



Bronx Green-Up • THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

Bronx Green-Up, the outreach program of The New York Botanical Garden, provides horticultural advice, technical assistance, and training to community gardeners, school groups, and other organizations interested in improving urban neighborhoods through greening projects. At the heart of Bronx Green-Up are the community gardens of the Bronx and a compost education program. For additional information, contact Bronx Green-Up at 718.817.8026 or bronxgreenup@nybg.org.

Companion Planting for Vegetables

Companion planting is the placing together in the garden plants that have complementary physical requirements and so do not compete for light, water, or other resources. Good companion planting results in the enhanced growth of each plant.

The aim of companion planting in the vegetable garden is to grow many different plants that will help one another flourish. An important goal of organic gardening is to create a healthy ecosystem, one that might include vegetables and fruits, flowers and herbs, trees and shrubs, beneficial insects, spiders, and even chickens.

Companion planting is not a new idea—the Native Americans planted the three sisters garden, a companion planting of corn, beans and squash. However, experimental research on successful plant combinations is still ongoing. You may want to try it out in your own garden.

Examples of companion planting:

- Borage, a blue flowering annual plant, grows well with most plants, but especially tomatoes. It is one of the best bee and wasp attractant plants, and deters tomato hornworm.
- For good-tasting Bibb lettuce, plant 1 spinach plant for every 4 Bibb lettuce plants.

Some plants have “enemies” you’ll want to watch out for:

- For example, many gardeners feel that broccoli and other plants in the brassica family are not good companion plants for tomatoes. Also, scientific studies have shown that decomposing residues of broccoli were found to have a toxic effect on lettuce seedlings¹, providing one clue as to why broccoli might not be the best companion plant.

Spacing: Space plants so that their leaves are barely touching when plants are full grown. You can plan for this by reading your seed packets at planting time.

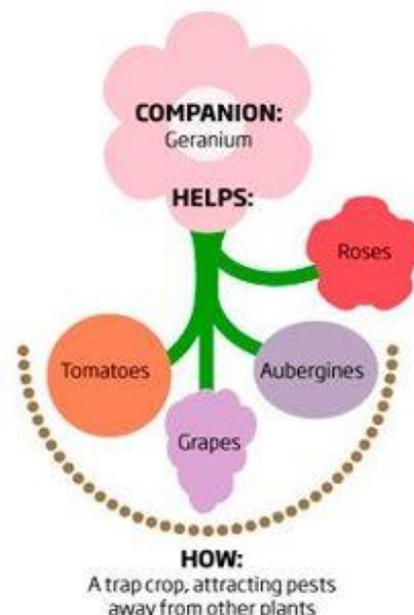
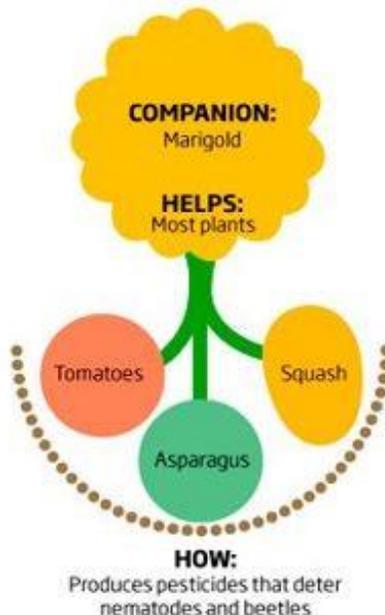
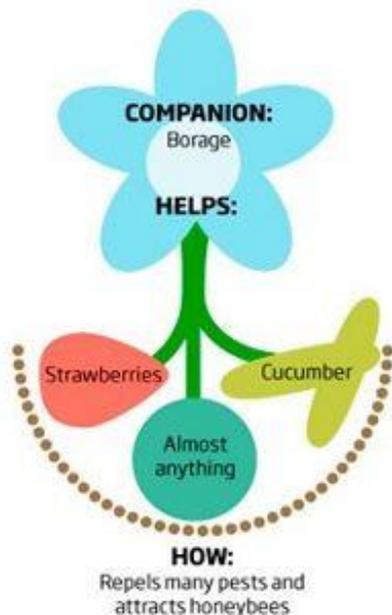
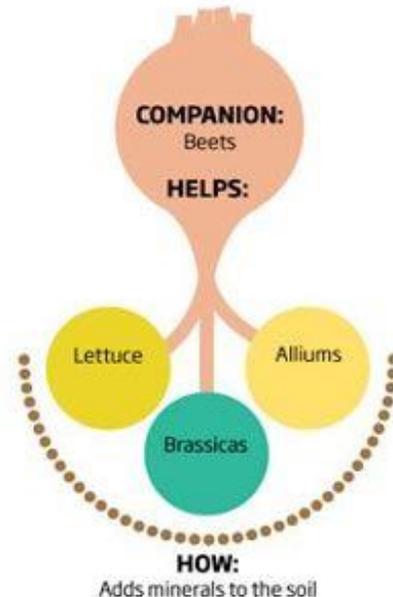
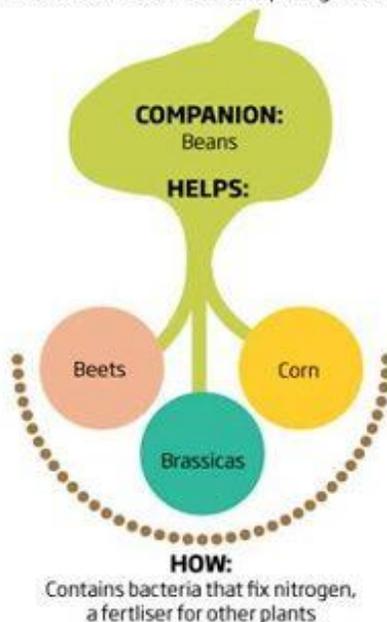
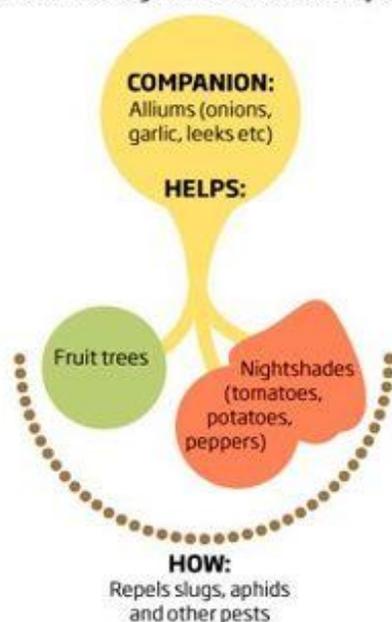
Follow this companion planting chart² for vegetables that grow well together as well as vegetables that should not be planted in close proximity.

