

## Start Your Own Victory Garden

What is the best shopping tip? Don't shop--at least not for everything. Why buy what you can grow?

You don't need a huge backyard to produce a significant amount of food. You can grow some of your own produce in containers on front porches, balconies and windowsills. Here in our Santa Ynez Valley some of us have enough land to have a substantial garden. Raising your own food isn't just good for the environment, it's good for you and your wallet.

Square foot gardening gained popularity with the home farming movement in the 1970s and has recently undergone a huge resurgence. It is easy and yields beautiful results. Gardens are built in a raised bed or box divided into a grid. Because plants are grown so close together, these gardens maximize production while using a minimal amount of space. In theory, each square should contain a different type of plant. Be creative and feel free to plant whatever you like. Grow in season, show a little love and your garden will thrive.

You will probably not grow every kind of vegetable that you would like to consume so for the ones that you don't grow--visit our local Farmers Market.

The choices you make in what you consume and how you consume it do matter. You don't have to obsess over every purchase--just be aware of the difference your shopping power can make.