



# African-American Theme Garden



## Steps to Planning a Theme Garden

1. Determine what type of theme garden you would like. In this case, we want an African-American theme.
2. Determine the location and size of your garden. Select an area that receives at least six hours of full sunlight every day and is close to a water source.
3. Take a soil sample and send it to be analyzed with the help of your county Extension agent.
4. The shape of your garden may be a 4'x4' square area or whatever fits into your landscape scheme!
5. Amend the soil according to soil test results. Using a tiller, work in a 3-inch layer of organic matter (peat moss, manure, rotted compost, etc.) to improve the soil structure.
6. Select plants from a list of recommended varieties.
7. Plant warm-season vegetables, such as tomatoes, peppers, eggplant & most herbs, after April 25th to avoid frost or freeze damage.

8. Water, weed, fertilize and harvest on a weekly basis throughout the growing season.
9. Enjoy your abundance of fresh vegetable and herbs.

African-American culture is based on religious ceremonies, feasting, cooking and raising food. Many foods traditionally grown by people of color are high in nutrients, such as collard greens and other leafy green and yellow vegetables, legumes, beans, rice and potatoes. Cultural diversity is an important issue to many groups in the United States. Both food and culture play a major role in American nutrition.

## Spicy, Hot Salad

- 2 onions
  - 2 radishes
  - 2 large carrots
  - 1 large tomato
  - 1 small head lettuce
  - 1 bunch fresh coriander, chopped
  - Mix of mustard greens, spinach, collard & other tasty greens
  - 1-2 hot chili peppers, chopped
  - Salt & pepper to taste
- Grate onions, radishes and carrots and place in salad bowl. Add remaining ingredients and toss well. Add lemon juice to taste.

## Recommended Plants

### Warm-season:

Cucumber: Whether pickling or slicing, harvest often to keep plants producing.

Okra: For tenderness, harvest pods when 3-4 inches long.

Black-eyed peas: Make successional plantings once the soil has warmed. Highly nutritious and easy to grow.

Watermelon: Experienced growers say that a green watermelon gives a “ping” sound when thumped, while a ripe watermelon gives a dull “thud” sound!

### Cool-season:

Collards: Set plants out early for picking early spring to summer greens.

Spinach: High in Vitamins A and C, this an important green to have in your garden. Use fresh as a salad or cooked.

Turnip greens: Easy to grow and equal to spinach and collards in nutritional value.

Mustard greens: Mix young leaves in with other salad greens.

Others: Cabbage, onions, butter beans, leaf lettuce, radishes and many herb varieties.



## More information:



A large number of gardening resource materials are available at no charge on the UT Extension Website, with more materials added all the time.

Visit [www.utextension.utk.edu/publications/default.htm](http://www.utextension.utk.edu/publications/default.htm)

Some Extension gardening and foods publications include:

PB724	Canning Foods
PB725	Preserving Foods
PB774	Food Storage Guide
PB901	Growing Vegetables in Home Gardens
PB 1215	Disease Control in the Home Vegetable Garden
PB1228	Gardening for Nutrition
PB 1391	Organic Vegetable Gardening
SP 291-A	Growing Vegetable Transplants
SP 291-B	Growing Vegetables from Seed
SP 291-C	Soil Preparation for Vegetable Gardens
SP 291-D	Care of the Vegetable Garden
SP 291-G	Fall Vegetable Gardens
SP 291-I	Weed Control in Home Gardens
SP 291-L	Fresh Vegetable Storage for the Homeowner
SP 291-N	Raised Bed Gardening
SP 291-O	Guide to Spring-planted, Cool-season Vegetables
SP 291-P	Guide to Warm-season Vegetables
SP 325-D	Canning Vegetables
SP 425-A	Healthy Tennesseans Eat More Fruits and Vegetables

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