



Nurture Nature Center, located in Easton, Pennsylvania, created an Urban Garden in a small parking area using recycled and found materials to demonstrate low-cost growing techniques for small urban areas (walls, balconies, small paved spaces). This fact sheet is part of a series that features information about demonstrations in the garden that are easy to replicate and implement in a variety of urban spaces.

Growing Vertically

Description:

If space is limited in the garden, growing vertically can be a solution. Visually, vertical plantings compliment a raised bed or container garden by providing upward interest. Vertical gardening also allows for added air movement which makes harvest easier and helps limit foliage diseases, especially in a small space.

Vertical Growing Techniques:

A trellis, cage, stakes or poles can all support growing plants. Plants that do well in a vertical garden include flowering vines, peas, climbing beans, small gourds, cucumbers, and tomatoes. With heavier fruit, you may need to add supports since there will be more exposure to wind.

Trellis systems can be constructed using materials that you already have on hand that could be “recycled” into a trellis support. Willow branches or bamboo can be used to create a tee-pee support. A discarded window frame (without the glass panes), box springs, or a piece of used lattice can all serve as vertical plant supports. Angle vertical supports slightly to create a shade area underneath them for additional shade-loving plantings. Garden twine or fishing line can be attached to trellis systems to provide more support. Some plants that don’t naturally adhere themselves to supports (like tomatoes) may need to be tied to the support structure. Keep the ties firm but loose enough to allow for the growth of the plants.

For more information related to Nurture Nature Center's Urban Garden Project, see <http://nuturenaturecenter.org/garden/>

Resources:

http://clark.wsu.edu/volunteer/mg/gm_tips/VerticalGardening.html

<http://lancaster.unl.edu/hort/articles/2002/vertical.shtml>



Tips:

- Regardless of what type of vertical support system you select, make sure it's secured properly.
- Site your support structure at the north or western side of the garden or raised bed. This helps to limit shading of the other vegetables.

