



The Jersey Fresh Entertaining Garden

NJ Conservation Partnership

Fact sheet #3

What is a Jersey Fresh Entertaining Garden?

The Garden State is known for fresh summer vegetables like tomatoes and peppers and what could be fresher than "Jersey Fresh"? The Jersey Fresh Entertaining Garden incorporates an entire dining experience that may be experienced in your backyard from Cape May to High Point and from Bellmawr to Belmar.

The freshest vegetables, fruits and herbs that can spring from native NJ soil combined with a collection of shrubs and flowers that offer an outdoor diner a sweet and fragrant experience, that's the Jersey Fresh Entertaining Garden.

What else is a New Jersey gardener besides a grower? How about being a conservationist concerned with reducing water use, using natural pest control (integrated pest management, IPM) and proper fertilization techniques to protect water quality. This little garden represents everything that a New Jersey native would treasure in a garden; a conservation ethic, the finest fresh fruits and vegetables, all enjoyed on a backyard patio surrounded by flowers and shrubs selected for their fragrance. This is the "real deal", Jersey Fresh Entertaining Garden, enjoy the experience.

Plants Found in the Jersey Fresh Entertaining Garden

Malus domestica, Apple: Three apple varieties are on display in the Jersey Fresh Entertaining Garden. The old favorite cooking apple, Stayman-Winesap is the variety that has been used in more apple pies than any other apple variety. Crisp, tangy and tart the Stayman-Winesap apple grows well in New Jersey and is an under appreciated apple for just plain eating. It's tart, but it's good.

Gala and Fuji are two newer apple varieties that also grow well in New Jersey. These apples are sweet, crisp and seem to store well. If you're planning a home orchard Fuji and Gala are two varieties that should be included in any native NJ orchard.

Pyrus communis, Pear: The grafted pear in the Jersey Fresh Garden includes 4 separate pear varieties specially grafted to one root stock. This special tree can maximize the space in any suburban orchard and who can argue when picking Anjou, Seckel, Bosc and Bartlett pears from the same tree?

- **Bartlett:** Ripening in August, these pears are sweet and juicy and excellent for canning.
- **Anjou:** Ripening in October, these pears are very juicy and very sweet when ripe.
- **Bosc:** Ripening in September, these pears are highly aromatic and flavorful and are ideal for baking and cooking.
- **Seckel:** Ripening in September, these tiny pears have an ultra-sweet flavor and size that are ideal for kid's lunches.

Magnolia virginiana, Sweetbay magnolia: Sweetbay magnolia is a small, semi evergreen native tree found planted throughout New Jersey. Sweetbay produces large, fragrant white flowers that smell like a cross

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between vanilla and cinnamon and has the added bonus of an extended flowering period, sometimes for several weeks beginning in June. Plant one and enjoy the fresh scent it will bring to your garden.



Rhododendron peridymenoides, Pinxter flower: A deciduous azalea native to the woodlands of NJ, this unique and under utilized plant provides a delicate and lovely scent to the Jersey Fresh Entertaining Garden. You may have to search through some obscure nurseries or garden catalogs to find this plant but it's worth the effort. Hummingbirds and hummingbird moths will find this plant wherever you decide to plant it, so plant it close by so you can benefit from the site of those two unique garden visitors.

Viburnum carlesii, Koreanspice viburnum: This may be an introduced species but when blooming in early spring this shrub will "stop you in your tracks" with its magnificent fragrance. Abundant and showy masses of pink flower clusters opening to white, that may last for weeks, made this shrub a favorite Victorian period plant selection.

Fresh Herbs: Growing fresh herbs allows a Jersey Fresh gardener the opportunity to provide flavors that cannot be provided by dried herbs. The delicate flavors imparted by the herbs included in the Jersey Fresh Entertaining Garden can not be captured when dry and may not stand up well in cooked meals.

- **Coriandrum sativum, Cilantro:** Fresh cilantro is a delicate herb that should be used while fresh and loses its appeal if cooked. Use the aromatic cilantro in fresh salsas, salads and vinaigrettes to fully appreciate this easily grown annual herb.
- **Mentha sachalinensis, Garden mint:** Mint is an easy to grow annual that is excellent as a garnish for any summer dining affair. Nothing says summer quite like a Mint Julep!
- **Allium schoenoprasum, Chives:** Chives are a smaller member of the onion family with a mild onion like flavor. Chives grow in grass-like clusters and their delicate flavor is best enjoyed fresh as a topping on potatoes when mixed with sour cream.
- **Thymus vulgaris, Thyme:** Thyme will sustain some flavor when dried but really excels when fresh and fragrant. Fresh Thyme can be used as a flavoring for a multitude of dishes as its strong aromatic properties allow it to stand up to hearty meat and fish preparations.
- **Ocimum basilicum, Basil:** Basil is at its flavorful and aromatic best when used fresh and uncooked. Basil is excellent fresh from the garden in tomato dishes and is the main ingredient found in Pesto.

Conservation Practices in the Jersey Fresh Garden

Rain Barrel: Capturing rain from the roof and storing it in a rain barrel is an excellent way to conserve water and meet the watering needs of thirsty plants like tomatoes and peppers. Hook up a drip irrigation tube to your rain barrel and reduce the likelihood of foliar diseases that will thrive on wet leaves that result from overhead sprinklers.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM): Toad houses create suitable habitat for insect devouring toads. Hungry toads can consume up to 110 slugs, grasshoppers, armyworms and sow bugs per day! Place one in a shady spot in your vegetable garden to entice a hungry toad to take up residence and feed on any potential plant eating pests that would do damage to the plants in your garden.

For More Information: <http://www.rainsaverusa.com/>

On rain barrels

<http://www.aquabarrel.com/>

<http://www.sprucecreekrainsaver.com/>

On Toad Houses

http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-10370_12148-60160--,00.html

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