



Workshop Topics

Vermont Garden Network (VGN) has been offering educational programming on how to grow nourishing food for over 20 years. We believe in the power of people growing food to strengthen food access, promote food justice and build community, and we want everyone to have access to the space and resources they need to be successful in growing some of their own food.

- Workshops are facilitated by VGN's team of experienced garden educators. Facilitator bios shared upon request.
- All workshops can be facilitated in-person; most workshops can also be facilitated virtually via Zoom.
- Workshop duration is 60 minutes at minimum, and may be extended to 120 minutes to include a deeper dive into the topic.
- Workshop descriptions below are summaries; we customize descriptions once we confirm the target audience, location and duration.
- To the extent possible, workshops include a practical demonstration and/or a hands-on activity to reinforce the lesson.
- Some workshops may include a make & take component for participants to work on a project and take it home. An additional material fee applies for all make and take workshops.

For more information and to talk through possibilities for facilitating a workshop in your community, please contact Carolina Lukac, VGN Co-Executive Director of Programs & Partnerships, carolina@vtgardens.org



VEGETABLE GARDENING

Seed Starting

Gather the essential supplies, some optional materials, and a stack of seed catalogs as we dive into the joyful world of starting seeds indoors in early spring! We will begin by reviewing planting calendars to identify the ideal times to start seeds, including cool season and warm season crops. Participants will learn about grow light requirements, selecting a soil mix, watering tips, when and how to pot up, and best practices for successful germination and seedling growth.

Integrated Pest Management

Join us for a hands-on workshop to identify common pests in vegetable gardens and make a strategic plan for how to manage them. We will explore how to select and appropriately apply various low-tech strategies such as selecting resistant varieties, attracting beneficial predators, using row cover, and shifting your planting dates. We will focus on some of the most prevalent vegetable pests, including flea beetles, leaf miner, Colorado potato beetle, cucumber beetle, swede midge, and leek moth. Come prepared to scout for pests in our garden and share your own experience dealing with pests in your garden!

Season Extension: Low Tunnels, Row Covers, and Mulches

Cool spring temperatures are ideal for growing many beloved crops, while others will need a little extra warmth and protection from potential frost. Join us for an exploration of row cover thicknesses, plastic and biodegradable mulch to warm up soil, tarping techniques to eliminate weeds, and peek inside our DIY low tunnel. These simple season extension techniques require minimal investment in materials to achieve a gardener's dream of harvesting luscious spring greens, getting an early start on brassicas, and preparing soil to welcome warm season crops in a few weeks.

Seed Saving

Join us for a workshop to deepen your relationship with seeds by learning tips and techniques for seed saving in a small-scale garden. We'll begin with building a common understanding of seed terminology for concepts such as heirloom, hybrid, cross-pollination, inbreeding, and winnowing. Participants will learn how to select varieties, understand pollination requirements, and promote good seed set. Saving seeds from both dry-seeded (e.g. beans and lettuce) and wet-seeded (e.g. tomatoes and cucumbers) crops will be reviewed, including methods for harvesting and processing. We'll wrap up with tips for seed storage and encourage community seed libraries and seed swaps.

Tomato Tips for Every Gardener

There is so much to love about growing tomatoes and so much to learn! In this webinar we will begin by understanding all the terminology included in the description of a tomato variety - Is it a hybrid or heirloom, determinate or



indeterminate, paste or beefsteak tomato? Participants will learn transplanting techniques unique to tomatoes, as well as tips for pruning and fertilizing through the growing season. We will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of different trellises and structures to support tomatoes. And of course, touch upon pests and diseases that are common to tomatoes.

Cover cropping

Cover cropping has numerous soil health benefits such as weed suppression, erosion control, and nitrogen fixation. Selecting cover crop seeds best suited for small-scale gardens, defining a seeding calendar, and coming up with a termination plan are all fundamental to establishing a successful cover crop practice. Participants in this workshop will gain an understanding of the benefits and disadvantages of winter-kill versus over-wintering cover crop seed options, as well as strategies for terminating a crop in both a tilled and no-till garden.

HERBS, FLOWERS & PLANT DYES

Culinary Herbs

Growing herbs in a backyard raised bed or in a container on your porch is a practical way to bring delicious flavors and additional nutrients into your life. Culinary herbs such as basil, cilantro, thyme, rosemary and chives are easy to grow in abundance once you learn growing requirements and how best to care for herbs. This hands-on workshop is an opportunity to identify perennial and annual herbs, to practice planting and pruning techniques, and to participate in harvesting.

Cut Flower Gardening

Incorporating flowers into your garden design can provide habitat for pollinators and beneficial insects, as well as offering you a supply of freshly cut flowers to create beautiful bouquets. This workshop will focus on our favorite varieties for a cut flower garden, including both perennial and annual varieties. Learn about growing requirements, pruning techniques, and suggestions for flower varieties to add color, texture, foliage, and even dry flowers to your garden design.

Growing Medicinal Herbs & Flowers in Your Garden

Calendula, lemon balm, echinacea, chamomile and tulsi are a handful of medicinal herbs and flowers you can easily incorporate into a home garden design. This workshop will introduce you to 10 of our favorite plants, including both perennial and annual varieties, that are easy to grow and have numerous medicinal properties. Participants will learn growing requirements, harvesting tips, and an introduction to making herbal remedies.



Plant-Based Dyes

Experience the colors of the rainbow in a hands-on introduction to the world of plant-based natural dyes. Our focus will be on beginner-friendly dye plants that can be cultivated in a Vermont garden. After walking through a garden to identify and harvest dye plants, participants will learn the basics to mordant fabrics, create a master dye bath, and shift color tones with after baths and over dyeing. Each participant will create their own sample color palette with wool yarn and also take home a silk handkerchief dyed with their favorite color.