

It's that time of year when the vegetable gardens are worn and withered, and it's time to let them go. Compost the remains and plan to put the garden to rest for the winter, or make plans for a fall crop. Either way, it means going out in the heat to do some manual labor. I prefer morning stints outdoors because I can avoid the pesky mosquitoes.

Some vegetables to consider for August planting are beans, broccoli, cauliflower, corn, cucumbers, tomatoes and squash. Check the UF/IFAS document, Florida Vegetable Gardening, at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh021> for information on fall vegetable selections for North Florida.

While you're at it, check out the "minor" vegetable selections at http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_hs_minor_vegetables

Floridians have the opportunity to grow many unusual and lesser-known vegetable varieties because of the favorable climate. If you have a passion for home gardening, you probably have already experimented with a "minor" vegetable or two.

Comfrey is a hardy perennial that grows 3 to 4 feet tall, has large leaves, and forms an attractive clump. The drooping bell-shaped flowers are white, purple, or pale yellow. This plant tolerates the cold winter and only needs to be cut back in February to allow a new flush of growth. Use comfrey as a cooking green, an herb, or a pretty ornamental.

Salsify, or oyster plant, is a vegetable with an oyster flavored edible root. Salsify is grown similarly to carrots or parsnips. They need a long season and are usually grown from October through March. The light brown roots of salsify are used in soups, stews, and in creamed dishes. They can be cut into strips and boiled, and then fried or mashed.

Would you like some real, down to earth answers to your questions about vegetable gardening in North Florida? The UF/IFAS Extension Agents and Master Gardeners are planning a "Home Vegetable Gardening Mini-Series" to help you get your fall garden off to a great start.

The sessions will be held on September 9th, 14th, and 16th from 6:00 to 7:30 pm. Each session will address different topics. Join us on August 26th at 1pm and learn how to attract butterflies and keep them around. The classes are free, but space is limited, so call 752-5384 to reserve your seat.

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