

Change Choices Good, Better, Best

Growing vegetables



Stepping Up to Sustainability

Stepping Up to Sustainability – how can we live more sustainably and make positive lifestyle choices?

In 2011, WESSA launched the 'Stepping Up to Sustainability' concept. With the support of various partners, USAID and other funders, eleven 'Sustainability Commons' have been established across South Africa.

Each of these 'Sustainability Commons' practices sustainable living by:

- reducing, sorting and managing waste better,
- installing renewable technologies,
- conserving and teaching about water management, as well as,
- providing experiential courses on biodiversity.

The goal is simple - to put into practice the lifestyle choices we all need to make! These innovative concepts are set to expand as we all 'step up to sustainability' and seek to change our environmental footprints into environmental handprints of practice for a more sustainable future!



Growing your own veggies

It sometimes feels easier to just pop into the shops to buy your vegetables, but there is nothing more satisfying than picking your own and experiencing their intense flavour. And, with increasing food prices, growing your own vegetables may soon become a must!

Create a dedicated vegetable patch for a valuable garden addition. This allows you to plant successive plants through the seasons, so that you can enjoy home-grown, pesticide-free produce all year round.

If you design your veggie garden with a bit of imagination, it can also be an attractive part of your back garden!

This 'Change Choice' pamphlet was developed by Cindy-Lee Cloete, Natanya Dreyer and Nkosinathi Mncawabe during a workshop at the 2012 EEASA 30th Annual Conference and Workshop held in Grahamstown.

Did you know?

Insect pests are often plant specific. When plantings are mixed, pests are less likely to spread throughout a crop. Rotating crops each year is a common method to avoid re-infestation of pests which have over-wintered in the bed.

Did you know?

You can boost tomato growth by wrapping a wire mesh cage with clear polyethylene to act as a mini greenhouse during cool weather.

Good Change Choices

Growing veggies



Use organic compost. Artificial fertilisers do not benefit the soil as much as organic manures like cow-dung and chicken manure.



Start a small compost heap. Virtually all plant material will decompose on a compost heap.



Use natural pest controls. Homemade remedies are inexpensive and, best of all, you know what is going into your garden.



Choose easy vegetables to grow. Radishes, onions and carrots grow easily from seed and don't have many pests.



Buy vegetable seedlings. It's easier to start your vegetable garden by planting directly into the garden, by-passing indoor seed starting and transplanting.



Sell or 'trade' your excess vegetables. If you have excess veggies, your neighbours or nearby schools may be interested in buying from you.

Better Change Choices

Growing veggies



Install a pest control firewall.

Ladybugs are great for controlling aphids, potato beetle, green peach aphid and scale insects, mealybugs, mites and whiteflies.



Harvest your vegetable seeds for next year's crops.

This year, plan to collect, store and use some of the seed your own garden gives you for free.



Bring life back into the soil! This can easily be done by buying a worm farm and using the worm tea.



Mulch your vegetable beds. To mulch is simply to cover the soil around plants with a protective material, organic or inorganic. Mulches reduce weed growth and keep the soil damp.



Involve everyone in the garden. If your garden is in the schoolgrounds, get as many teachers, the ground's man and learners involved, if it is at home, get the whole family interested.

Best Change Choices

Growing veggies



Use "captured" water. Linking "Jojo" tanks to the gutter system will help gain extra water from rain for watering your vegetable garden.



Build your own vegetable tunnel.

Consider building your own tunnel with either hail netting or shade cloth, thus keeping out bigger pests, like porcupines and duiker, and also protecting the young vegetables from hail.



Teach others. Consider running a short half-day workshop so that other people in the community can learn from you and set up their own veggie gardens.



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For **environmental resources** to support better lifestyle choices, contact WESSA Share-Net, 033-330 3931 ext 2124 or 2144; e-mail us at sharenet@wessa.co.za or visit our website www.wessa.org.za

Main funding agent of the WESSA 'Stepping Up to Sustainability' project.

Did you know?

Vitamin C is not just in citrus fruits, but is also found in high concentrations in broccoli, sweet potatoes, and red, green or yellow peppers

Did you know?

Cucumber has been used as a beauty boost for centuries to help with puffy eyes. Cucumber contains natural antioxidants and contains large amounts of water, so it is very moisturizing.

Practice the
lifestyle choices
we all have to make!!