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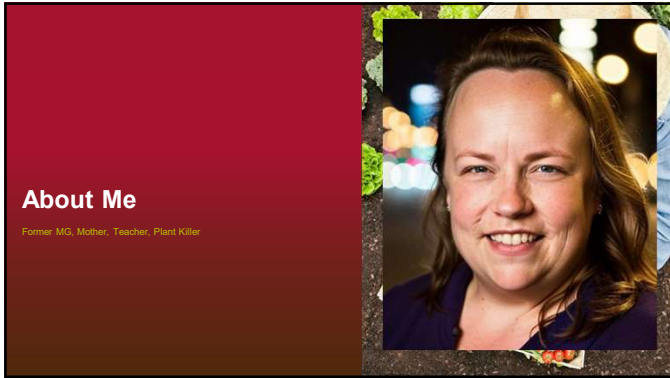
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**Preparing the Soil**

- Soil is water, air, and dirt particles. The perfect ratio of these creates conditions for fluffy, well-draining soil.
- The "dirt" part needs to have the right amount of nutrients/organic material in it for root vegetables to grow.
- Root veggies like deep soil fluffiness (12-18") for optimal growing conditions.
- Remove debris from soil, like rocks, sticks, or competing root systems.

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**Direct Sow**

- Check back of seed packet for instructions and follow these directions
- Soil temperature is very important
- Thin seedlings according to packet instructions
- (Beet greens and thinned-out others can be eaten after thinning)

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**Potatoes**

- Needs: 45°F soil, consistent watering throughout the summer, curing
- Two weeks before planting, put seed potatoes somewhere warm and bright to sprout
- Two days before planting, cut seed potatoes into "seeds," or 1-1/2" squares, with at least 1 or 2 "eyes" or buds. Smaller potatoes may be planted whole. We want the seed to heal over the cuts to help prevent rot when planted

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**Potatoes, Continued**

Water through the summer, especially during flowering.

Water in the morning so leaves are wet at night to reduce fungal disease.

When foliage yellows and dies, discontinue watering for a week or two before harvesting (2-3 weeks after flowers)

Lay your harvest out, unwashed, for 2-3 days, to dry

Don't grow potatoes in the same soil more than once in three years. Crop rotation helps with pests and diseases



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### Sweet Potatoes

- So closely related to morning glory that leaves and vines can resemble bindweed/mock morning glory
- Since sweet potatoes evolved in warm, humid climates, growing them in the PNW means they need help with warmth, like row covers, cold frames, or greenhouse to help with yield and growth
- Plant slips (or tuber starts) 3-4" deep in raised beds 10-18" apart in rows 36-60" apart
- 85-120 days to maturity
- Don't leave in soil too long...they can't withstand colder temperatures

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### Parsnips

- Easier than carrots
- The hardiest vegetable?
- Even better after frost!
- They store well
- Long time between germination and harvest; plant early



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### Parsnip Problems

- Insects: Leaf hoppers
- Diseases: Alternaria (leaf blight/spot) and Cercospora (leaf spot)
- Avoid working soil when wet; you need good air circulation, well-drained soil; rotate crops



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### Varieties of Garden Beets




Color	Examples of the Varieties
	Boro, Detroit Dark Red, Early Wonder Tall Top, Red Ace, Bulls Blood, Cylindra
	Golden Detroit, Touchstone, Boulder
	Chioggia

Photo Credit: harvestinghistory.com

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### Timeline (Beet)

#### May: Germination in the Garden



- Soil temperatures 40°F-80°F
- Optimal is 77°F
- Germination time: 5 -15 days
- Direct sow under cover, March to end-May for summer crop
- Direct sow June to end-August for fall crop

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### Timeline (Beet)

#### June: Maintenance and Harvesting




Photo Credit: onehundreddollarsamonth.com




Photo Credit: raised-bed-gardening.com

- Maintenance:**
  - Thin early 1-2" apart
  - Thin later 3-5" apart to harvest baby beets and greens
  - Keep beds weed free to eliminate competition for resources
- Harvesting:**
  - Follow instructions on seed packet for days to maturity (~45 - 60 days)
  - Beets can get woody if left too long

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**Timeline (Beet)**  
**July: Moving Forward**



Photo Credit: urbanfarming-kelly.blogspot.

