Get your home garden off to a good start

Source: Rachel Rudolph, UK horticulture extension specialist

Springtime in Kentucky is the perfect time to get outside and start your home garden. A few tasks will help you have a successful season.

Planning your garden on paper before you begin allows you to visualize the plants you want to grow and when they will be ready to harvest.

Next, select a good gardening site. Plan a site in full sun, relatively level, well-drained, close to a water source and dries quickly from morning dew. You may need to get a soil test to best prepare the soil. Add fertilizer according to soil test results.

Remember to only plan a garden as large as you can easily maintain. Beginning gardeners often overplant and fail because they can’t keep up with the required tasks. You must manage weeds and pests and apply water so your plants will be ready to harvest on time.

A few other important tips:

1. Grow vegetables that will produce the maximum amount of food in your available space.
2. Plant during the correct season for the crop.
3. Choose varieties recommended for Kentucky.
4. Harvest vegetables at their proper stage of maturity. Consider how you will store them if you don’t use them right away.

Consult the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment’s Home Vegetable Gardening publication ID-128, available online at http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/id/id128/id128.pdf.

For more information about gardening or other horticulture topics, contact the (COUNTY NAME) Cooperative Extension Service.

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