

EDIBLE FOREST GARDEN PLANT GUIDE

*Note that not all plants will be found at all of the gardens.

(Most are found at Delki Dozzi, by far the largest of Sudbury's edible forest gardens.)



Apple (*Malus pumila*): The varieties planted in the food forest were developed at the University of Saskatchewan and are hardy to -40C. The seven apple trees in the eastern section of the food forest were planted by the Delki Dozzi Community Garden between 2012-14. Two more were planted in the western section in 2017 and 2018.



Anise Hyssop:(*Agastache foeniculum*): is a native plant with leaves and flowers that smell and taste like licorice and attract bees.



Asparagus (*Asparagus officinalis*): It takes a few years to become established, after which it will produce for decades and can be harvested every second day from early May to early July. Always leave at least one spear, however, which will develop fern-like leaves that will replenish nutrients for the plant later in the season.



Baptisia - Blue False Indigo (*Baptisia australis*) and Yellow Wild Indigo (*Baptisia sphaerocarpa*): These native wildflower species are NOT edible, but were chosen for the food forest because of their ability to "fix" nitrogen (take it from the air and turn it into a useful form), providing a natural fertilizer. These drought tolerant species also attract pollinators.



Bee Balm, also known as wild bergamot (*Monarda didyma*): A native perennial planted mainly for its ability to attract pollinators. A member of the mint family, the flowers and leaves are edible. With a scent reminiscent of Earl Grey Tea, Bee balm's blooms are strongly flavoured and best used sparingly.



Black Chokeberry, not to be confused with Chokecherry. (*Photinia melanocarpa* or *Aronia melanocarpa*): A shrub producing dark purple to black berries. Naturally understory plants, they grow well under trees. Resistant to drought, insects, pollution, and disease. Berries are astringent in flavour, but very high in nutritional value and may taste better as a juice than when eaten raw. Best flavour when fully black and ripe.



Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*): NOT edible, these were chosen for their drought tolerance and because they attract pollinators



Blue Vervain (*Verbena hastata*): The flowers and leaves of this native wildflower are edible and have been used traditionally for a number of medicinal purposes. Our main reason for planting it in the food forest is to attract bees and other pollinators.



Buffaloberry (*Shepherdia canadensis*): This small native tree was chosen for the food forest because it is drought tolerant, winter hardy and fixes nitrogen, meaning it helps build healthy soils. The berries are very nutritious, being especially high in vitamin C and also lycopene (an anti-oxidant). The berries are very sour and astringent, but after exposure to frost, the taste improves as the sugar content rises. The seed is easily chewed and consumed with the fruit.



Butterflyweed, also known as Butterfly Milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*): Butterfly weed is *not* edible and may even be toxic if consumed in large quantities, but is less toxic than common milkweed and spreads less aggressively. We chose to plant because it attracts beneficial insects and is the only food for the larval stage of the monarch butterfly.



Catnip, also known as Catmint (*Nepeta cataria*): As the name suggests, this plant is appealing to cats, but young leaves are edible and add a mint-like flavour to salads or can be dried for tea.



Cherry (Saskatchewan dwarf sour cherry) (*Prunus x kerrasis*): Cold-hardy varieties bred at the University of Saskatchewan, they produce smaller fruit than what you will find in a grocery store, but are good for fresh eating. Despite the name “sour cherry,” the fruit are actually quite sweet when fully ripe. When the fruit first comes out, it will be a bright red colour and will darken as they ripen over several weeks. They will not be sweet until they have taken on a deep red, nearly black, colour..



Cherry Plum (*Prunus cerasifera*): These are a cross between western sandcherry and Asian plum, bred at the University of Saskatchewan to be cold-hardy. The fruit are approximately 3cm in diameter and can be eaten fresh.



Chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*): The flowers, leaves and roots of this member of the onion family are all edible. The flowers also attract pollinators.



Comfrey (*Symphytum* species): Comfrey grows prolifically and while NOT edible, it is known to have a number of medicinal qualities. Its deep-tapping roots that pull up trace minerals for other plants to take advantage of. Its nutrient-rich leaves are a great compost activator and mulch. The flowers are short-lived, but favoured by pollinators.



