

Our Top Ten Lists

There are lots of things you can grow but they don't all give equal results. These suggested types and varieties are ones that are reliable and good value for energy expended. These lists are based on our experience of growing under subtropical conditions on the far north coast of NSW with high rainfall and humidity.

They are not a good choice if you or your family doesn't like to eat them! Soils and other conditions vary from yard to yard - so do the results. Happy experimenting!

Autumn/ Winter Veggies

Type Or Variety	Comment
Potatoes (kipfler, desiree)	Grow in new no-dig bed or containers with straw
Kale	Reliable brassica that yields over long period, survives well
Broccoli (sprouting)	Cut & come again, choose varieties that have a smaller main head & more side shoots
Lettuce – loose leaf or cos varieties	Can continue plucking leaves, keep feeding liquid fertilizer
Sugar snap or snow peas	Keep picking the older pods
Silverbeet/rainbow Chard	Pick outside leaves peel off at the base, keep feeding liquid fertilisers
Chinese greens - bok choy, pak choy and tatsoi	Quick and easy, more suited to subtropics than European veggies
Leeks	Like rich compost soil – can leave in the ground a long time
Chinese broccoli	Easy to grow, sow thickly, harvest before flowers open, eat stalks
Spring onions	Crop all year, cut and come again, can leave in place long time

Spring/Summer Veggies

Type Or Variety	Comment
Cherry tomatoes	Just keep coming, more disease resistant than other varieties
Loose leaf lettuce e.g. mignonettes	Can handle heat & wet
Bush & climbing beans	Lots of good heirloom varieties- try snake & madagascar varieties. Reliable, keep picking pods, good value
Spring onions	Trouble free, can use over long period, cut & come again

Top 10 Vegies

<i>Chinese greens –tatsoi and bok choy – shanghai variety</i>	<i>Generally like heat & wetness</i>
<i>Jap pumpkins</i>	<i>Suited to ST conditions, cook shoots as a green. Pick pumpkins when storks turn brown.</i>
<i>Cucumber – Richmond River.</i>	<i>This variety tolerates humidity better than many</i>
<i>Choko vine</i>	<i>Use fruit when very young & shoots as a green</i>
<i>Sweet potato</i>	<i>Best in separate bed , grow from rooted shoots or sprouted tuber</i>
<i>Bell peppers</i>	<i>Long lived, great yields, only the seeds are hot. Withstands the wet season better than capsicums</i>

Good value herbs

Type Or Variety	Uses	Comment
<i>Parsley – curly or flat leaf (biannual)</i>	<i>Garnishes, add to dishes</i>	<i>Medium moisture, good soil</i>
Chives – or garlic chives (perennial)	<i>Garnishes, add to dishes,</i>	Same as parsley
<i>Comfrey (perennial)</i>	<i>Weed teas, mulch, compost activator, medicinal uses</i>	<i>Divide when clump gets too large</i>
<i>Rocket (annual)</i>	<i>Annual for salads, garnishes</i>	<i>Give some shade in summer cooler times better</i>
<i>Basil (annual)</i>	<i>Pesto, add to dishes</i>	<i>Med moisture, good soil</i>
<i>Sorrel (perennial)</i>	<i>Tart taste for salads , stays alive under adverse conditions,</i>	<i>Keep up moisture, long lived</i>
<i>Lemon balm (perennial)</i>	<i>Teas, Garnish, add to dishes</i>	<i>Cut back periodically to refresh</i>
<i>Garden mint (perennial)</i>	<i>Keep contained</i>	<i>Moisture, some shade</i>
<i>Lemon grass (perennial)</i>	<i>Teas, flavour food, mulch</i>	<i>Moisture, sun</i>
<i>Thyme (perennial)</i>	<i>Flavouring, garnishes, medicinal</i>	<i>Perennial ground cover, well drained, not crowded conditions</i>

More unusual but good value vegies

Type Or Variety	Comment
<i>Amaranthus- annual</i>	<i>Diverse varieties. A. tricolour is eaten for greens & other varieties for grain , very nutritious, great in stir frys.</i>
<i>Warrigal Greens -annual</i>	<i>Greens, stir frys etc -</i>
<i>Winged Beans - annual</i>	<i>Beans & greens edible, good yield –either raw or cooked</i>
<i>Snake Beans - annual</i>	<i>Great yield, disease resistant good through hot summers</i>

Top 10 Vegies

<i>Tree spinach - perennial</i>	<i>,Eat raw in moderation or cooked, quite nutritious,</i>
<i>Mitzuma - annual</i>	<i>Lasts longer than lettuce, handles the heat</i>
<i>Ceylon Spinach- perennial</i>	<i>Easy to grow green, tolerates damp, long lived</i>
<i>Pidgeon pea- perennial</i>	<i>Use beans to eat, greens for mulch or in compost</i>
<i>Atherton raspberry- perennial</i>	<i>Steady trickle of berries –perennial</i>
<i>Yacon (earth apple) - perennial</i>	<i>Propagate from tuber, eat raw or cooked, roasted like pumpkin</i>

Fruit trees & vines good for small to average sized yards

Type Or Variety	Comment	Conditions required
<i>Lemon tree- Meyer or Eureka available as dwarf</i>	<i>Many uses, good yield over long period, can be grown in pots</i>	<i>Good drainage, well fed soil, keep well mulched</i>
<i>Lime tree- Tahitian (could be multi grafted with</i>	<i>Many uses, good yield over long period</i>	<i>Good drainage, well fed soil, keep well mulched</i>
<i>Paw Paw</i>	<i>Red type bisexual, yellow type - male & female plants needed.</i>	<i>Well fed soil, likes heat from brick walls, frost sensitive,</i>
<i>Passionfruit vine – Panama Red or Black</i>	<i>Always something it can climb on – lasts a few years</i>	<i>Keep well mulched, shade ok</i>
<i>Mandarin – early or late varieties</i>	<i>Fruit can stay on tree over long period</i>	<i>Same as lemon</i>
<i>Non astringent persimmon</i>	<i>Great fruit, eat while firm, generally misses fruit fly season,</i>	<i>Reasonable soil, mulch, good drainage</i>
<i>Tamarillo – red or yellow types</i>	<i>Easy to fit in a corner or between other trees, lovely fruit</i>	<i>Shorter lived - 2-3 years, doesn't mind shade</i>
<i>Dwarf black mulberry</i>	<i>Lovely shade tree, edible leaves & fruit, deciduous. Can be a weed</i>	<i>Keep well pruned if too large, good for chook yards</i>
<i>Avocado (only if you have room and are prepared to</i>	<i>Great food, can stay on tree long time, available as dwarf stock</i>	<i>Can keep pruned to small size, perfect drainage needed.</i>
<i>Grape – Isabella or</i>	<i>Beautiful, deciduous, long lived</i>	<i>Protect fruit from birds</i>
<i>Pepino</i>	<i>Steady trickle of fruit, a survivor</i>	<i>Good moisture</i>

For more ideas see:

www.communitygardens.org.au/ideas – good info on unusual varieties of fruit, root crops & water crops.

www.greenharvest.com.au – free newsletter, good info on subtropical growing, source of unusual plants

www.theveggielady.com – not subtropical but good info sheets, can pay joining fee for more info

www.herbsarespecial.com.au – lot of detail on sprout & herb growing, free newsletter