

»Companion planting«

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Companion planting is the practice of planting different kinds of crops together for mutual benefit. This can help minimize the use of pesticides.

When doing companion planting, there are principles that need to be followed in order to have it successful ie plants with similar light and water requirements can be planted next to each other, avoid putting crops that are attacked by the same pests next to each other because this allows easy spread of diseases from one crop to the other.

Polyculture planting tips

Implement polyculture planting practices in your garden ie plant as many different crops in a given garden as possible. This can be done by adding a wild variety of different fruits, vegetable and herbs in the same bed. Before doing Polyculture, learn how different crops grow and this gives you a basis for planting different crops with similar light and water requirements next to each other.

Dont be afraid to add a variety of vegetables to each bed, add perenial herbs to your garden beds and resist the urge of wanting to plant all of one type of vegetables in one position.

Other tips

Encourage beneficial insects to come in and thrive because these are the natural predators that help us control disease. This can be achieved by eliminating pesticide use in the garden and also use organic pesticide very carefully.

Observation is very key in pest management. The beneficial insects that need to be preserved include pirate bug, lacewing, parasitic wasps, preying mantis and bees.

Use plants as supports for one another ie plant tall plants near climbing plants.

Also use companion planting to repel pests for example planting basil near tomatoes makes them not susceptible to

boll worms and thrips, while marigold when planted near brassicas and onions may help repel onion maggot root fly and cabbage root fly. You can also plant trap crops around the perimeter before the main crop.