

Learn About Your CSA Herb Garden!



As part of your Highlands Harvest Club experience, you will be receiving live herb plants for the first weeks of the CSA season, 18 individual plants in all. This is another aspect of our CSA program that was created to help you get the most out of your membership, all season long. Below you will find helpful care tips and tricks to get you started and to help you take care of your plants all season.

The live plants you will be receiving will come in 4 inch plastic pots. The herbs can remain in these pots while they are still small, but they would do best being transplanted into a large pot, 12” pots are the most common choice, since they are large enough to fit two or three different herbs at the same time. If you need help finding the right size pots, or have other plant care questions, we are always happy to assist you. We are available by phone at (908) 879-7189, or you can stop by to talk to our Garden Center staff in person. We carry a full line of the supplies that you may need for your herb garden right in our garden center, from soil to pots, to fertilizer, we have everything you need.

If you are planting outside in your yard or garden, not in a pot, the easiest rule of thumb, straight from our Production Manager Craig Steely, is “one foot per herb plant.” If you leave a one foot circle around your plants, they will have even more room to be able to spread and grow, without stretching too tall.

If you have more limited space, or would prefer to keep some of your herb plants inside your house or apartment, that is okay, too. There are many creative options that you can use to help save space while still providing your herbs with enough room to flourish.

On the following page, you will find a few helpful suggestions for your CSA Herb Garden, but the options are endless! If you have a neat idea for your herb garden, don't hesitate to share it with us- we love to see how you and your families are enjoying the plants that you bring home with your shares each week!

(Also- see the Herb Storage Instructions in the Produce Care Section for more information on harvesting and keeping your herbs for extended periods of time.)

Herb Garden Ideas...



Unique Recycled Pots



Pallet Herb Garden



Space Saving Containers



Terra Cotta Pots



Wooden Barrels Add Height and Texture

Live Herb Plant Care

This year, you will be receiving 18 live plants throughout the season. Here you will find information on caring for each herb.

Basil (Thai Basil, Lemon Basil, and Traditional Basil)

Tender Annual. Be careful of cold temperatures. A culinary herb, known for its warm, spicy flavor and appetizing scent

Where to plant: Needs full sun, moist well drained soil. Can be potted with 12-18 inches of space to grow

Care: Grows best in the summer heat. Remove flowers, cutting above the first set of leaves below the flower. This will encourage branching and more leaves.

Harvest: trim leaves as needed; see the Herb Storage section for tips on preserving the leaves.

Oregano

Perennial. Very popular herb in tomato sauces and Italian dishes. Oregano is sometimes called "Wild Marjoram," sweet marjoram is a close relative.

Where to plant: Full sun. Average, well-drained soil. Space multiple plants 18 inches apart.

Care: trim the ends to keep fresh growth going. If bottom of stems become woody, trim to the bottom, leaving an inch of stem, this will allow fresh growth.

Harvest: trim leaves as needed in cooking.

Cilantro (Coriander)

Hardy Annual. One of the most widely used herbs, leaves have a strong aroma.

Where to plant: Full sun to partial shade. Moist, well-drained soil. Can be potted with 6 inches of space.

Harvest: trim lower leaves as needed, trim top leaves when they start to turn brown.

Anise

A sweet and fragrant, similar to fennel with a mild licorice taste.

Care: This tender annual can grow up to 2 ft tall. Needs full sun and well-drained soil.

Anise is an herb with culinary and medicinal properties. It is a digestive aid. Its numerous uses in food and beverage span a wide range of international cuisines. The eastern European communities have used it widely in liqueurs such as Anisette.

Harvest: The seeds, once crushed, yield an aromatic oil that is used in soaps, perfume and potpourris. Dry the seeds for future use in cooking and store them in a glass container with a tightly sealed lid.

Dill

Hardy Annual. Appreciated for its tangy flavor, often synonymous with any form of cucumber pickles.

Where to plant: Full sun. Moist well-drained soil. Space 10 inches apart, ca be potted.

Care: Protect from wind

Harvest: trim leaves as needed. Remove flower heads for more fresh foliage. (See herb storage information for preservation instructions.)

Rosemary

Woody Evergreen Perennial. Rosemary is very useful in the kitchen and is also used for medicinal purposes as well. The flavor can be intense so start with small amounts, to determine how much you like.

Where to plant: Full sun, average, well-drained soil, can be potted or planted. Allow multiple plants 1-3 feet to grow.

