

How does your garden grow?

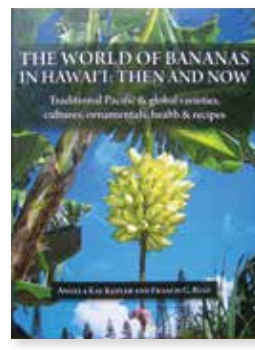
When you live on an island with as many microclimates as Maui's, the secret to growing vegetables has everything to do with location. We asked Dr. Angela Kay Kepler, a consummate Maui gardener, to help us plot the perfect plants for a Maui vegetable garden — no matter where on the island you've set down your roots.



	UPCOUNTRY 2000-4000 FEET	DOWNCOUNTRY WINDWARD 0-1000 FEET	DOWNCOUNTRY LEEWARD 0-400 FEET	COMMENTS
Asparagus	Does well.	Does well; needs lots of weeding.	Spears will be thinner, more water required. Can grow close to the ocean in salty soil.	Grows year-round; needs sandy soil. Cut back once or twice a year and add ample fertilizer. Weed and water frequently.
Beans (bush and pole)	Excellent, except in winter.	Excellent all year; less productive in winter.	Good all year.	White- and purple-flowering varieties are best. Don't plant scarlet below 3,500 feet.
Beets	Excellent, except in winter.	Does well if given new soil with each replanting. Grows all year; slower in winter.	Grows all year. Give new soil with each replanting.	Detroit Dark Red is best. Needs ample water. Root-knot nematodes a problem below 1,000 feet.
Bok choy (tatsoi)	Excellent all year.	Very good, especially in winter.	Try in winter.	
Broccoli	Excellent all year.	Can last up to three years. Rain and clouds in winter slow growth.	Generally too hot; try in winter.	Don't let heads flower or go to seed; will result in fewer edible heads. Fertilize well.
Cabbage	Excellent all year.	A winter crop; plant seeds/seedlings in October.	Not recommended, but if you want to try, plant in winter.	Try Copenhagen Market and Premium Late Flat Dutch varieties.
Carrots	Excellent. Plant in spring; too cold in winter.	Grows all year; needs new plot each time. Try Nantes Half-long, Pot o Gold Hybrid and Scarlet Nantes.	Not recommended.	Keep moist by mulching with a fine layer of grass clippings. Slow-growing. Prefers light, rich and sandy soils. Dig deep and aerate well before planting seeds.
Celery	Very good all year.	Good all year. Needs some shade.	May be good in shade. Can be bitter.	Keep moist. Cut central, youngest stalks for use.
Chayote squash	Thrives all year.	Not recommended.	Not recommended.	Mild succulent squash, delicious leaves. Harvest young.
Collard greens	Excellent all year.	Wonderful. Provide some shade.	Worth a try; give some shade.	Replant every year. Stalks curl around; give them space.
Corn, sweet	Excellent all year except winter.	Very good, except in winter.	Very good; better in winter here than in windward areas.	Corn caterpillars may infest plants; remove old stalks from property. Fertilize heavily when corn is knee-high; mulch around stalks.

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Cucumbers	More luck here than elsewhere, except in winter.	Worth trying.	Fewer fruit flies and fungi here. Worth a try.	Problems with fruit flies and leaf fungi (powdery mildew). Choose thick-skinned varieties like Japanese Climbing.
Daikon (winter radish)	Excellent all year	Taste and texture inferior to Upcountry.	Not recommended.	Needs cold climate for best taste.
Eggplant	Excellent, except in winter.	Excellent all year.	Excellent all year.	Somewhat drought-resistant. Recommend Black Beauty and heirloom Listada de Gandia varieties.
Kale	Excellent all year.	Excellent all year. May last two to three years with care.	Climate is a bit hot, but worth a try.	Try lacinato, an Italian kale with dark blue-green, tasty leaves. Dwarf Blue Scotch and Red Russian also good.
Lettuce	Excellent, except in summer.	Excellent, except in summer. Pick heat-tolerant varieties.	Plant leaf variety in cool months. When it's hot, plant in light shade.	Recommend Mānoa, Black-seeded Simpson, Red Sails and Buttercrunch.
Onions	All types excellent, less so in winter. Only Maui area producing good bulbs.	Green onions excellent all year. Plant every couple of months.	Green onions excellent all year. Plant every couple of months.	For bulb onions (Upcountry), let top leaves die back and fold over before harvesting.
Soybeans	All types excellent all year.	All types excellent all year.	Try all year; summers may be too hot.	
Spinach	All types excellent all year.	Not worth the effort.	Not worth the effort.	
Squash	Winter squash like butternut good, except in winter. Zucchini and summer squash better here than downcountry.	Kabocha is delicious, productive all year. Vines may last three years. Other types less productive; forget zucchini and summer squash.	Fewer fruit flies here, which means better luck with squash.	All members of the squash/cucumber family do poorly because of fruit flies. If you grow zucchini, try Embassy Hybrid from Park Seed.
Sweet potatoes	Good all year. Keep dry and grow in fairly poor soil.	Not worth the effort.	Excellent all year.	Purple-fleshed Okinawan/Moloka'i sweet potato is delicious. Plant from cuttings, never from tubers; a larval insect burrows into the flesh. Replant in a new location each time because of this insect.
Swiss chard	Very good all year, less so in summer.	Very good all year, excellent in cooler months.	Too hot in summer. Good in winter.	Keep moist. Don't overfertilize; roots burn easily.
Tomatoes	Very good all year, except winter.	Very good all year, except winter.	Very good all year. Fewer fruit flies; try medium-sized varieties like Early Girl.	Fruit flies ruin large varieties like Big Boy or Beefsteak. Most reliable: cherry or patio tomatoes, e.g. Large Red Cherry, Supersweet 100, Tommy Toe, Roma usually OK.



A naturalist, organic farmer and award-winning author, Dr. Angela Kay Kepler also is the world's leading authority on Hawaiian and Eastern Pacific bananas. She and husband Frank Rust coauthored the definitive book on the subject: *The World of Bananas in Hawaii: Then and Now* (2011, University of Hawai'i Press). Its 612 pages and 1,900 color illustrations catalog virtually every edible and inedible banana in Hawai'i, including spectacular ornamentals and the little-known *ma'i hāpai*, or "pregnant" banana, whose fruit grows inside the plant's trunk. The book also lends insight into Hawaiian culture, examining traditional foods, chants, legends, crafts and even how parts of the banana plant were used to weave everyday clothing. A recipe chapter features all manner of dishes, from banana mayonnaise to meat-plantain casserole and everything in between. This "banana bible" won the 2012 Ka Palapala Po'okela Award for excellence in natural science. It's available for purchase at uhpress.hawaii.edu. (\$80).