



# *Gardening Tips*

*Helpful tips for starting a regenerative garden*

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# Introduction

## WHO WE ARE

H.O.P.E. Gardens is a 501c3 nonprofit organization based in Grand Rapids, Michigan. We teach regenerative gardening practices to supply healthy, affordable food to students, families, and communities. Our primary offering is educational programs for students in grades K-12, which combine hands-on gardening with grade-appropriate classroom instruction. We also offer after-school and summer gardening programs and community education for adults.

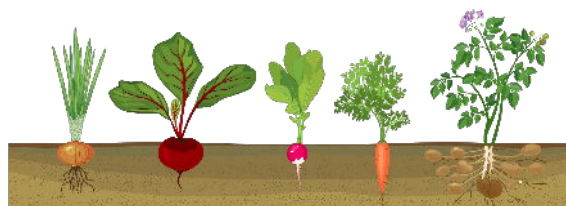
## WHAT IS REGENERATIVE GARDENING?

Regenerative gardening recreates the conditions in which plants naturally thrive. Unlike a traditional garden, a regenerative garden is covered with mulch, which retains water and nutrients for the plants, minimizes weeds, and enriches the soil for future planting. Healthy soil produces healthy plants, and diversity in the garden promotes a healthy garden ecosystem.

We promote this method because it's inexpensive and easy to start and because it doesn't rely on chemicals, tilling, or any special equipment. A regenerative garden also requires less maintenance in terms of weeding and watering. Most important of all, it's sustainable and good for the planet.

*Our mission is to teach a sustainable, affordable method of growing with the ultimate goal of empowering community-led solutions that grow food security from the ground up.*

*We believe a seed in the hands of a child can transform a community.*



# Local West Michigan Resources

## COMPOST and MULCH

- [Fruit Basket Flowerland](#): Dairy Doo Compost purchased by the bag or by the yard (the Grand Rapids Kentwood location also has [bulk mushroom and leaf compost](#))
- [Brink Wood Products](#): Untreated Mulch (economy mulch)
- [ChipDrop](#): You can sign up to get wood chips from local tree removal companies to be delivered directly to your garden.

## SOIL

- Seed starting soil: [Great Lakes Water -Detroit Nutrient Company](#) (sold at [Growers Outlet](#))
- Potting soil: [Fruit Basket Flowerland](#) - Examples include Pro Mix Premium Potting Soil, Dairy Doo VeggieDoo, Organic Potting Mix, FoxFarm Ocean Forest Soil, and FoxFarm Happy Frog Soil.

## LUMBER (for raised beds)

*Always choose untreated or cedar lumber.*

- Home Depot [Cedar 4x4](#)
- Home Depot [raised garden bed kits](#)

## Materials Needed for Planting

- **Volunteers!**
- **Cardboard or brown flooring paper:** If using cardboard, be sure to remove all tape, stickers, or staples. You can find flooring paper at a local paint or hardware store. Make sure to use an untreated, heavier weight (10 lb) style like [this](#).
- **Composted soil:** Use a good quality organic soil, such as leaf or mushroom compost. This can be purchased by the bag or in bulk.
- **Wood chip mulch:** Make sure you get *untreated* mulch, aged if possible.
- **Leaves:** If available, adding chipped leaves to your mulch will help with decomposition.
- **Seeds and plants:** Use high quality organic heirloom seeds from a reputable source (*see Planting! section for details and recommendations*).
- **Wheelbarrows**
- **Gardening gloves**
- **Pitchforks**
- **Rakes**
- **Shovels**
- **String**
- **Fencing** may be necessary for pest control
- **Plant markers/signs**
- **Method for watering** (drip hoses or hose and sprinkler)



# Companion Planting

Companion planting means intentionally grouping plants in a garden through complementary strengths. For example, one plant may help increase soil nutrients while another repels pests. When each individual plant uses its strengths, you will have a better, healthier, and more fruitful garden.

<p><b>TOMATOES</b></p> <p>♥ carrots, asparagus, lettuce, spinach, onion, parsley, basil</p>  <p>✗ potato, cabbage family</p>	<p><b>CUCUMBERS</b></p> <p>♥ Tomato, pepper, beans, corn, peas, radish, lettuce, dill</p>  <p>✗ thyme, sage</p>	<p><b>CARROTS</b></p> <p>♥ beans, onion, lettuce, pepper, radish, peas, parsley, dill</p>  <p>✗ tomato</p>
<p><b>ONIONS</b></p> <p>♥ carrot, cucumber, lettuce, strawberry, tomato, herbs</p>  <p>✗ beans, peas</p>	<p><b>BEANS</b></p> <p>♥ carrot, cucumber, tomato, peas, strawberry</p>  <p>✗ Chives, garlic, onion, pepper</p>	<p><b>SQUASH</b></p> <p>♥ lettuce, corn, peas, pepper, marigold, nasturtium</p>  <p>✗ broccoli, cauliflower</p>
<p><b>STRAWBERRIES</b></p> <p>♥ beans, garlic, lettuce, onion, peas, thyme</p>  <p>✗ broccoli, cauliflower</p>	<p><b>LETTUCE</b></p> <p>♥ tomato, carrot, cucumber, onion, strawberry, any herbs</p>  <p>✗ none!</p>	<p><b>PEPPERS</b></p> <p>♥ carrot, cucumber, squash, tomato, any herbs</p>  <p>✗ beans, broccoli, cauliflower</p>

# GARDEN activities guide

ALL AGES

Activities for using your garden as a learning space

## BUTTERFLY GARDEN ACTIVITIES

- Observe bees/insects (April, May, August, September)
- Hunt for monarch chrysalises (July, August)
- Learn about native plants and their importance (Anytime)
- In fall, analyze seed pods of different flowers and plants
- Make a bee house for native solitary bees (Anytime)
- Build toad houses (March, April, May)
- Make butterfly houses and feeding stations (March, April, May)
- Cut flowers for bouquet in the classroom (May, August, September)



## COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

- Prepare herb or salad bowls for senior citizens. Create with personalized cards.
- Share harvested produce with local food banks or senior centers.
- Learn about the different job opportunities related to the Agriculture/Horticulture industry.
- Invite Agriculture/Horticulture professionals to come in to discuss what they do (farmers, wholesale growers, retail greenhouses, florists, H.O.P.E. Gardens staff, landscapers, nutritionists, chefs, environmentalists, arborists, food equity and advocacy representatives, master gardeners from MSU, FDA representatives).

## NEED MORE INFORMATION?

You can purchase our comprehensive *Starting Your School Garden Package* that includes:

- 20-page *Regenerative Gardening Guide* with detailed instructions for starting a school garden along with a garden plan, seed recommendations, and ideas for leveraging your school garden for student learning and growth
- A private 30-minute consultation with a certified regenerative gardening expert from H.O.P.E. Gardens

[learn more](#)