

# URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

## How to: Companion Planting

One growth avenue all gardeners should familiarize themselves with is the subject of companion planting. Companion planting can enhance your crop growth, increase your harvest and potentially decrease pests and disease that may target your crops.

### What is companion planting?

Companion planting is the act of planting plants which may help each other near each other. Plants don't have any control over their environment, and for the most part, neither does the gardener. That's why companion planting is important, as it's a decision up to the garden which may improve a certain crop's growth.

The first tips for companion planting would be to avoid planting long rows of only one kind of vegetable. This is asking for pests to visit and wreak havoc on your crop. Instead, mix in flowers and herbs between the rows to confuse the pests on where your vegetables are. Certain types of these flowers and herbs also will serve as a beneficial attraction to good insects that can pollinate your vegetables and improve their health.

### Basic companion planting:

Although there are endless vegetable companions to plant near each other, some of the most common are listed below. In addition to the chart, another rule-of-thumb to follow is the Three-Sister Planting rule – planting beans, corn and squash near each other. The climbing varieties of the beans will



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climb the corn stalks and add nitrogen to the soil for the corn to feed off of. The squash will grow in a widespread pattern which will prevent weeds.

**Asparagus:** Plant asparagus near basil, parsley or tomatoes. Another good option would be to plant marigolds near your asparagus bed, because marigolds will deter beetles, which can harm the asparagus.

**Beans:** Plant beans near strawberries, cabbage, carrots, celery, chard, corn or many others. Marigolds, nasturtium and rosemary all can deter beetles that may harm the beans, so planting pots of them near your beans many be beneficial.

**Carrots:** Plant near beans, onions, peas, peppers, radishes or tomatoes. Chives can help improve the flavor of carrots if the two are planted near each other. Rosemary and



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sage are herbs which can help deter carrot fly.

**Lettuce:** Plant lettuce near beets, cabbage, carrots, onions, radishes or strawberries. Planting lettuce near chives or garlic can help keep aphids away.

**Peppers:** Plant peppers near tomatoes, eggplant, carrots and onions.

**Tomatoes:** Plant tomatoes near asparagus, carrots, celery, cucumbers, onions, parsley or peppers. Planting tomatoes near basil can help keep the flies and mosquitos away. Bee balm, chives and mint can help improve the health of the tomato plant. Do not plant tomatoes and corn near each other, as the same worm attacks both corn and tomato plants. Don't plant tomatoes near dill either, as dill can stunt the tomato plant's growth. Kohlrabi also stunts tomato growth. Potatoes and tomatoes are attacked by the same type of blight, so keep them away from each other, too.

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