

Edible Landscapes

The University of Florida reports that edible landscapes are a multi-functional landscape that can provide returns (fruits, vegetables, etc.) on your investment of water, fertilizer, and time. An edible landscape can be just as attractive as a traditional one; in fact, the colorful fruits and foliage of many edibles are quite beautiful. Here are some additional benefits:

Improved Taste and Nutrition of Food: Nutrient content and flavor in most plants is highest immediately after harvest. The edible landscape provides fresh foods which can be eaten minutes, rather than days or weeks, after harvest. In addition, many exceptional and flavorful varieties not readily available at food markets are available to growers of edible landscapes.

Increased Food Security: An edible landscape reduces your dependence on foreign food sources which have unknown production systems.

Reduced Food Costs: Certain edibles are highly productive and are more economical to grow at home than to purchase.

Convenience: Having fruits and vegetables right outside your home may help you add fresher, healthier foods to your diet and make meal preparation easier.

Fun and Exercise: Growing your own crops can be rewarding and fun; the exercise you get in the process can help you stay fit.

Sustainability: Consuming locally grown produce can be an important part of reducing energy inputs and protecting our environment.

The edible plant pallet publications available online from the University of Florida include:

Vegetables

Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide (SP103) <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh021>

Organic Gardening in Florida (HS1215) <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/hs1215>

Vegetables A-Z http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_vegetables_a_thru_z

Fruits

Fruitscapes Website <http://trec.ifas.ufl.edu/fruitscapes/>

Dooryard Fruit Varieties (FC23) <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mg248>

Citrus Culture in the Home Landscape (HS867) <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/hs132>

Herbs

Herbs in the Florida Garden (Cir570) <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh020>

For more information on edible landscapes contact the Palm Beach County Cooperative Extension Service Master Gardener Volunteer Hotline M-F 561-233-1750.