

USU Extension Releases “A Beginner’s Guide to Growing Mushrooms at Home”

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Need a winter gardening idea? Utah State University Extension recently published a comprehensive guide to help beginners learn to grow gourmet mushrooms. “A Beginner’s Guide to Growing Mushrooms at Home” is a how-to introduction to fungi cultivation, providing simple steps and practical advice.

The guide was created by College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences faculty members Paul Grossl, Melanie Stock, and graduate student Jacob Hawkes.

“Mushrooms offer a wealth of health benefits, including immune system support, brain health, and protection against some types of cancer,” says Grossl.

The guide highlights popular varieties such as white button, cremini, portobello, oyster, shiitake, pioppino, and lion’s mane mushrooms. Each type offers unique flavors and health-boosting compounds, making them ideal for personal cultivation.

The guide walks growers through mushroom cultivation, from selecting the right species to when and how to harvest them. Topics covered include:

1. Understanding fungi. Information is provided about the life cycle of mushrooms and the critical role of the mycelium network in producing fruiting bodies.

2. Preparing a sterile workspace. The guide emphasizes setting up a clean, sterile work environment to prevent mold contamination.
3. Selecting and sterilizing substrate. Home growers are guided in preparing different substrates, such as straw, wood pellets, and coco coir, which provide the nutrients fungi need to thrive.
4. Spawn preparation and inoculation. The guide provides step-by-step instructions on inoculating grains with fungal spores and monitoring mycelium’s growth.
5. Fruiting conditions and harvesting. Environmental conditions necessary for fruiting, including optimal temperature, humidity, and light, are outlined, as well as tips for optimal harvesting times.

In addition to cultivation tips, Grossl says the guide addresses common challenges, such as mold contamination. It offers solutions to keep mushrooms healthy and growing. It also touches on the legal status of psychedelic mushrooms in the United States, providing an overview of current regulations.

To access the complete guide, visit [“A Beginner’s Guide to Growing Mushrooms at Home.”](#)

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