

SPLASH



JUNE 14-27, 2015

Plus SECRETS
TO SUCCESS
FROM LOCAL DADS
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& MORE**

FATHER'S
DAY ISSUE

starring

Brad
Paisley

THE MUSICIAN STOPS
THROUGH CHICAGO
TO HEADLINE THE
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LAKESHAKE

PARTIES

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HISTORY
MUSEUM'S
MAKING
HISTORY
AWARDS**

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LIFE'S
BENEFIT**

& MORE

Garden variety

Tips for growing the perfect green space **BY ASHLEY DEVICK**

AS A FOOD SOURCE

John DeWald, owner of Serosun Farms (45W489 Berner, Hampshire; Serosunfarms.com) — a sustainable community based in Kane County — says creating an edible vegetable garden simply requires a little patience.

"Sometimes people who try too hard have a lot of problems, and overdo it by over-watering or over-handling [the plants]," DeWald says. To be successful, he adds, start with the soil, which is "more of a living organism than just a pile of dirt." Using a mineral enriched soil will help improve the quality of the garden over time. When it's time to plant, use already flowering veggies like tomatoes and peppers to get a head start (or start growing them inside from seeds during the winter months).

With a little water and sunlight, you'll have fantastic food that is, according to DeWald, better than what you'd buy at the grocery store.

"You usually end up with a lot more than you can use, so share and trade," he says. "Sometimes it creates a little bit of community through that common interest."



5 VEGGIES TO GIVE YOUR GARDEN COLOR AND FLAVOR

- 1. Beets:** Start them from a seed. "Even people who don't like beets may be surprised at how good they taste fresh from the garden," DeWald says. Plus you get beet greens, which are great for salads or smoothies.
- 2. Swiss chard:** These tasty greens — which add lots of color to the garden — should be started from seeds.
- 3. Potatoes:** No need for seeds — start planting from chunks of uncooked potato.
- 4. Beans:** Pick your favorite bean — any variety — and start them as seeds.
- 5. Radishes:** These also work great from a seed and are very easy to grow.

AS AN ENTERTAINING SPACE

We challenge you to think about the outdoor space as an extension of your living space," says Frank Mariani, owner and CEO of Mariani Landscape (300 Rockland, Lake Bluff; Marianilandscap.com). Combine landscaping with hardscaping — non-plant items like stone walls, wooden decks, fountains and the like — to create usable entertainment space in your garden. "The planting is defined by the spaces you create with the hardscape." Use plants that flower from early spring to late fall, and add pine and other shrubbery to keep the garden looking lively even in the dismal months.

For cool summer evenings, "an outdoor fireplace is absolute heaven," Mariani says. Fire pits are relatively low maintenance when using gas logs — they look authentic but don't spew ashes, making them safer. If a fire pit is not an option, bring in a heat lamp to extend the use of your outdoor space.



6 VARIETALS TO PLANT AND ENJOY RIGHT NOW

- 1. Bridalwreath spirea**
- 2. Siberian squill**
- 3. Elizabeth magnolia**
- 4. Summer snowflake**
- 5. Eastern redbud**
- 6. Virginia bluebell**