

Suggested Varieties for Florida Vegetable Gardens

| CROP | RECOMMENDED VARIETIES ¹ | NOTES/REMARKS |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Beans, Bush | Snap: Bush Blue Lake, Contender, Roma II, Provider, Cherokee Wax Shell: Horticultural, Pinto, Red Kidney, Black Bean, Navy | Fertilize at 1/2 rate used for other vegetables. Seed inoculation not essential for most soils. Flowers self-pollinated. Use shell beans green or dry. Roma is a flat pod type. Cherokee is a yellow wax. |
| Beans, pole | McCaslan, Kentucky Wonder, Blue Lake | Support vines. May be grown with corn for vine support. |
| Beans, lima | Fordhook 242, Henderson, Jackson Wonder, Dixie (Speckled) Butterpea, Early Thorogreen | Provide trellis support for pole varieties. Control stinkbugs that injure seeds in pods. Fordhook is large-seeded; Henderson is "butterbean" type. |
| Beets | Tall Top, Early Wonder, Detroit Dark Red, Cylindra, Red Ace, Yellow Detroit | Beets require ample moisture at seeding or poor germination results. Leaves are edible. |
| Broccoli | Early Green, Early Dividend, Green Sprouting/Calabrese, Waltham, Packman, De Cicco, Broccoli Raab (Rapini) | Harvest small multiple side shoots that develop after main central head is cut. Broccoli Raab is not related to broccoli. |
| Cabbage | Rio Verde, Flat Dutch, Round Dutch, Wakefield types, Copenhagen Market, Savoy, Red Acre | Buy clean plants to avoid cabbage black-rot, a common bacterial disease that causes yellow patches on leaf margins. Keep an eye out for looper caterpillars; use Bt for control. |
| Cantaloupes and Honeydews | Athena, Ambrosia, Galia (green flesh) | Bees needed for pollination. Mulch to reduce fruit-rot and salmonella. Harvest when the fruit cleanly separates from the vine with light pressure. |
| Carrots | Imperator, Nantes, Danvers, Chantenay | Grow carrots on a raised bed for best results. Sow seeds shallow and thin seedlings to recommended spacing. |
| Cauliflower | Snowball Strains, Snow Crown, Brocoverde | Tie leaves around the head when it is 2-3 inches to prevent discoloration. Brocoverde is green-headed. |
| Celery | Utah Strains | Celery requires very high soil moisture during seeding/seedling stage. |
| Chinese Cabbage | Michihili, Bok Choy, Napa, Baby Bok Choy, Pak-choi, Joi Choi | Bok Choy is open-leaf type, while Michihili and Napa form tighter heads. |
| Collards | Georgia, Georgia Southern, Top Bunch, Vates | Tolerates more heat than most other brassicas. Harvest lower leaves. |
| Corn, sweet | Silver Queen (white), How Sweet It Is (white), Sweet Ice (white), Sweet Riser (yellow), Early Sunglow (yellow) | Separate super-sweets from standard varieties by time and distance to avoid cross-pollination. Sucker removal not beneficial. Plant in blocks of 2-3 rows. |
| Cucumbers | Slicers: Sweet Success, Poinsett, Ashley, MarketMore 76, Straight Eight, Space Master | Pickling types can also be used fresh. Liberty Hybrid and Sweet Success are burpless types. Many new hybrids are gynoecious (female flowering), which means |

| CROP | RECOMMENDED VARIETIES ¹ | NOTES/REMARKS |
|--|---|---|
| | Picklers: Liberty Hybrid, Eureka, Boston Pickling | more fruit set. Bees required for pollination |
| Eggplant | Black Beauty, Dusky, Long, Ichiban, Cloud Nine (white) | May need staking. Harvest into summer. Requires warm weather. |
| Endive/Escarole | Endive: Green Curled Ruffec Escarole: Batavian Broadleaf | Excellent ingredient in tossed salads. Escarole is a selection of endive also known as Batavian endive. |
| Kale | Vates Dwarf Blue Curled, Tuscan, Winterbor, Redbor | There is also a collard variety named Vates. |
| Kohlrabi | Early White Vienna, Purple Vienna | Both red and green varieties are easy to grow. Use fresh or cooked. Leaves are edible. |
| Lettuce | Crisphead: Great Lakes Butterhead: Ermosa, Bibb, Tom Thumb, Buttercrunch, Loose Leaf: Simpson types, Salad Bowl, Red Sails, New Red Fire Oak Leaf: Salad Bowl, Royal Oak Romaine: Parris Island Cos, Outredgeous | Grow crisphead type in coolest months for firmer heads. Sow seeds very shallow as they need light for germination. Intercrop lettuce with long-season vegetables. |
| Mustard | Southern Giant Curled, Florida Broad Leaf, Tendergreen, Giant Red, Green Wave, Mizuna | Consider planting in a wide-row system. Broadleaf types require more space. Cook as “greens.” Mizuna is a Japanese green used in salads. It is damaged by freezing temperatures. |
| Okra | Clemson Spineless, Emerald, Annie Oakley II, Cajun Delight | Produces well in warm months. Highly susceptible to root-knot nematodes. |
| Onions | Bulbing: Granex (yellow) Bunching (Green): Evergreen Bunching, White Lisbon Bunching Leeks: American Flag Multipliers: Shallots | Plant short-day bulbing varieties. Bulbing onions may be seeded in the fall, then transplanted in Jan-Feb. For bunching onions, insert sets upright for straight stems. Divide and reset multipliers. |
| Peas, English or Snow | Wando, Green Arrow, Sugar Snap, Oregon Sugarpod II | Trellis. The pods of Sugar Snap and Oregon types are edible. |
| Peas, Southern (aka Field Peas, Cow Peas, Crowder Peas, Cream Peas) | California Blackeye No.5, Pinkeye Purple Hull, Texas Cream | Good summer cover crop. Cowpea curculio – a tiny white grub that infests seeds in pod – is a common pest. ‘California No.5 Blackeye’ is resistant to root-knot nematodes. |
| Peppers | Bell: California Wonder, Red Knight, Big Bertha | Mulching especially beneficial. Will often produce into summer. Most small-fruited varieties are hot. Pepper heat is measured |

