

# Think Gardening, Think USU Extension

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With the growing season fast approaching, many people are anxious to work in the yard. This can be fun for some, but overwhelming for those new to gardening, concerned about major pest or disease problems or installing a new landscape.

Fortunately for gardeners, Utah State University Extension offers free or low-cost resources to assist in horticulture and many other areas and has offices that serve every county in the state. Additionally, recommendations are research-based and nonbiased.

For someone new to gardening, getting started can be confusing. USU Extension offers help with free, easy-to-follow fact sheets for commonly grown vegetables. The fact sheets include information about when to plant, how to prepare the soil, how to fertilize, harvest times and solutions to common problems. Fact sheets can be found by [clicking here](#).

Another resource on vegetable varieties for the home garden is available [by clicking here](#).

Deciding which fruit tree to plant can be difficult. Mike Pace, USU Extension agent in Box Elder County, home to Utah's famous fruit way, has built a web page with fruit varieties and descriptions that can be helpful to home growers. It is available [by clicking here](#)

During the growing season, it is common to find landscape or garden plants that look unhealthy, but it can be difficult

to determine what is wrong. Local USU Extension offices are available to assist, and USU Extension also has a pest and disease diagnostic lab with scientists who can diagnose plant samples mailed to them. They charge \$7 per sample to cover costs. Click <http://utahpests.usu.edu/uppd/> for information. Another service the pest lab offers is their free, email Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Advisory with updates on how to manage pests and diseases in fruits and vegetables. Their pesticide spray recommendations include lower-risk and organic options. To subscribe, visit <http://utahpests.usu.edu/ipm> and you will receive email updates throughout the growing season. They do not share email addresses.

Soil is one of the most neglected but important considerations when starting a new yard or garden. Soil testing can determine if soil in a particular area is suitable for growing crops and landscape plants. Testing is inexpensive and useful in identifying or eliminating soil as the factor in an area where plants consistently struggle. The USU Analytical Laboratory can test soil for such things as nutrient levels, soil texture, salinity and pH. Visit the website at: [www.usual.usu.edu](http://www.usual.usu.edu). The form for soil testing can be downloaded [here](#). The routine test can be very beneficial for homeowners and hobby gardeners.

Another common concern many gardeners have is selecting the right trees for their landscape. An online, interactive program is available at [www.treebrowser.org](http://www.treebrowser.org). The program allows users to list their desired characteristics, and a list of compatible trees with pictures is then generated.

USU Extension also offers information in many other areas including food preservation, finances and youth development. Visit [extension.usu.edu](http://extension.usu.edu) for further information.