Currant - Red and Black (*Ribes rubrum*; *Ribes nigrum*): The fruit is nutritious, especially high in vitamin C, and ranges from tart to sweet. Can be eaten fresh and makes excellent jelly. Red and black currants taste quite different from each other and both have been producing well in our gardens



Daylilies, orange (*Hemerocallis fulva*): Daylilies are not true lilies. Originating in Asia and used there for food for hundreds of years. Thousands of new cultivars have been developed since bringing them to North America, many of which are toxic. We do not recommend eating daylilies before doing more research. We received donations of orange daylilies, because they are attractive and grow and divide easily..



Echinacea or Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*): Although Echinacea is known to have medicinal uses, our main reason for planting it is to attract beneficial insects.



Garlic Chives (*Allium tuberosum*): Look like regular chives, but with a mild garlic flavour. Distinguished not only by their flavour, but also by flat, broader leaves and fragrant white flowers (which attract butterflies). They May be used in salad dressings, soups, as a garnish or mixed into butter or soft cheese. Snip close to the ground to allow new growth. They can be dried or frozen and are said to have health benefits common to other plants in the Allium (onion) family.



Green-headed Coneflower (*Rudbeckia laciniata*): flowering plant in the aster family Asteraceae and native to North America, Also known as cutleaf coneflower, we plant them to attract pollinators.



Good King Henry (*Chenopodium bonus-henricus*): in the same family as spinach, all parts of the plant are edible. Raw leaves are bitter and contain oxalic acid, so should be eaten in moderation. Cooking destroys the oxalic acid. Shoots can be harvested and prepared like asparagus (cut when about 12 cm). Seed may be eaten, but needs to be soaked overnight and rinsed to remove the saponins much like its relative, quinoa. Produces well in the shade, making it a good ground cover plant.



Gooseberry (*Ribes hirtellum*): Wild gooseberry is a shrub native to Northern Ontario that grows to approximately 1 metre tall. The fruit, which matures in a summer, may be green to purplish-black. Ranging from tart to sweet, the fruit is high in vitamin C and good for juice and smoothies.



Haskap (*Lonicera caerulea*): Relatively new as an agricultural crop in North America, they are native to the boreal forest and have been widely used in Japan for hundreds of years. We plant are cold-hardy varieties developed at the University of Saskatchewan. The ripe fruit has a unique flavour, are high in antioxidants and are resistant to most diseases and pests. The fruit will turn blue on the outside in early June, but are not ripe until a few weeks later, when they are purple (not green) on the inside.



High bush cranberry (*Viburnum trilobum*): This native shrub is not a true cranberry but produces bright red fruit, about the size of a cranberry, with a similar flavour. The shrubs planted at Delki Dozzi in 2017 have not done well and likely require wetter conditions, so we have not planted any in the other gardens.



Hosta (*Hosta species*): A member of the asparagus family, hostas are mostly known in North America as ornamental plants. There are a huge number of species, some better for eating than others. In Japan, the young leaves of *Hosta montana* are popular as a vegetable known as urui. Fresh leaves and stems are best harvested while young and tender. Hostas will readily re-grow their leaves after being chopped down to the base.



Lance-leaved Coreopsis (*Coreopsis lanceolata*): Native wildflower known to attract chosen to attract pollinators and beneficial insects.



Lupine, perennial (*Lupinus perennis*): Lupines are NOT edible but were chosen because of their ability to enhance soil fertility by “fixing” nitrogen from the atmosphere, providing a natural fertilizer for themselves and for other plants. Lupines are also attractive to beneficial insects.



Oregano (*Origanum species*): Oregano has been used as a culinary and medicinal herb for thousands of years, although its medicinal value has been disputed by some since Oil of Oregano became popular in recent decades. There are many species and varieties of oregano. We requested donations of cold-hardy oregano and it has grown prolifically. It may be harvested when the stems are at least 4 inches tall by cutting back up to two-thirds of the plant. The flowers are also edible.



Oxeye or False Sunflower (*Heliopsis helianthoides*): Native to the prairie habitats of central Canada, it grows readily in the Sudbury climate.



Pear (*Pyrus species*): The pear trees at Delki Dozzi were planted in 2013 by members of the Delki Dozzi community garden. Harvesting pears is tricky because they have to ripen off the tree. If left to ripen on the tree, they will develop a mealy texture. Once the skin starts changing colour (they should still be very hard), if ready to harvest they should detach from the tree with a gentle twist. Allow to ripen at room temperature for a few days. Apply gentle pressure on the flesh just below the stem. If it is a little soft, it is ready!



