

Parkview Nursery

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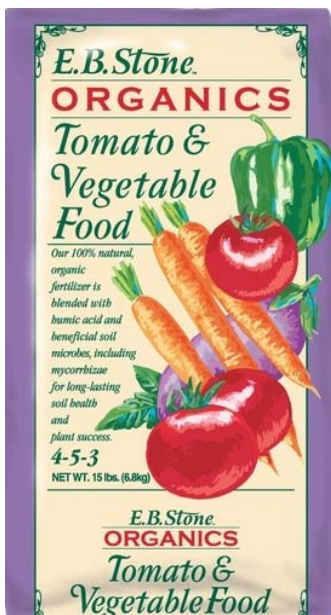
Open 7 Days 8:30am-5:30pm
www.parkviewnursery.net

Gardening Newsletter—January/February 2018

The Benefits of Organic Fertilizers

Organic fertilizers works by feeding the soil, rather than the plant directly, and help contribute to the long-term health of garden beds. Feeding the soil helps to maintain plant nutrition over a longer period of time and provides more balanced nutrition. While chemical fertilizers such as Miracle Grow kick in faster, they artificially overstimulate plant growth and force the plant to consume more nutrition than necessary. This can cause nitrogen burn and leaves plants stressed out. Chemical fertilizers also fail to feed the soil, which means plants must be fed constantly. Studies show that residues from chemical fertilizers remain in the produce when consumed by humans, and these chemicals can remain in the human body for a long period of time.

Organic fertilizer provides essential nutrients that plants need and plants absorb these nutrients at a constant rate, allowing for uniform growth. The nutrients in our EB Stone Organic Plant Foods include: blood meal, bone meal, feather meal, chicken manure, bat guano, alfalfa meal, and others. Industry and independent studies have shown that the presence of organic nutrients in vegetable gardens enhance the vitamin content of vegetables when compared to conventional farming. Specifically, researchers found higher percentages of Vitamin C, Magnesium, Iron, and phosphate; all nutrients necessary for healthy bodily functions in humans.



Champagne Oranges

January in Riverside means navel orange season and this recipe will turn your oranges into a sweet and classy treat. (Recipe from The Pioneer Woman on the Food Network)

8 navel oranges	1/3 cup toasted slivered almonds
1/2 cup orange marmalade	Sprig of fresh mint
1/2 cup sugar	
1 1/2 cups champagne or sparkling white grape juice	

Combine the marmalade and sugar in a small saucepan. Mix well, place over low heat and cook, stirring, until the sugar dissolves.

Cut the peel from the oranges, cut into slices and then quarter each slice, removing the white center pith from each. Put into a medium bowl.

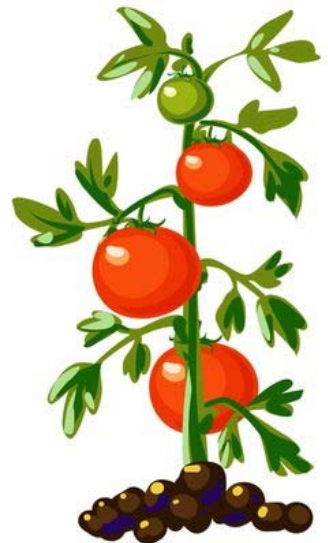
Pour the sugar/marmalade mixture and champagne/grape juice over the slices oranges. Refrigerate for 8 hours. Sprinkle with almonds and garnish with mint before serving.

Square Foot Gardening

Many gardeners look to the strategies of author Mel Bartholomew when laying out a new vegetable garden. Mel's advice is to divide up a large garden bed into 1ft - 1ft squares to make managing and harvesting the garden easier. He recommends dividing the sections with wood or thick string to help with organization. For spring vegetables the proper spacing is one tomato per square foot, one eggplant per square foot, two cucumbers per square foot, four staked up pole beans per square foot and sixteen onions per square foot. Melons and squashes will need two square feet to spread out.

The majority of vegetables only need 6 inches of good soil beneath them. If you have a raised bed higher than 6 inches, any soil or material can go beneath the 6 inch level as long as it drains water well enough. High quality soil is not of value if the plant's roots cannot reach down far enough to use it.

For beginner gardeners the easiest and most stress free spring garden bed is made using only four 4-foot 2x6-inch boards, chicken wire and nails. Standard wood boards are a better alternative to chemically treated wood or plastic lumber that can leach chemicals into the soil. The chicken wire can be placed at the bottom of the planter bed to keep gophers out, and can be wrapped around the outside to repel other furry pests (two feet off the ground is high enough to keep most small



Custom Soil, Pre-Made Soil or No Soil?

Expert and novice gardeners alike must decide how to best prepare their soil for planting vegetables. Riverside's soil is mostly clay and decomposed granite, which tends to be nutrient poor. An easy fix to this problem is to mix soil amendment with the native soil at a 50/50 ratio. All soil amendments have nitrogen and other nutrients necessary for plant development. Bumper Crop is the most popular soil amendment sold at independent garden centers and features chicken manure, bat guano, kelp meal, and a plethora of other organic sources of nutrition. Bumper Crop also includes beneficial Mycorrhiza fungi, which attach to a plant's root system and greatly enhances the plant's absorption of nutrients.

Bumper Crop is the most effective pre-made soil amendment Parkview Nursery has come across; but the most effective amendment period is "Mel's Mix" (developed by Mel Bartholomew). We have done side-by-side comparisons and vegetables planted in Mel's Mix narrowly beat out Bumper Crop every time. Mel's Mix is as follows:



1/3rd Peat Moss (2.2ft³ bale)

1/3rd Perlite or Vermiculite (3.5ft³ bale)

1/3rd Compost = A blend of 1-Bumpercrop and 1-Potting Soil

5lbs of Gypsum

4 Cups of Organic Vegetable Food

Add a 1 inch layer of Worm Castings to the surface