

Virginia Zoo Gardens

Virginia Barnyard



Come see the animals in our gardens!



At the Virginia Zoo, old fashioned heirloom varieties stand (climb, sprawl) proudly with their contemporary counterparts.

Tough, drought tolerant, disease resistant, beauties are the only candidates for this practical garden:

- 'Miss Huff's Hardy', lantanas are a feast to the eye and the butterfly.
- 'Disco Belle' hibiscuses perennially flaunt 8" blooms every summer.
- 'Knock Out' roses vie for attention on the root cellar.
- Rosemary and sage provide evergreen foliage as well as great flavor.
- Pansies, violas, kales, and mustards fill the plantings in winter.

From whiskey barrels to hayracks and hanging baskets, the Barnyard plantings rise from ground level. Unable to contain the secrets of our success, here are some hints:

- Line cocoa fiber baskets with a sheet of plastic to reduce evaporation. Be sure to puncture the bottom of the plastic for drainage.
- Blend compost into soil-less potting mixes to improve its nutritional properties.
- Select drought tolerant plants. (Some never recover from a wilt.)
- Use organic fertilizers that feed the plants gradually.
- Mulch the surface of container plantings to stabilize soil temperature and slow evaporation.
- Water thoroughly to saturate the soil when it feels dry to the touch at a 2" depth.
- Remove dead flowers and prune back overzealous plants that outgrow their space.

For the gardener who appreciates fresh, organically grown vegetables, the Virginia Barnyard has a vegetable patch that changes with the seasons. During the summer, look for:

- 'Pennsylvania Butter-flavored' popcorn- Pre-1885 heirloom maintained by the Pennsylvania Dutch
- 'Kentucky Wonder' pole bean- Pre-1864 "snap" bean
- 'Big Early' pepper- Hybrid with long, large bell peppers
- 'Evertender' okra- Spineless variety, remains tender longer
- Egyptian walking onion- Perennial, top-setting
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In winter, look for:

- collards
- mustard
- and other leafy "greens" and root vegetables.

Virginia Barnyard cont.

To savor these flavors at home, here is a Southern recipe for:

DOLLY'S CORN PUDDING

2 cups corn (fresh, frozen, or canned)
1 ½ cups sugar
2 eggs
3 Tbsp. flour
¾ cup milk
½ stick butter

1. Pour corn into casserole dish.
2. Mix flour and sugar.
3. Add to corn.
4. Add beaten eggs and milk.
5. Dot top with butter.
6. Place in 350 degree oven.
7. When the butter melts, stir it in.
8. Cook 35-40 minutes until lightly browned.

Seed Sources:

- Southern Exposure Seed Exchange
- Seed Savers Exchange
- Territorial Seed Company
- Johnny's Selected Seeds, etc.

A Special Thanks to the Norfolk Master Gardener Volunteers who plan, plant, maintain, and teach in the vegetable garden in the Virginia Barnyard.