- Succession planting every three weeks (until temperatures reach 80°F)
- Restart planting late summer for fall crop – 8 weeks before first frost
- Use shade cloth if it gets too hot to prevent bolting

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**Growing Herbs**

Rosemary, Thyme, Oregano, and Lovage



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**Preparing the Garden**

Herbs do well in boxes, containers, in ground, and sometimes hanging baskets

Well draining soil  
Planning for pollination



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### Rosemary

- If you want to grow by seed, rosemary needs a couple years and some TLC before planting and harvest
- Established starts are easy to find and if put in full sun in decent soil, this plant can effortlessly grow into a massive shrub in PNW gardens
- Harvest before flowering
- Makes great skewers
- Can be used as a brush for basting




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### Thyme

- Shorter to the ground
- Runs/spreads easily
- Various cultivars...Garden, German, Common, Lemon
- Flowers are edible and harvesting flowers encourages leaf growth




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### Oregano

- Perennial, woody plant
- Prefers full sun
- Flowers are edible, too
- Can be harvested when plant is 4". Can harvest up to 1/3 of the plant at a time




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### Lovage

- Perennial leafy herb
- Tastes like celery
- Also known as maggi
- Easy, hearty, lots of flavor
- When it flowers, harvest flowers to preserve leaf flavor



Photos from gardenerspath.com

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### Recipe Inspiration

Let's cook!



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### Soups

- Erwtten Soep/Snert: A Dutch specialty
  - A mix of potatoes, carrots, parsnips, and split peas, boiled until the wooden spoon can stand up in the pot. Flavor enhancers include bay leaf, juniper berries, and lovage, depending on the region the soep is made. Sometimes ham and sausage are added for flavor and heartiness.
- Sweet Potato Bisque
  - Sweet potatoes boiled in broth long enough to be able to be blended. Flavor enhancers include thyme, rosemary, or curry powder. Swirl in a little sour cream, Greek yogurt, or whole milk at the end for creaminess.
- Borscht
  - Beets are boiled, onions are sauteed, they are blended with garlic, spices, and stock until smooth, then topped with herbs, like lovage, and served with a toasty bit of rye bread.

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### Salads

- Potato salad is jazzed up by thyme, oregano, and lovage. Classic potato salad recipe can be lightened with plain Greek yogurt, and usually includes mayonnaise, vinegar, a dash of sugar, salt, and pepper. In my family, we also added chopped pickles and hard-boiled eggs.
- Salad skewer appetizers with rosemary.
  - Caprese: mozzarella pearls, cherry tomatoes, and basil, drizzle all with oil and balsamic vinegar
  - Antipasti: olive, salami cube, marinated artichoke heart, sprinkle chopped thyme and oregano over
  - Caesar: romaine lettuce piece, cube of chicken, cube of parmesan, drizzle with favorite Caesar dressing
- Lovage "straws" for Bloody Mary's, because Bloody Mary's are brunch salads.

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### Air Frying/Roasting

- In my airfryer, I roast all these vegetables, cut into French fry shapes at 370 for 20-25 minutes, shaking the basket every 7-8 minutes.
- In my oven, I roast all these vegetables in all different ways, but my favorites include rosemary potatoes, "spicy" sweet potatoes with a paste of cumin, fresh thyme, pepper, hot sauce and olive oil, and balsamic beets with oregano.

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## Questions?



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**Resources**

- <https://extension.wsu.edu/king/gardening/>
- <https://hortsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/>
- <https://www.allrecipes.com/>

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### Spring Series Presentations

**2024 Growing Groceries Classes and BDG Garden Workshops**

Date	Class
Wed, March 27	Grow Kale, Broccoli, and Related Cole Crops
Wed, April 10	Grow Tomatoes, Peppers, and Other Edible Nightshades
Wed, April 24	What Loves Heat? Cucumbers, Squash, Beans and Melons
Sat, May 4	BDG Workshop – Irrigation and Effective Water Management
Wed, May 8	Savoring What You Sow: Roots and Herbs
Sat, May 18	BDG Workshop – Beneficial Insects

More info: <https://kingcounty.mastergardenerfoundation.org/education/gg/>



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### Master Gardener Resources

**Ask a Master Gardener**

Send a messages with questions and photos to: [ask-a-mastergardener@live.com](mailto:ask-a-mastergardener@live.com)

Or use the online form at <https://extension.wsu.edu/king/ask-a-master-gardener>

**Become a Master Gardener**

For information on King County Master Gardener training, visit <https://extension.wsu.edu/king/gardening/become-a-master-gardener>

Applications for the 2025 class will open in September 2024



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# Thank you!



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EXTENSION

**King County Master Gardener Program**

<https://extension.wsu.edu/king/gardening>

- Demonstration Gardens
- Plant Clinics
- Education Outreach
- Science-based Publications



**Master Gardener Foundation of King County**

<http://www.mgfk.org>

- Fundraising for these programs

**More information about growing groceries:**

<https://kingcounty.mastergardenerfoundation.org/education/ga/>

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