

## Gluten Free - Not Flavor Free

Tue, 05/15/2012 - 4:46pm -- Saladmaster  
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*By Melinda Myers*

Don't let going gluten-free mislead you into thinking there will no longer be flavor in your daily diet. The wonderful news is that vegetables and fruits do not include gluten so you can eat all of the tasty foods that you might plant (or purchase) for your raw recipes.

It's never too early to start with the year's gardening plan. Gather your favorite recipes and prepare a list of the most common vegetables. This grocery list can be converted into this year's garden plan.

Start by identifying those vegetables best suited to your climate. Greens like lettuce, spinach, mustard and kale perform and taste best when grown in cool temperatures. That means spring and fall for cold weather gardeners and winter for those gardening in milder climates. These vegetables are also more tolerant of shade.

Raw recipes that use root crops like radishes, beets and carrots can tolerate half a day of shade, but need well-drained soils for best results. Try growing these in raised beds or containers if your soil is heavy or poorly drained.

Tomatoes, peppers, squash, melons and any plant that you eat the flowers or fruits, require the most sunlight and most prefer warm soil and air to grow, flourish and produce. Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts are the exception. These vegetables have the best flavor when harvested in cooler temperatures. They even tolerate a light frost that can improve their flavor.

Next assess your available space. Some vegetables like corn require quite a bit of space to produce a substantial harvest. Other vegetables like tomatoes produce lots of fruit with minimal space. Vine crops like pole beans and squash can be trained up a trellis or fence or grown in a container on a deck or patio.

Finally, look at the cost of the vegetables on your list. You may want to grow those that are costly or hard to find, and visit the farmers market for the vegetables that are more affordable.

Once the harvest begins, try eating produce as fresh from the garden as possible. Avoid breading and sauces with gluten-containing grains. Fresh-from-the-garden vegetables prepared in

Saladmaster cookware will add nutrients and flavor to your gluten-free meal!

For more gardening tips and information, visit  
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