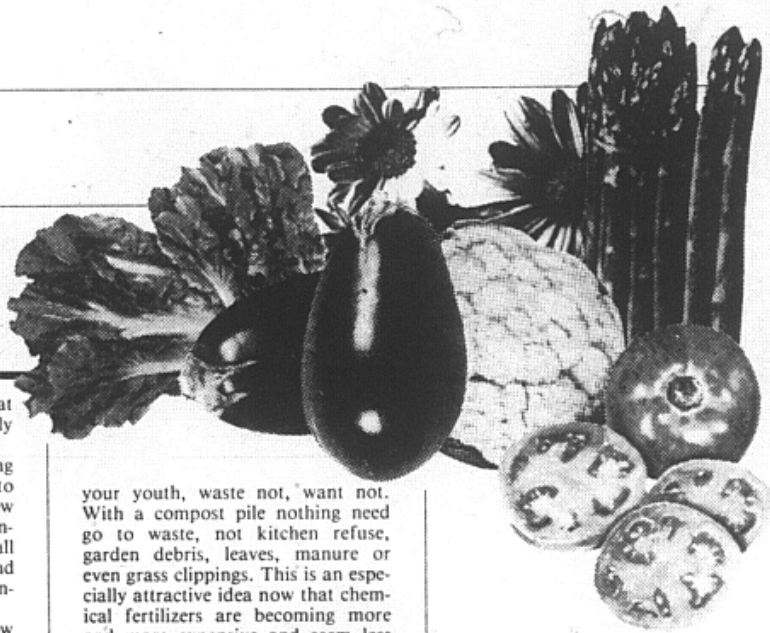


gardening

GARDEN RESOLUTIONS

With a few adjustments in your approach to gardening you can enjoy a better harvest next year.



By Pat Leuchtman
leisure Columnist

It's the beginning of a new year and I'm all prepared to make a raft of new year's resolutions. I'm going to learn to cook one new dish a month, lose 10 pounds, reorganize the kitchen, keep newspapers and magazines from piling up unread, read a serious book every month, and of course, I'm going to become a better gardener.

One problem with new year's resolutions is that I tend to make too many and it's easy to get discour-

aged when it becomes apparent that I'm not going to become instantly perfect.

Still, there is always that striving for better things so I will continue to make resolutions and I have a few suggestions for my fellow gardeners. Don't think I feel they are all necessary, but take your pick and you and your garden may both benefit.

Start a compost pile. Think how virtuous you will feel when you know you can turn all your organic trash into rich, soil-building fertilizer. This resolution harkens back to the old New England precept of

your youth, waste not, want not. With a compost pile nothing need go to waste, not kitchen refuse, garden debris, leaves, manure or even grass clippings. This is an especially attractive idea now that chemical fertilizers are becoming more and more expensive and seem less and less like the complete answer to fertility problems.

Start to grow something that will last for many years. Finally make a decision about where to put that asparagus or rhubarb bed. A little thought and work this spring will guarantee years of good eating. And don't forget that dwarf fruit trees or a berry bush hedge can be used in your landscaping plan, adding utility and fruitfulness to the beauty of your yard.

Grow something new. To shop at the supermarket you would think that peas, beans, carrots, beets and broccoli were the only vegetables in existence. Why not plant parsnips, sweetly succulent, or surprising mild kohlrabi. Plant your own horseradish and add a real wallop to your corned beef and cabbage or the new sugar snap peas that are so different from the standard Lincoln or even the oriental edible podded peas. Are you an adventurous cook? Try growing your own leeks and tarra-
get for those French recipes or your own Chinese cabbage, broccoli or radishes.

Try using a new method of gardening. You don't have to change over your whole garden, but if you have been a devoted cultivator, try

mulching, perhaps in the cabbage row. Your cabbages will appreciate having their roots kept cool and moist.

Or prepare one raised bed. Extra rich, deeply prepared soil is especially good for root crops or heavy feeders.

Try planting your lettuce or broccoli in a wide row to help keep down weeds and prevent soil compaction. Plant your tomatoes inside or around a ring instead of letting them sprawl on the ground and see if there is a difference in production.

A final suggestion. If you have only grown flowers, think about adding a few vegetables. A salad garden won't take up much room and tender leaf lettuce and cherry tomatoes fresh from the garden are beyond compare.

Or if you have always been too busy to grow flowers think about adding a flowering shrub or an old fashioned rose that doesn't need to be pampered the way modern tea roses do. Perhaps a flowering tree like dogwood or cherry would make a cheerful accent in the yard. Gardens can feed our souls as well as our stomachs.

The following information is provided by the Franklin County Extension Service:

Now is the time to:

- set up discarded Christmas tree outside as a shelter or feeding station for birds.
- write for seed catalogs.
- fertilize houseplants.

Note:

- Houseplants need bright light in winter.
- When ground is frozen, cut down large trees.
- Don't overwater plants.
- HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

Garden Calendar



SPECIAL INTEREST CLASSES

- starting at the **Y** in January
- Braided Rugs Mon. 1-4 p.m.
 - Macrame Mon. 8-10 p.m.
 - Chair Mon. 7-10 p.m.
 - Resedting or Wed. 7-10 p.m.
 - Quilting Tues. 9-12 a.m.
 - Tole and Dec. Painting Tues. 1-4 p.m.
 - Decoupage and Crafts Wed. 7:30-10 p.m.
 - Cake Decorating Wed. 7-10 p.m.
 - Crocheting Beg. & Adv. Wed. 7-9:30 p.m.
 - Vegetarian Cooking Thur. 10:30-12 a.m.
 - Painting Thur. 7-10 p.m.
 - Pottery Thur. 7-10 p.m.

Call The Y For More Information
New For Children!
Ages 10-13 6 weeks
Fantasy Theatre Wed. 3:30-5
Register Week of January 5
Classes Start Week of Jan. 12

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51 Main Street
(in old brick church
next to Town Hall)
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527-7078

NORTHAMPTON
312 King Street
Mon.-Sat. 10-5
Thur. Fri. Sat. Even.
584-7000

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