

What is Edible Landscaping?

Edible landscaping, simply put, replaces plants that are strictly ornamental with plants that produce food, allowing you to create a multi-functional landscape providing returns (fruits, berries, etc.) on your investment of water, fertilizer, and time. And let's face it, adding a plant to the landscape that only offers one season of interest or one function in the garden is a luxury on today's smaller home lots.

Here are some of the benefits:

- * **Improved Taste and Nutrition:** Nutrients and flavor in most plants are highest immediately after harvest. What could be better for you than fruit fresh off the bush or vine?
- * **Increased Food Security:** An edible landscape reduces your dependence on foreign food sources which have unknown production systems.
- * **Reduced Food Costs/Increased Availability:** Certain foods, such as pomegranates and figs, are more economical to grow at home than to purchase. And some fruits are simply unavailable in the traditional grocery store produce section, such as bush cherries, currants or gooseberries.
- * **Convenience:** Having fruits right outside the door will encourage you to add fresher, healthier foods to your diet—a terrific inducement for your children to enjoy them.
- * **Fun and Exercise:** Growing your own crops is rewarding and fun! The exercise you get in the process can help you stay fit.
- * **Sustainability:** Consuming locally grown produce can be an important part of reducing energy inputs and protecting our environment.



Edibles in the Landscape

Here's how you can incorporate these beautiful, healthful, delicious specialty fruits into your landscape:

Think of the functions plants in your landscape fulfill: ornamental trees, shrubs in borders, hedges, screens, ground-covers, vines on trellises. All of these niches can be filled by one or more of our edible alternatives.

- * **Hedges, screens and shrub borders:** Bush Cherries can be grown as a low (four foot) hedge. Not only will they give you fruit in the fall, but beautiful spring flowers, and lovely fall color. They can also be planted singly in an existing shrub border as an accent plant. Currants and Gooseberries can also be utilized as a taller hedge or screen.
- * **Patio Plantings:** Patio plantings are very fashionable now. Add some Mediterranean flare to your outside "rooms" with the addition of containerized figs. Oh, the antipasto possibilities right from your own trees!
- * **Ornamental Trees:** Nothing could be more beautiful than a Pomegranate in your yard.. The flowers are exotic and the fruit is strikingly beautiful and delicious. Much more exciting than the traditional Maple!
- * **Trellises:** There is nothing more refreshing on a warm summer day than to sit under an arbor in the dappled shade of a well-grown vine, and in today's smaller lots we are all looking for additional growing space. Think vertically! Kiwi vines are wonderful in this application. Kiwi fruit is expensive in the grocery store, but not if you grow them in your own yard.

So now go outside your door. Pluck a Pomegranate or a fig. Harvest your bush cherries, currants and gooseberries. When you are the farmer you can be assured they are pesticide free and organically grown. Who knew something so beautiful could be so good for you? Here's to your health!



Specialty
Fruits

www.virginiaberryfarm.com

sales@virginiaberryfarm.com

804-448-4430

Figs ~ Self-fertile:

Figs are ideal edible landscaping plants! They are productive with or without heavy pruning. In colder climates provide frost protection: plant against a wall which provides heat from radiation, erect a frame to cover the plant in winter, or grow in a tub that can be brought into a warmer location. If given full sun, and properly watered, these plants will provide you with years of nutritious goodness.

Fig fruit has a short shelf life so it is best enjoyed fresh from the tree. They must be allowed to ripen on the tree since they will not ripen, if picked when immature.

Figs are a rich source of potassium, calcium, iron, magnesium and vitamin B6.

- * **Brown Turkey** bears a large, rich purplish-brown fruit with delicious strawberry-pink flesh mid-season. Zones 7-10.
- * **Celeste**, known as the “sugar fir,” produces medium-sized fruit with a light brown to violet skin and strawberry-pink flesh early in the season. One of the best varieties for drying and preserves. Zones 7-10
- * **Chicago Hardy**, as the name implies, is one of the most prolific figs to grow in cold areas of the northern U.S. The fall fruits are borne on the new canes that grow during the summer. A plant with four new stems can produce up to 150 purplish-brown figs of excellent flavor. Zones 6-10.
- * **LSU Purple** bears small purple to burgundy figs of excellent flavor and high sugar content. Zones 7-10.



