

List of Veggies for Estes Park Gardens

September 2010; last updated February 2023



These are not the only plants that will grow in our high-elevation, short-season environment. They have been recommended and tested in the MacGregor Ranch garden, and the original list was given to us by George Hockman, a Master Gardener in Estes Park who volunteered in the MacGregor Ranch garden for many years.

Additional suggestions (*in italics*) have been added by Estes Valley Community Garden (EVCG) using information obtained from other experts presenting in our Garden Education programs and from our own Community Gardeners in the annual surveys.

This list, which is planned to be updated annually, is available as a pdf on our website, evcg.org – click on Resources, then Specific Crops.

- Asparagus
- Arugula – *may tend to bolt early; aphid problems reported in 2018. 2nd planting in 2022 too late to produce.*
- Basil – *Sometimes very successful; may be susceptible to drying in windy conditions. Low yield reported in 2022.*
- Beans (Burpee’s stringless, Black Valentine bush). *Green beans were the most-reported crop in the EVCG 2017 gardener survey - 10 responders said they “worked well.” Several reported they were very slow to “get going”, and harvests were small. Blue Lake Bush Beans worked well in 2018 and 2019; one report of poor germination/yield of unspecified varieties in 2018 and 2021. Contender Bush green beans did well in 2022.*
- Beets (Burpee’s Golden, Early Blood, Bulls Blood, Detroit Red). *May perform better if planted from starts than from seed. Reports of rodent damage in 2021. Unspecified variety(s) performed well in 2022.*
- Bok Choi/Pakchoi – *works well for succession planting; baby leaves are delicious in salad or sautéed*
- Borage (herb) – *attracts bees*
- Broccoli – *may not produce large heads; did not grow well in 2020; may perform better if planted from starts than from seed; rodents love it*
- Broccoli rabe
- Brussels Sprouts (Long Island) – *Brussels sprouts may often be attacked by cabbage worms of various types; 2020 production not good*
- Carrots (Danvers, Scarlet Nantes, Black Nebula). *Carrots appreciate deep watering which may not be compatible with other crops in your plot. Voles and other burrowing critters find them tasty.*
- *2019 report of soil too hard; may require adding organic matter to help with deeper-rooted crops. Good yields from many plots in 2022. “Tender Sweet” variety produced well in 2022.*
- Celeriac
- Celery – *season may be too short.*
- Chamomile – *re-seeds itself, will invade neighboring plots*
- Chard, Swiss – *grows exuberantly; baby leaves are excellent in salad; freeze extra for winter use;*
- *2021 generally not bothered by rodents*
- Chinese cabbage – 2019
- Cilantro – *may be slow to germinate if direct-seeded in cool soil; re-seeds itself if let to go to seed*
- Cucumber- *season may be too short for fruit to set. Burpee “Picklebush” not disease-resistant as advertised. Bush cucumber was not successful in 2022.*
- Cauliflower – *Did not do well in 2020, 2022.*
- Cabbage (White, Red, Ball)
- Dill – *re-seeds itself, will invade neighboring plots*
- Dragon’s Tongue (Spotted Wintergreen)
- Fennel (Florence)

