

# **GROWING FRUITS & VEGGIES**

**FROM KITCHEN  
WASTE & LEFTOVERS**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Growing Food From Scraps .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Celery .....	5
Garlic .....	6
Potatoes .....	7
Sweet Potatoes .....	7
Carrots.....	8
Avocados .....	9
Bok Choy.....	10
Ginger .....	11
Lemongrass.....	11
Tomatoes.....	12
Onions.....	12
<b>Savor Your Scraps.....</b>	<b>13</b>



## GROWING FOOD FROM SCRAPS

Don't toss those food scraps into the compost pile, down the disposal or in the trash. Instead, you can give them a whole new life by regrowing them into plants. Those seeds, butts and stems can be transformed into a whole new fresh crop, with some rich soil, sunlight, water and a little effort. It's a great way to reduce food waste, save money and enjoy lots of delicious, fresh produce at the same time. Here are some of my favorite scraps to grow!



## ..... CELERY



If you're worried you won't be able to grow your own food from scraps, start with celery – it's one of the easiest there is. Chop off the base from the celery you purchased at the grocery store (the part you normally throw out). Place it in a small bowl of warm water, with the base facing down. Put the bowl in a windowsill or another place that gets direct sunlight. Change out the water every other day, and use a spray bottle to keep the base watered as the leaves grow out.

After a week or so, you'll start to see the leaves thicken and growing along the base. That's when it's ready to be transplanted into soil. Plant the base and cover it up with soil, letting the leaf tips remain above it. Water it generously, keeping the soil moist but not waterlogged at all times.



## GARLIC .....

Garlic is another one of the easiest foods to grow from scraps. You can transform a single clove of garlic into a whole garlic bulb with only a few easy steps. You'll want the largest bulbs you can find, making sure they're entirely free of disease. Separate the individual cloves and then place them into well-drained, light and fluffy soil with the pointy-side up, about 4 to 6 inches apart. They should go in about twice the depth of the garlic clove. Press down firmly and then water well. Water regularly until the cloves begin to flower. You can plant them inside in a container, or outside during the fall, before the first frost to enjoy your garlic the following year. It will be ready to harvest when a third to half of the leaves have wilted and turned brown.

# POTATOES



If you're like me, you've probably started growing new potatoes on accident at one point or another — ever leave a bag in your pantry a little too long? Before you know it, they're sprouting all over the place! Take this idea and run with it, cutting up your potatoes into two-inch chunks that have at least two or three eyes in each. Let them dry out overnight and then they'll be ready for planting.

Sow them into the ground with the eyes facing up, planting them about four inches deep into the soil.

# SWEET POTATOES

You can grow sweet potatoes much like you'd grow standard potatoes. Simply cut a sweet potato in half and then use toothpicks to suspend it in a jar or glass. Add water until it just reaches the bottom edge of the sweet potato. In a few days, roots will appear and you'll also be able to see some sprouts at the top. When the sprouts reach about 4 inches in length, twist them off and put them into a container of water. When the roots from the sprouts reach about an inch in length, they can be planted in the soil.



Plant it into a hill of warm soil that's 10 inches high; typically the soil will be warm enough for planting in June. Keep the plant well-watered while the roots are established. It will take a few months for them to form tubers, so you'll want to allow for at least three months before the first frost when planting.



## CARROTS

You can't grow carrots from carrots, but you can grow them from carrot tops — you know, that green part you always toss out? Cut the tops off from a bunch of carrots purchased at your local supermarket, food-coop, farmer's market or what have you, saving about an inch of the root. Stick a toothpick into either side of the root and then balance it along the top of a glass. Use one you don't care a lot about as it will probably develop mineral stains. Fill the glass with water, letting it just barely touch the bottom edge of the root. Place the glass in an area that gets direct sunlight, adding water whenever it starts to diminish. You'll want to make sure that some water is always touching that bottom edge. In a week or so, green sprouts will start to grow in the top of the root, while small white roots appear from the bottom.

Note: This method in itself won't produce actual carrots, but it can give you an attractive plant. Of course, we're talking about growing food, so what you can do is wait for that plant to bloom and produce seeds, which you can then plant in your garden to grow more carrots.



## AVOCADOS .....

Avocado seeds are great for growing a steady supply of avocados. While it's a little more challenging than the others, the reward is worth the effort. All you need is a jar or bowl, toothpicks and some patience. Ideally, you should do at least 2 or 3 seeds at once for the best chances of success. Scoop out the seeds and use the avocado flesh for your guac, a smoothie or what have you. Wash the seeds in cold water and wipe them off, making sure no debris remains. Use the toothpicks to suspend them over water in a jar or bowl, the toothpicks should rest on the rim, and the seed suspended over the center – there should be enough water to cover the bottom inch of the seed. Place the seeds in a warm place, but not in direct sunlight.

Check the water each day, adding more as needed to keep the bottom inch of the seeds covered. It can take as long as six weeks for the roots and stem to appear. When the stem grows to about six inches, cut it down to half that size. When the leaves start to appear, it's time to plant the seeds into soil. About half of each seed should remain above ground. Give them a little water, keep them watered regularly and watch them grow.





## ..... BOK CHOY

Growing bok choy is nearly as easy as growing celery and requires a similar process. Simply cut the base off of a bok choy plant and put it into a bowl with the bottom down. Cover the entire base with water, but don't add so much water that it goes any more than about a quarter of an inch above the base. Replace the water every two to three days, and in a week or two you should see regrowth around the center. Once you see that, it's ready to be placed into soil in a container of its own, or in the garden.

# GINGER



Ginger is so useful, but for culinary and medicinal purposes, and it's extremely easy to grow. Once you start you'll have a continuous supply. Just cut off a chunk of fresh ginger root and place it in soil with the buds facing up. It needs to be in an area that stays warm but doesn't get a lot of direct sunlight. In a week or so, new shoots and roots will begin to pop up, allowing you to pull it up and use it all over again. Save a piece every time so that you can keep re-planting and growing.

# LEMONGRASS



It can be hard to find lemongrass as your typical supermarket, but the good news is that it's also quite easy to grow as it grows just like regular grass. All you need to do is take the stalks that are purchased at the store and place the root that's leftover into a jar or bowl with enough water to cover it. Place it in the sun, changing out the water regularly, and in about a week you'll notice new growth. When it has two inches of roots, you can transplant it into a pot or directly in your garden.



## TOMATOES

All you have to do to grow new tomatoes is save the seeds from the tomatoes you buy at the store. Plant them into a small pot and place them on a windowsill, keeping them well-watered. Soon a new plant will emerge, and once it reaches a few inches tall, it can be transplanted into a larger pot or outside in the garden, as long as the threat of frost has passed.



## ONIONS

Onions are really easy to grow too, outside or in. All you have to do is cut the roots off, making sure that you leave about a half inch of the onion. Place it into a sunny area and cover it up lightly with soil. Water it regularly and watch your onions grow.



## SAVOR YOUR SCRAPS

Among the many benefits, planting your scraps is easy and rewarding. And if you've got little ones, it's a great way to teach them about gardening and sustainability. Plus, it's great for your wallet, too. Forget trying to find savings at the grocery store; the sooner you plant a garden from your kitchen scraps, the sooner you'll have an abundant supply of your favorite produce items. Growing tasty food has never been easier – or more fun. Enjoy!

***“An optimistic gardener is one who believes that whatever goes down must come up.”***

***– Leslie Hall***