



Lake Merritt Trials Garden, Oakland, California
Vegetable Trial Results
The Master Gardeners Recommend...

Spring/Summer Garden

Tomatoes

CHERRY TOMATOES:

- ✓ **Sungold:** medium, orange cherry, great flavor, excellent yield, disease resistant
- ✓ **Sweet Million:** small, red cherry, good flavor, good yield, disease resistant

STANDARD TOMATOES:

- ✓ **Early Girl:** medium, red, great flavor, excellent yield, disease resistant
- ✓ **Stupice:** small, red, sweet flavor, excellent yield, disease resistant

Tomatoes were started from seed in early March and transplanted to the Trials Garden in mid-April. Generally, cherry tomatoes and short-season varieties that don't require a lot of heat perform best in our area.

Summer squash

- ✓ **Trombetta:** excellent flavor, huge yield, disease resistant

Trombetta squash (also called Trombocino) is an Italian climbing variety. It produces firm-textured, light-green, 12- to 15-inch fruit that are about ½ to ¾ inches in diameter for most of their length but are slightly bulbous at their non-stem end. The squash remains firm upon cooking and has a delicate artichoke-like flavor.

Green beans

- ✓ **Romano pole bean:** excellent flavor, great yield

We grew Blue Lake and Romano beans, both the pole and bush forms, for several summers. Blue Lake is a straight, round-podded, dark green snap bean with smooth, 6- to 7-inch pods. Romano beans (also known as Italian string beans) are broad, flat-podded green snap beans with 5- to 6-inch pods. The Romano pole bean greatly outperformed the Blue Lake in both yield and flavor.

Note: Bush beans produce most of their crop over a short period of time (great if you have a big family or want to can). Pole beans produce smaller daily yields but will continue producing for a longer period of time than bush beans as long as the beans are picked regularly and not allowed to mature. Pole beans will need a trellis or other support on which to climb and are particularly well-suited for small gardens where space may be limited.

Eggplant

- ✓ **Nadia:** excellent yield, disease resistant

Eggplant can be challenging to grow in western Alameda County because it needs heat and because it is susceptible to verticillium wilt. Nadia seemed appropriate for our local conditions because it was developed for cool climates and to be resistant to wilt. Five plants produced several dozen small, oval eggplants with little evidence of wilt.

Peppers

HOT PEPPERS:

- ✓ **Gusto Green:** medium hot green pepper
- ✓ **Anaheim:** mild hot green or red pepper

SWEET PEPPERS:

- ✓ **Valencia:** sweet orange bell pepper
- ✓ **Admiral Bell:** sweet yellow bell pepper

In 2011, we grew 19 varieties of peppers, from sweet to hot, to see which did best in our climate. Contrary to popular belief, you CAN grow peppers in our maritime climate, but you will need to start the plants from seed indoors to get a jump on summer, so that when the heat of summer hits, the plants will spring into action and set fruit.



Lake Merritt Trials Garden, Oakland, California
Vegetable Trial Results
The Master Gardeners Recommend...

Fall/Winter Garden

Spinach

- ✓ **Tyee F-1:** good flavor, great yield, disease resistant
- ✓ **Oriental Giant:** wonderful flavor, good yield, beautiful plant
- ✓ **Baby Leaf Catalina:** sweet flavor, reasonable yield

If you're looking for a cool season crop to grow during the winter months, spinach is a good option. We planted six varieties in early October and had our first harvest in mid-November. The spinach was productive through February.