- Garlic – *plant in the fall. Hard neck, German and elephant varieties did well in 2022.*
- Kale - *grows exuberantly; baby leaves are excellent in salad; freeze extra for winter use; pick frequently or seek a small or dwarf variety as it can easily take over the plot; rodents love it. Can harvest when baby leaves for salad greens.*
- Kohlrabi – *moderately successful in 2017*
- Lavender - *may not overwinter*
- Leeks
- Lettuce (*baby leaf mixes, mesclun mixes, Red Salad Bowl, Henderson, Gold Rush, Yugoslavian Red, Little Gem, Butter Crunch*); *head lettuce may not form heads; leaf types respond well to cut- and-come-again technique; good for succession planting. Some rodent damage reported in 2021.*
- Marigolds – *re-seeds profusely*
- Mint – *Will spread by underground runners and take over your space and probably the pathways as well. Plant in a container and be prepared to pull it out ruthlessly as it will invade other plots too.*
- Mustard and its relatives - *re-seeds itself, will invade neighboring plots – keep it from going to seed unless you plan to save the seed for re-planting. May bolt early in hot weather. Harvest for salad greens!*
- Onions (Green, Red, Yellow, White, Sweet). *Watch for yellowing leaves, indicating overwatering. “Candy” variety did well in 2022.*
- Oregano – *may overwinter and return*
- Parsley – *biennial, but may not overwinter.*
- Parsnip – *2019 report of soil too hard; may require adding organic matter to help with deeper- rooted crops*
- Peas, unspecified – *2021 & 2022 some seeds eaten by rodents. Good crop reported in 2022.*
- Peas, English (British Wonder, Little Marvel) – *all are susceptible to powdery mildew, look for resistant varieties.*
- Peas, snow - *susceptible to powdery mildew, look for resistant varieties. Unspecified variety did well in 2022.*
- Peas, sugar snap – *needs vertical support; 2017 & 2022 were good years for sugar snaps; susceptible to powdery mildew- look for resistant varieties; Oregon II Sugar Snap did well in 2019.*
- Peas, sweet - *susceptible to powdery mildew- look for resistant varieties. 2022 had mixed results, late flowering.*
- Peppers – *may not set fruit, season may be too short; plant after last frost or protect plants*
- Potatoes (Butter Ball, Russett, Yukon, Red) –*tiny potatoes are fun and delicious in soups; harvest when leaves have dried. “Norland Red” performed well in 2022. See evcg.org, click on Resources, then Specific Crops, for "Potatoes in the Home Garden", CSU Extension Fact Sheet 7.617.*
- Pumpkin – *An unspecified small variety produced well in 2022.*
- Radish (Champion, Easter Egg, Daikon) – *2019 reports of early bolting. 2022 did well. Generally reliable, good for succession planting.*
- Rhubarb *reported successful in 2022. Shared plants near scarecrow are for all to harvest, best in spring – remove leaves before cooking or eating as they are high in oxalic acid.*
- Rutabaga (American Purple)
- Sage – *successful in 2022*
- Scallions – *2022 performed well.*
- Sorrel – *2019, 2021 performed well.*
- Spinach (Bloomsdale, American) – *try succession planting if using baby leaves in salad; 2020 reports of early bolting. 2021 reports of some rodent damage. Unspecified variety(s) performed well in 2022.*
- Squash (Summer Medley, Summer Crookneck, White Scallop Patty Pan) – *all squash requires a lot of space; susceptible to powdery mildew – look for resistant varieties. 2021 Yellow squash generally not bothered by rodents. “Sebring” hybrid summer squash not successful in 2022. All winter squashes generally not successful due to short growing season.*
- Stevia – *grown successfully in 2019*
- Strawberries – *Ripening berries are targeted by birds and rodents. 2022 a good year but many were munched. See evcg.org, click on Resources, then Specific Crops, for “Strawberries for the Home*

Garden”, CSU Extension Fact Sheet 7.000.

- *Tomatillos – grown successfully in 2021*
- *Tomatoes - Birds may eat them, ripening may be difficult; try planting starts that already have some blossoms. Cherry tomatoes did well in 2019, 2020, and very well in 2022. See evcg.org, click on Resources, then Specific Crops, for "Growing Tomatoes in Cool, Short Season Locations", University of Idaho Extension, Bulletin 864.*
- *Turnips (Purple Top, White Globe)*
- *Zucchini (Golden, Black Beauty) – requires a lot of space; susceptible to powdery mildew - look for resistant varieties; may do better from starts than from seed due to short growing season*

- *Flowers:*
- *Dahlias, zinnias, bachelor button, calendula, snap dragon, marigolds. Zinnias are susceptible to powdery mildew, look for resistant varieties. Unspecified variety of dwarf sunflowers performed well in 2022.*
- *These wildflower varieties performed well in 2022: Ratibida columnifera (Prairie Coneflower), Echinacea purpurea (purple Coneflower), Rudbeckia hirta (black eyed Susan's), Rudbeckia laciniata (cut leaf Coneflower), Linum lewisii (Lewis' flax), Clematis ssp. (himalayan sugar bowl species-not trailing), Aquilegia coerulea (blue columbine), Achillea millefolium (yarrow), Monarda fistulosa (wild bergamot/beebalm), and Oenothera coronopifolia (Cut-leaf Evening Primrose).*

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