Plum (*Prunus salicina*): Toka and Brookgold varieties were planted at Delki Dozzi in 2017, but as of 2021, the trees have not produced fruit.



Prairie Coneflower (*Ratibida columnifera*): A member of the daisy family (Asteraceae), this native wildflower is NOT edible, but was chosen for the food forest mainly to attract pollinators. First Nations peoples used it for a number of medicinal purposes and an orange-yellow dye was made from boiled flowers.



Prairie Smoke (*Geum triflorum*): In the rose family, plant is NOT edible, but is used by some people medicinally. The plants spread by rhizomes.



Purple Poppy Mallow (*Callirhoe involucrata*): NOT edible and we planted them at Delki Dozzi before we knew they're not native to Northern Ontario, but they are lovely!



Raspberry (*Rubus species*): We have planted yellow, red and black raspberries were planted in the food forest in 2018. They take a few years to develop and in the summer of 2021 started to have a decent crop at Delki Dozzi, although the black raspberry patch has done better, likely due to fuller sun.



Rhubarb (*Rheum rhabarbarum*): The leaves are poisonous, but the stalks are edible. Rhubarb is easy to grow from divisions of established plants, so we are able to obtain donations from members of the community and now produce our own divisions for new gardens. When picking, leave about one-third of the stalks to allow the plant to regenerate. Once established, this will allow it to be picked from late May throughout the summer.



Saskatoon berry, also known as Serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*): About the size of a blueberry, this is a more common shrub in the western provinces than in Ontario, but is native to the Sudbury area. The berries are rich in nutrients.



Sea Buckthorn (*Hippophae rhamnoides*): Used for centuries in both Europe and Asia as food and for its pharmaceutical properties, the berry juice is a common drink there, being very high in protein, vitamins C and E, and organic acids. The plant is able to fix atmospheric nitrogen. It has been growing fast and spreading quite aggressively since we planted it at Delki Dozzi in 2017, so we have not added it to any of the other gardens and we remove many suckers each year.



Showy Tick Trefoil (*Desmodium canadense*): Native wildflower in the legume family, which adds useful nitrogen to the soil by “fixing” it from the air and attracts pollinators.



Silver Sage, also known as Prairie Sage (*Artemesia ludoviciana*): Silver Sage is an aromatic plant and is a great drought tolerant ground cover for dry landscapes. It has grown prolifically in the Delki Dozzi garden since we planted it in 2017, so we often share with other gardens.



Strawberry, everbearing/day-neutral (*Fragaria species*): These have a much longer growing season than the common June-bearing type. Although they produce only a moderate June crop, they take a short break in summer then continue to produce from August until hard frost. They are easily propagated and we have added plants to other gardens from our original plants at Delki Dozzi.



Sunchoke, also known as Jerusalem Artichoke (*Helianthus tuberosus*): A native edible tuber that provides food for pollinators late in the season. We planted in separate patches because of their tendency to spread rapidly and so tubers can be harvested without disturbing other plants. With a slightly sweet flavour and a starchy texture somewhat like potatoes, a number of sources warn to eat them sparingly at first as they are difficult for many people to digest and may cause stomach upset.



Sweet Cicely (*Myrrhis odorata*): All parts of this plant are edible – leaves, seeds, roots, and flowers – and have a sweet, licorice flavour. The leaves can be cooked with tart fruits, such as rhubarb, to reduce the amount of sugar needed. Leaves can also be added to soups, omelettes and custards, or used fresh in salads.



Thyme (*Thymus serpyllum*) Mother-of-thyme (also known as Creeping Thyme) was planted as a ground cover that attracts pollinators. The leaves and flowers are edible, but with a different flavour than the thyme that is usually purchased commercially (and sometimes grown as an annual in our climate zone).



White Clover, also known as Dutch clover (*Trifolium repens*): White clover seed is spread between plants throughout the gardens to act as a groundcover that can compete with grass. Because it is able to fix nitrogen, we “chop and drop” regularly, to enrich the soil for other plants.



Wild Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*): This native wildflower is NOT edible. It was included in the food forest for its ability to attract beneficial species, because it grows easily in our climate and is drought tolerant.



Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*): Drought-tolerant and used by many people for medicinal purposes, Yarrow is considered an especially useful companion plant, attracting beneficial insects and repelling some pests. It attracts predatory wasps, which drink the nectar and then use insect pests as food for their larvae. Similarly, it attracts ladybirds and hoverflies.

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