

News Release From:
University of Missouri Extension
Northwest Region

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Garden, Grow, Preserve with University of Missouri Extension

By Janet Hackert, Regional Nutrition and Health Education Specialist

Spring has finally shown up in Northwest Missouri. Now is the time to know that University of Missouri Extension has a wealth of resources to help with gardening and preserving your garden's harvest.

MU Extension guides provide direction on getting the garden started. A soil sample can be brought to any extension office and sent in to be tested to determine if the soil is ready for the vegetables or fruits that are planned for it. There is also a guide on how to take the sample to best represent the whole garden. The [Vegetable Planting Calendar \(G6201\)](#) describes what and when to plant, how to space it, and how much to plant, depending on whether the produce will be eaten fresh or preserved.

There are also guides on growing vegetables and fruits, managing common problems like what diseases and insect infestations to watch for, and maintenance like pruning fruit trees and thinning carrot seedlings. Go to the MU Extension web site <http://extension.missouri.edu> and search for what you are interested in, like "growing tomatoes" and see an assortment of publications that are available. Now there is even an online resource and app for identifying weeds. Simply go to <http://weedid.missouri.edu>, select the characteristics of the weed, and pick from the list that comes up. The descriptions include photo(s) to help confirm identification. Once the weed is clearly identified, control measures can be focused on that particular weed. This tool is also available as an app for iPhone, iPad, or Android devices.

Once the produce is ripening, MU Extension also has information and specialists who can help understand how and when to harvest, store, use and preserve it. *Seasonal and Simple* tells where to find produce (with a guide to Missouri's Farmers Markets), as well as selecting, preparing and storing fresh fruits and vegetables found in Missouri. It can be purchased in paper form (MP909), or it can be found online at <http://seasonalandsimple.info>. There is also a link to the free app from that site as well.

For those who wish to get hands-on experience learning how to select, can, freeze and dry their produce, I will be offering food preservation classes in Bethany and Gallatin in the coming months. Contact me to learn more about these classes or to pre-register.

Whether in paper form, online, as an app or from a specialist, MU Extension has answers to questions on gardening, growing and preserving produce.

For more information on these or on any other topic contact me, Janet Hackert, Regional Nutrition Specialist, at 660-425-6434 or HackertJ@missouri.edu or your local MU Extension office.