds

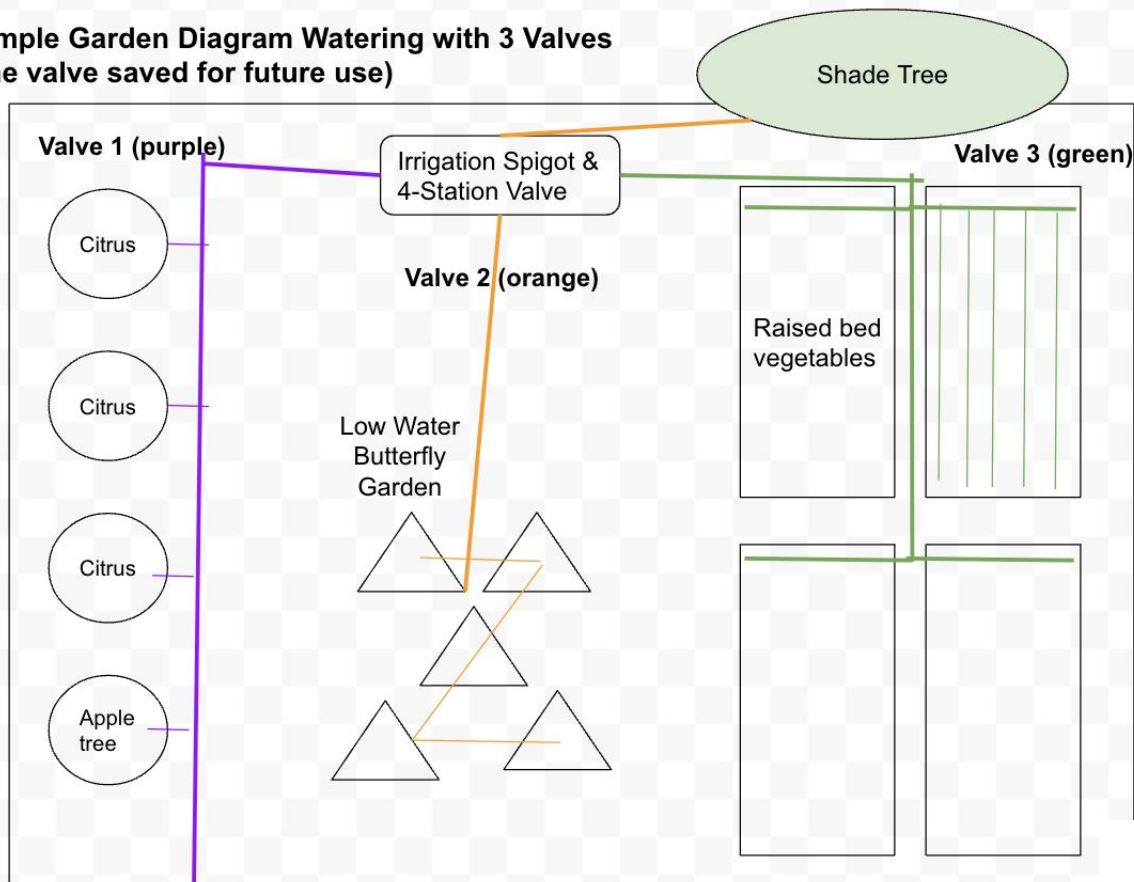


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Sample Garden Diagram Watering with 3 Valves (one valve saved for future use)



Passionfruit vine on garden fence

Irrigation Beyond Raised Beds

Group similarly watered plants on the same irrigation zone operated by a multi zone controller

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Watch your Plants Grow.

- As plants grow bigger, water deeper and less frequently, water when top inch is dry
- Vines need supports
- Mulch veggies with straw
- Harvest regularly



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Don't Hesitate to Harvest

- It is important to harvest frequently to keep the plant producing
- When fruit is present it is a race between you and the critters



**Don't Teach the Critters
your Garden Has Food**



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Dealing with Wildlife

IPM (Integrated Pest Mgmt.) recommends:

- hand removal
- exclusion



Composting Closes the Loop

Whether you use a worm bin, a commercial compost bin, or a deluxe composting system, you'll reduce garden waste and make your soil more productive.



A Final Tip: Everything you need to know is right here

Seed packets can teach you how to garden. It's all on the label.