Plant	Companions	Enemies
Beans: all beans enrich the soil around it by fixing nitrogen from the air. This benefits anything you plant after it	Potatoes, carrots, cucumbers, cauliflower, cabbage, summer savory, most other vegetables and herbs	onions, chives, garlic, gladiolus
Beets	onions, kohlrabi	pole beans
Cabbage family (cabbage, cauliflower, kale, kohlrabi, broccoli)	Aromatic plants such as perennial herbs, potatoes, celery, dill, chamomile, sage, peppermint, rosemary	strawberries, pole beans
Carrots	peas, leaf lettuce, chives, onions, leeks, rosemary, sage, tomatoes	dill
Celery	leeks, tomatoes, bush beans, cauliflower, cabbage	
Chives	carrots, tomatoes	peas, beans
Corn	potatoes, peas, beans, cucumbers, pumpkins, squash	
Cucumbers	beans, corn, peas, radishes, sunflowers, lettuce	potatoes, aromatic herbs
Eggplant	beans, potatoes	
Leeks	onions, celery, carrots	
Lettuce	carrots and radishes (lettuce, carrots, and radishes make a strong team grown together), strawberries, cucumbers, onions	
Onions and garlic	beets, strawberries, tomatoes, lettuce, summer savory, leeks, chamomile	peas, beans
Parsley	tomatoes, asparagus	
Peas	carrots, turnips, radishes, cucumbers, corn, beans, most vegetables and herbs	onions, garlic, gladiolus, potatoes, chives
Peppers	basil, okra	
Potatoes	beans, corn, cabbage, horseradish (should be planted at the corners of the patch), marigolds, eggplant (as a lure for the Colorado potato beetle)	pumpkins, squash, cucumbers, sunflowers, tomatoes, raspberries
Pumpkins	Corn	potatoes
Radishes	peas, nasturtiums, lettuce, cucumbers	
Soybeans	grows with anything, helps everything	
Spinach	Strawberries	
Squash	nasturtiums, corn	potatoes
Strawberries	bush beans, spinach, borage, lettuce (as a border), onions	cabbage
Sunflowers	Cucumbers	potatoes
Tomatoes	chives, onions, parsley, asparagus, marigolds, nasturtiums, carrots	kohlrabi, potatoes, fennel, cabbage
Turnips	Peas	

Growing companions

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Horticulturists and gardeners have learned by trial and error that certain combinations of plant grow well together



Companion Planting with Vegetables

	Bush Beans	Pole Beans	Beets	Cabbage	Carrots	Celery	Corn	Cucumbers	Eggplant	Lettuce	Melon	Onion	Peas	Pepper	Radish	Spinach	Squash	Strawberry	Tomato	Special
Basil														X					X	
Bush beans			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		N	X		X			X		A, B
Pole Beans			N		X		X	X	X	X		N	X		X					A, B
Beets	X			X								X								
Cabbage family	X		X			X						X						N	X	C
Carrots	X	X								X		X	X		X				X	D
Celery	X			X								X				X			X	
Corn	X	X						X			X		X				X		N	
Cucumbers	X	X					X			X		X	X		X					E
Eggplant	X	X														X				
Lettuce	X	X			X			X				X			X				X	
Marigold	X	X		X			X											X	X	
Melon							X								X					
Nasturtium				X				X			X				X		X		X	
Onion	N	N	X	X	X	X		X		X			N	X			X	X	X	A
Parsley																			X	
Peas	X	X			X		X	X				N			X					Turnips
Pepper												X								
Raddish	X	X			X			X		X	X		X				X			F
Sage			X	X	X			N												
Spinach						X			X										X	G
Squash							X					X			X					
Strawberry	X			N						X		X				X				
Tomato				X	X	X	N					X								H

N means the plants cannot tolerate each other; therefore, do not plant these close to each other
 X means good companions – these plants benefit each other, so you can intermix these vegetables

- A - Summer Savory: Companion to beans and onions; deters bean beetles
- B - Tansy: Plant under fruit trees; companion to roses and raspberries. Deters flying insects, Japanese beetles, striped cucumber beetles, squash bugs, and ants
- C - All strong herbs
- D - Sage: Plant with rosemary, cabbage, and carrots; dislikes cucumbers. Deters cabbage moth, carrot fly
- E - No strong herbs
- F - No hyssop
- G - Cauliflower
- H - Mint, no fennel