

# Winter Garden

by Kathy Fitzpatrick

Now that my outdoor garden has been put to bed for winter it's time to start gardening inside. One of the easiest ways to grow greens is to plant sprouted garlic cloves, the rooted ends of green onions and the tops of carrots. To do this simply press them into a container filled with soil, next add a bit of water and watch them take root and grow! All of them make delicious additions to soups, salads and sandwiches. What i love best about this "garden" is it's all free, it's all things we'd normally toss into the compost pile. Instead nature allows us to take delight in reusing in a way that will delight our taste buds while adding a splash of green to our interior landscape.

Another way to add loads of nutrition and live enzymes to your diet is by growing sprouts. If all you've ever eaten are the store bought variety you're in for a HUGE surprise! Homegrown sprouts actually taste good and the reason for the transformation? Because they're fresh, they haven't traveled hundreds of miles to get to your doorstep. Best of all you can grow them on your

kitchen counter. While there are all kinds of new devices to grow them in my preference is using a mason jar or any other recycled jar. You will need to cover the jar using a lid with a screen from the health food store or you can use mesh or cheese cloth and a rubber band. After washing off the seeds, fill the jar with the seeds of your choice. Large seeds and beans shouldn't fill up more than 1/8 or a 1/4 of the jar, while small seeds should just cover the bottom. Add enough filtered or spring water to fill the jar to the half full. Cover the mouth of the jar and allow to soak 5-6 hours [or overnight]. The next morning pour the water off the seeds and rinse well. Put the jar under the faucet and let the water overflow. Don't worry if the water is foamy, it's removing the waste created by the sprouts. You will need to make sure your sprouting jar is kept at an angle so the seeds can continue to drain after being rinsed. Your sprouts require good circulation so be sure they aren't covering the mouth of the jar. Rinse and drain several times a day until they have sprouted and grown to your liking. This will vary depending on the type of seed you have selected to sprout.

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**Think small. Planting tiny seeds in the small space given you. Can change the whole world or, At the very least, your view of it.**

- Linus Mundy

If you want to grow something really fantastic try your hand at sunflower greens and buckwheat lettuce. They're absolutely DELICIOUS! Before you begin you will need to wash them. Next it's time to soak the seeds over night in a mason jar [or at least 12 hours]. The next morning rinse, then drain and cover with mesh or cheese cloth, at an angle, for another 12 hours. While they're sprouting fill a tray [black trays from a greenhouse work well] with a one inch layer of soil. Be sure to make a trench all the way around

so catch any extra water. Once the seeds are done sprouting pour them over the soil,

spreading them out evenly with your hands. Sprinkle with a bit of water, then cover with another tray for three days. At the end of three days, uncover, place in indirect sunlight and watch them grow! It's important not to allow the soil to dry out, so be sure to moisten every day. To add nutrients add a bit of dried kelp to the water. In about a weeks time they will be approximately 5 to 8 inches tall and ready for harvesting. Use a knife to harvest by cutting the base of the plant as close to the soil as you can. If you're going to store them, don't rinse as it will speed up decomposition. They will keep for about 10 days when stored in a glass jar in the refrigerator. Or you can harvest them a little at time and eat them fresh! YUM!

Here's a recipe i created using winter homegrown veggies, it's a "cooked" salad for two. Into each bowl place a small handful of sunflower greens and a handful of buckwheat lettuce. Next throw on some sprouts, [broccoli, radish, fenugreek, mung, etc,] top with snips of onion, garlic and carrot tops. To this add a squirt of hemp oil and bragg's liquid amino's as desired. Let set over night [this is how it cooks] or forget about "cooking" and eat right away! Enjoy!

Need sprouting supplies? Try the [Sprout People](#).

Kathy Fitzpatrick is a writer, activist, intuitive and naturalist who loves to dig in the dirt, eat weeds and grows her own organic herbs and veggies.