

Is Organic Gardening Frugal?

Let's think back to our grandparents' gardens, whether they were full of geraniums or rows of carrots or beans; my guess is all of their gardens were grown organically. I can't remember any of them mixing up chemicals to add to their potted plants or their garden beds...but I do remember huge blossoms and giant veggies. Hmmm, what was their secret?

Only in the last couple of decades have we been pressed to purchase chemicals for our gardens. If we return to gardening practices of old (using natural products as fertilizer and practicing companion planting to ward off bugs and critters), we will be gardening organically. When you get down to basics, the natural way will always save you time and money.

The rules of organic gardening are few and they're quite simple:

- Start with good soil. Invest your money here in this category, enriching your soil every year if possible. Remember, earth worms make the best soil of all & they are FREE. Most county extension offices will do (or send out kits) to evaluate soil samples. This way, you will know what your particular garden is lacking and just what you need to add to make it healthy.
- Healthy soil makes for healthy plant roots. Roots like aerated soil, full of nutrients and water. Those little worms can accomplish most of this too! Mulching will insure that your plants don't have to compete with weeds for the water, as well as cutting down on the amount of watering you need to do. Mulch can be newsprint, old carpet pieces, straw, grass clippings or shredded tree limbs and plant debris that had been growing on your own property.
- Healthy roots make for healthy plants and healthy plants resist drought, disease & pests, so you won't need to

buy sprays, dusts and other chemicals for your garden.

When you look at it from this perspective, the simplicity and lack of needing all the chemical treatments that cost so much makes organic gardening an extremely frugal way to garden.