Care: Can be kept in pots and brought indoors over winter. Trim to shape after flowering.

Harvest: trim leaves as needed for cooking, drying or freezing are good ways to store.

Parsley

Annual. Frequently used as a garnish but also helps to pull flavors together when cooking. Parsley is also rich in Vitamin C.

Where to plant: Full sun to partial shade. Moist, well-drained soil. Can be potted, allow 8-10 inches for growth

Care: trim to shape after flowering, allowing fresh growth

Harvest: trim leaves as needed for recipes, see herb preservation section for storage details.

Epazote

Perennial. Small green flowers. Often used in herbal tea and very commonly added for flavoring in Latin dishes and salsas.

Where to plant: Full sun, average, well-drained soil, can be potted or planted. Allow multiple plants 1-3 feet to grow.

Care: Aromatic leaves typically repel destructive insects naturally. Be sure to clip and remove seed heads to help prevent it from taking over the garden quickly.

Harvest: trim leaves as needed for cooking, drying or freezing are good ways to store.

Sage

is the better known of the savory species. It is an annual, but otherwise is similar in use and flavor to the perennial winter savory. It is used more often than winter savory, which has a slightly more bitter flavor.

Where to plant: Full sun. Average, well-drained soil. Can be potted, or planted in the ground. Allow 2 feet between plants, if planting multiple.

Care: Trim to shape after flowering, replace after five years.

Harvest: Trim leaves as needed, trim flowers as they open. Preserve by drying, but remember this will make the flavor more intense.

Catnip

Catnip is a gray-green perennial with the square stems and terminal flower spikes typical of the Mint family. It has fuzzy, heart-shaped, toothed leaves and grows 2-3 feet tall.

Where to Plant: Full sun to partial shade. Average, well-drained soil. Space 8-12 inches apart.

Care: trim in early spring and again after flowering

Harvest: trim leaves as needed, or harvest larger quantities before flowering, by cutting back to 2 inches. Remove flowers as they open.

Thyme

Perennial. One of the most versatile herbs in the garden, good for cooking and for health.

Where to Plant: grows best in full sun. Keep it well watered until it has become established. As the plant is growing, pinch out the top growth tips to promote full shape.

Harvest: You can take leaves from your catnip plant throughout the year. To dry, place in the oven on very low heat or hang upside down in a dry, ventilated area, away from the sun. It should crumble easily when it is ready.

Summer Savory

Woody Evergreen Perennial. Lemony fragrance and flavor, milder and sweeter when used fresh in cooking, rather than dried.

Where to plant: Full sun. Average, well-drained soil. Can be potted, or planted in the ground. Allow 2 feet between plants, if planting multiple.

Care & Harvest: The mature herb is approximately 18 inches tall, with many branches and soft, narrow, dark green leaves that are about one half inch in length. Light pink or lavender flowers appear in July, followed by dark brown or black, nut-shaped seeds. If these are gathered for future planting, they should be used following spring, as they lose their viability after a year.

Lovage

Perennial plant growing 5-8 ft tall

Where to plant: Rich moist, well-drained soil is required and a sunny area.

Care & Harvest: The leaves can be used in salads, or to make soup or season broths, and the roots can be eaten as a vegetable or grated for use in salads. Its flavor and smell is somewhat similar to celery. The seeds can be used as a spice, similar to fennel seeds.

Chervil

Delicate culinary herb used frequently in French cuisine. A member of the parsley family, chervil has a mild flavor with hints of licorice or anise.

Where to plant: The ideal location for chervil is partial shade in summer and sun in the winter, in a somewhat sheltered area, such as under a deciduous tree. Chervil can be picked any time of the year.

Care & Harvest: Chervil is beneficial to lettuce and broccoli when planted nearby. It repels aphids and grows well with other shade-tolerant food plants. Chervil planted near radishes imparts a spicier flavor to the radishes, a plus or minus depending on your personal tastes.

Sunflowers **(BONUS in 2017)**

Annual. Plant can be decorative and the sunflower seeds can be harvested as well.

Care: Most sunflowers are remarkably tough and easy to grow as long as the soil is not waterlogged. Most are heat- and drought-tolerant. They make excellent cut flowers and many are attractive to birds and bumblebees in the garden.

Harvest: To harvest seeds, keep an eye out for ripeness. The back of the flower head will turn from green to yellow; this happens about 30 to 45 days after bloom. When the head turns brown on the back, seeds are usually ready for harvest.