| CROP | RECOMMENDED VARIETIES ¹ | NOTES/REMARKS |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| | <p>Other Sweet: Sweet Banana, Giant Marconi, Mariachi, Cubanelle</p> <p>Jalapeno: Early Jalapeno, Jalapeno M</p> <p>Specialty Hot: Cherry Bomb, Hungarian Hot Wax, Big Chile II, Numex, Ancho, Thai, Anaheim Chile, Long Cayenne, Habanero, Caribbean Red Habanero</p> | <p>in Scoville units. Habaneros average 259,000 Scovilles; Caribbean Reds are a little over 445,000 Scovilles. In comparison, Jalapenos rank 2,500-10,000 Scovilles, depending on the variety.</p> |
| <p>Potato</p> | <p>Red Pontiac, Yukon Gold, Gold Rush</p> | <p>Plant 2-ounce seed pieces with eyes. Do not use “store bought” for seed. Remove tops two weeks before digging to “toughen skin.” Varieties planted by seeds produce less than from seed pieces.</p> |
| <p>Potatoes, Sweet</p> | <p>Centennial, Beauregard, Vardaman</p> | <p>Sweet potato weevils are a serious problem. Start with certified-free transplants. Use vine cuttings to prolong season. 'Vardaman' is a bush type for small gardens.</p> |
| <p>Pumpkin</p> | <p>Big Max, Connecticut Field, Prizewinner, Jack Be Little, Jack O Lantern</p> | <p>Bees required for pollination. Foliage diseases and fruit-rot are common.</p> |
| <p>Radish</p> | <p>Cherry Belle, White Icicle, Sparkler, Champion, Daikon</p> | <p>The winter type (Daikon) grows well in Florida, too. Inter-crop fast-growing radishes with slow-growing vegetables to save space.</p> |
| <p>Spinach</p> | <p>Melody, Bloomsdale Longstanding, Tye, Space</p> | <p>Grow only during the coolest months. New Zealand spinach and Malabar spinach, although not true spinach, grow well during warm months in Florida².</p> |
| <p>Squash</p> | <p>Summer: Early Prolific Straightneck, Summer Crookneck, Early White Scallop</p> <p>Winter: Spaghetti, Table King, Table Queen & Table Ace (Acorn), Waltham, Early Butternut (Butternut)</p> <p>Zucchini: Cocozelle, Spineless Beauty, Black Beauty</p> <p>Calabaza</p> | <p>Summer squash are usually bush type; winter squash have vining habit. Both male and female flowers on same plant. Bees required. Common fruit rot/drop caused by fungus and incomplete pollination. Crossing occurs but results not seen unless seeds are saved. Winter types store longest. Calabaza is a heat-resistant, disease-resistant, vining, hard-shelled squash, similar to a butternut or acorn in taste.</p> |
| <p>Strawberry</p> | <p>Chandler, Oso Grande, Sweet Charlie, Selva, Camarosa, Festival</p> | <p>Plant short-day varieties. Grow as an annual crop starting with disease-free plants in the fall.</p> |
| <p>Swiss Chard</p> | <p>Bright Lights, Bright Yellow, Fordhook Giant, Lucullus, Red Ruby</p> | <p>Can be grown nearly year-round in Florida. An excellent alternative green for warm weather.</p> |
| <p>Tomatoes</p> | <p>Large Fruit: Celebrity, Heat Wave II, Better Boy, Beefmaster, BHN444-Southern Star*, Amelia*, BHN 640*</p> <p>Small Fruit: Sweet 100, Juliet, Red</p> | <p>Staking, mulching beneficial. Flowers self-pollinated. Blossom drop due to too high or too low temperatures and/or excessive nitrogen fertilization. Serious problems include blossom-end rot, wilts, whitefly, and</p> |

| CROP | RECOMMENDED VARIETIES ¹ | NOTES/REMARKS |
|---|---|--|
| | Grape, Sun Gold, Sugar Snack, Sweet Baby Girl Heirloom: Green Zebra, Cherokee Purple, Eva Purple Ball, Brandywine, Mortgage Lifter, Delicious | leafminers. *Resistant to TSWV (Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus) |
| Turnips | Roots: Purple Top White Globe Roots and Greens: Purple Top Greens: Seven Top, Shogoin | Grow for roots and tops (greens). Broadcast seed in wide-row system or single file. |
| Watermelon | Large: Jubilee (aka FL Giant), Crimson Sweet, Charleston Grey 133 Small: Sugar Baby, Mickeylee | Vines require lots of space. Suggest small “ice-box” types. Plant fusarium wilt resistant varieties. Bees required for pollination. “Seedless” types must be interplanted with regular types to dependably bear fruit. |
| <p>¹Other varieties may produce well also. Suggestions are based on availability, performance, and pest resistance.</p> <p>²Information on New Zealand and Malabar spinach and many other minor vegetables can be found at: http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_minor_vegetables</p> | | |

Footnotes

This document is SP 103, one of a series of the Horticultural Sciences Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Original publication date December 1999. Revised December 2010. Reviewed February 2012. Visit the EDIS website at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is an Equal Opportunity Institution authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function with non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations. For more information on obtaining other UF/IFAS Extension publications, contact your county's UF/IFAS Extension office.