

# New Year's Plans for Next Summer's Garden

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**W**ITH the advent of the New Year, most of us resolve that we are going to do something more satisfactory, or should I say accomplish something which comes nearer to our ideal, than we achieved during the year that is just past. To make such a resolution materialize is no mean accomplishment, and particularly is this so with gardening. This garden business is very much in the nature of a race—a race against conditions, weeds, insects, and last but not least, against time. If we only had time enough in spring, summer, and autumn, what a splendid garden we could have. But our time is always too short. The only way to get ahead is to save time in every possible way, and if you have resolved to do this and start to do it now, you have decided upon something well worth while. Anyone who intends having a garden, even if only a small one, and who wastes time, even in mid-winter, is accepting a severe handicap.

There is no greater saver of garden time than the planting plan. It means that when things open up in the spring every minute can be put into actual work, and that everything needed—seeds, plants, fertilizers, and so forth—will be on hand and in proper quantities. Thus there will be no waste of time or materials. More than this, it means vastly better results.

Perhaps you have not done anything as yet to improve your place, beyond keeping the front lawn cut and planting a few vegetables. Even so, if you only have a piece of ground twenty by twenty feet, make a plan of it now. This should be drawn to scale, using a T square and triangle for convenience, and should indicate the space for and amount of each vegetable wanted. Plan to have such vegetables as onions, beets, and carrots, which remain in the ground all the season, in one section as far as possible, and tall-growing ones, as corn, north of the dwarfier kinds, in order to avoid undue shading.

In preparing your plan, make careful use of the seed catalogues. The new ones will soon be out. Study them thoroughly, but be careful in the choice of novelties, as they may not be adapted to your locality. Try out a few, but go easy.

If you have no regular flower garden, devote part of the vegetable garden to flowers, or better still, mark off a long narrow bed or border along some path. Even if it means less vegetables, have a few flowers. Some of the choicest annuals and perennials are as easily grown as carrots. You can start them yourself with your early vegetables in the house or in a hotbed.

The hotbed should be got ready towards the end of the month. A few hours' work will see it an accomplished fact. Select a warm, sunny, sheltered position on the south side of the house or some outbuilding. Clear the ground off level, and if it is not frozen too hard, dig it out to the depth of a foot or eighteen inches, six feet square. This will give room for two three by six standard size sash, which you can buy either glazed or unglazed for a few dollars.

The frame you can easily build yourself or have someone do it for you. Make the back six inches higher than the front. Ordinary three-quarter-inch boards, supported by three by three posts and banked on the outside with rough manure, are all that are required, and the labor is slight when one considers the advantage of having a garden six weeks ahead of time.

Into the frame place the heating material, twelve to eighteen inches of stable manure. Some persons make a practice of taking the manure directly from the pit and using it. A far better way is to take a sufficient quantity, and build it into a square heap. This should be wet, but not soaked, while being put up. After the lapse of a week turn it, and build it up into a heap again, putting the "outside inside" as much as possible. After a few days, put this into the frame, tramping it down well, then cover with about four inches of good rich garden loam.

If you have your soil protected from frost in some convenient place, you will be saved the none too pleasant task of thawing it out over the furnace. When the temperature of the bed has receded to seventy degrees Fahrenheit, as indicated by a thermometer plunged into the soil, the seeds may be sown.

In the greenhouse, January is a busy month. Towards the latter part of the month the first sowings of early vegetables will have to be made. Stock plants should be given more heat and moisture to start new growth for propagating purposes.

Tomatoes that were sown in December, for early fruiting indoors, will now need repotting preparatory to being put into the beds or fruiting boxes. Cucumbers should be brought along to follow the last crop of lettuce, which should now be in the beds. If you are short on pansies start more now, and sow seeds of annuals for setting out in the spring.

If you are desirous of prolonging your display of bloom indoors next spring, start a batch of tuberous begonias now. There are many excellent varieties of these persistent blooming plants that may be purchased at a nominal cost. Start the tubers in boxes (flats) of sand and leaf mould, keep them warm and moist, and after the first watering damp rather sparingly until the young growth appears. Pot them into suitable sized pots (preferably two and one-half or three inch) before the shoots become too far advanced, using a light but rich compost, made porous by the addition of plenty of sand. Continue to pot them on as they permeate the soil with roots, until a six or seven inch size is reached. In these they should be allowed to flower. Feeding with liquid manure or some approved fertilizer is advisable at this stage if the best results are to be obtained. Don't, however, overdo it. Once a week or every ten days is quite often enough to apply stimulants. Once started and growing well, tuberous begonias succeed best in a comparatively cool house, fifty two degrees at night being sufficiently high.



Note the Floral Effect in Connection with this Modest Home, that of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Knapton, London, Ont.