

HOME & GARDEN



Recorder Photo by Chuck Blake

They'll eat anything

Franklin County residents are waging their annual battle against the easy-to-hate gypsy moth. Many are wrapping their trees with foil coated with grease in hopes of trapping the caterpillars during their morning and evening excursions. This utility pole in front of the James Dale home in Riverside Hill may just prove that nothing is safe. Or maybe the precaution was a mistake ... or a joke. Of course someone could be bugging the Dale's phone.

Companion planting

Cultivate helpful neighbors

LEUCHTMAN
Recorder Columnist

I love living in Heath because although it is such a tiny town there is great diversity — of terrain and people. We have fields, woods, streams, hills and swamps. My neighbors are old hill families who have been in the town since it was incorporated, newcomers from Boston, New York and fashionable suburbs, new families looking for a stable place to raise their young children and retired people seeking the peace and fascination of the ever-changing countryside. They are farmers, businessmen, artists and artisans and we all live together in a cooperative community. In Heath I find fewer of

BETWEEN THE ROWS

the petty spites and intrigues and more benevolence and generosity of spirit than in any place I've ever lived. We all give and we are all the richer for our sharing. This is certainly not to say that everyone in Heath loves everyone else. There are disputes and antipathies, but there seems to be a good measure of tolerance and forbearance with other people's philosophies, ideologies and principles. Perhaps this attitude has its roots in the early history of the town which was founded by rugged individualists who discovered that cooperation was necessary for survival.

All of this is to say that in Heath I have found a healthy way of living in the sun and wind and an atmosphere that is conducive to a free sharing of goods and self and a disciplined restraint of tempers and judgements that is as good for our minds and souls as the sun and air are for our bodies. I'm richer and stronger and, I hope, wiser for having such diverse and good neighbors.

So too, it is in my garden. I feel my plants benefit from diversity as much as I do. Therefore, I try to interplant and practice companion planting keeping in mind that different vegetables have their own preferences in neighbors.

Interplanting is a technique that calls for the planting of two or more vegetables or herbs in the same space in order to more efficiently use that space. For instance, it is a fairly common practice to mix carrot and radish seed and then plant them both in the same row or bed. The radishes sprout quickly, marking the row and as they mature and are picked more room is provided for the developing carrots.

Interplanting can use space efficiently in another way. Bush beans can be planted with beets, the beets fully using the root zone and the bush beans fully using the space above the soil. Or you can plant cucumbers among the corn, because cucumbers like some shade for best development.

Another advantage to interplanting is that pests are less likely to find their target when it is mixed with plants that interest them not at all. For this reason I alternate bean and potato rows. I may not totally outwit the potato beetle, but it helps.

Companion planting means planting two or more vegetables or herbs near each other because in one way or another they will benefit each other. Sometimes the benefit is very clear. Planting the annual herb summer savory among bean beds will help keep away the bean beetle, but no one is sure why peas and carrots thrive so well when planted near each other.

The following is a partial listing of vegetables and some of the plants that have a beneficial effect on them. I am also listing a few of their enemies. Sometimes plants are only "enemies" because they appeal to the same pest. Corn and tomatoes are attacked by the same worm so they should not be planted near each other. A fuller discussion of companion

planting can be found in a number of books including *How to Grow More Vegetables* by John Jeavons.

Beets grow well with bush beans, members of the cabbage family, lettuce, onions and garlic but should not be planted near pole beans.

Members of the cabbage family (broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, etc.) grow well with beets, celery, chard, cucumber, lettuce, garlic, onions, potatoes, dill and tansy, but should not be planted near tomatoes.

Carrots grow well with radishes, beans, lettuce, onions, peas, peppers, tomatoes and chives, but should not be grown near dill.

Corn grows well with beans, cucumbers, peas, pumpkin and squash but should not be grown near tomatoes.

Cucumbers grow well with beans, members of the cabbage family, peas, tomatoes, marigolds and nasturtiums, but should not be grown near sage.

Edgplant grows well with beans, peppers and marigolds. Lettuce grows well with beets, members of the cabbage family, carrots, onions, radishes, chives and garlic.

Peas grow well with beans, carrots, cucumbers and mint, but should not be grown near garlic or onions.

Squash grows well near corn, melons, pumpkins, marigolds and nasturtiums.

Tomatoes grow well with carrots, celery, cucumbers, onions, parsley, basil and marigolds, but should not be grown near corn.

Interplanting and companion planting techniques can become very complicated, but you may have used these methods for practicality's sake or intuitively without giving them names. Don't worry about all the combinations that can exist; just choose one or two now and perhaps you can add more next year. It is not difficult to mix summer savory among the bean plants or onions with the tomatoes or to ring the whole garden with bright sunny marigolds.

Disraeli once said that variety is the mother of enjoyment — I think it is also the mother of health.

Like Visiting With
A Good Friend

"Just Plain
Neighbors"

by

Irmarie Jones

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