Bush Cherries ~ Self-fertile:

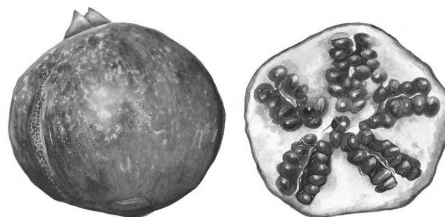
Bush Cherry (*Prunus jacquemontii* x *japonica*) resembles flowering almond in flower and form. The delicate white flowers are followed in fall by red “pie” cherries that are not bothered by birds, and in the fall the foliage gives a fiery display. Disease and pest resistant, this is a “no spray” fruit. Space three to four feet apart in well-drained soil and make sure they get at least six hours of sunlight per day for best fruiting. Matures 4 feet. Zones 3-8.

Arctic Kiwi:

Kiwis are cultivated as ornamentals and for their edible fruit. They climb by twining. Most species are quite vigorous and capable of growing to a large size, so trellises need to be provided. Plants are long-lived, having been known to produce fruit for at least sixty years. The fruit can contain several times as much vitamin C, ounce for ounce, as citrus fruits. Of the **Hardy Kiwis** we offer both **male and female** vines. Only female plants will produce fruit, but male vines are needed for pollination. One male vine will pollinate up to five females. We also offer a selection called ‘**Issai**’ that produces both female and male flowers, and will self-pollinate. It bears long fruit, to 1.75 inches in length, often the first year after planting. Zones 4-9.

Pomegranate ‘Wonderful’:

Pomegranate ‘Wonderful’ is the oldest of the commercial cultivars. The fruit is very large, dark purple-red, with a medium-thick rind and deep-red, juicy, winey pulp. The fruit will last for weeks without refrigeration and does not discolor or bruise easily. Self-fertile. Matures 10-15 feet. Zones 7-9.



Currants ~ Self-fertile:

The currant originated in Tibet and has been cultivated in Europe for 400 years. All varieties of currants are rich in bioflavonoids that are thought to boost the antioxidant effect of vitamin C. Black currants in particular are renowned for their high vitamin C content (four times that of oranges) and they have been shown to have twice the potassium of bananas. According to a 2006 Tufts University study the antioxidants found in black currants protect the brain and have been shown to thwart Alzheimer’s disease.

- * **Consort/Ben Sarek** are extremely productive, self-fertile varieties of currants that ripen early to mid-season. The **black** fruits have a strong flavor, are medium in size, and borne in clusters. The fruit is wonderful in jellies, jams, and sauces. Their soft, rich green leaves turn bright orange, yellow, or red in the fall. Matures 6 feet. Zones 3-8.
- * **Red Lake** produces clusters of large, **red**, late-ripening berries that possess a mild flavor. Hardy and vigorous, it is considered by many to be the best red currant variety. This glossy green-leaved plant is suitable for hedging and is highly ornamental. Red Lake provides visual appeal and takes up a relatively small growing area. Matures 3-5 feet. Zones 3-8.

Gooseberries ~ Self-fertile:

Gooseberries are an excellent source of vitamin C, and a good source of vitamin A, calcium, iron, and phosphorus.

- * **Houghton** bears small, roundish-oval, light **green-shaded red berries** with juicy flesh. Wonderful for canning and wine-making. Zones 2-7.
- * **Invicta** bears huge, sweet, **greenish-yellow berries** - delicious eaten fresh, or in pies and preserves. Yields prolifically. Mid-season. Matures 3-5 feet. Zones 2-7.
- * **Pixwell** bears **green berries** that ripen to pale pink - soft, juicy, and high in sugar. Fruits hang in clusters on long, slender stems one inch below the branches and small thorns making them easy to harvest. Good choice as an edible ornamental. Early season. Matures 4-5 feet. Zones 2-7.