

Edible Plants for the Southern New England Landscape

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Ornamental Edibles:

- Ornamental Pepper (some are too hot to eat)
- Cauliflower - orange ('Cheddar') and purple ('Graffiti')
- Tuscan Kale aka Dinosaur/Lacinato Kale
- Curly Kale (red)
- Lettuce (red/chartreuse) - some frilly, some smooth
- Radicchio (red)
- Red Orach
- Mesclun (young greens) - variety of colors and textures
- Swiss Chard 'Bright Lights'
- Purple Chives - flowers and stems edible
- Garlic Chives - flowers and stems edible
- Onion/Shallot/Scallion (*Allium*) - bulbs and flowers
- Nasturtium - flowers, leaves and stems edible
- 'Gem' Marigold (*Tagetes tenuifolia*)- petals (ray flowers) edible
- Mexican Mint Marigold (*Tagetes lucida*)- flowers and leaves edible
- Calendula - petals (ray flowers) edible
- Borage - leaves and flowers edible
- Violets - young leaves and flowers edible
- Pansy - flowers edible
- Sunflower (annual) - flowers and seeds edible
- Scarlet Runner Bean - bean pods and flowers edible
- Hyacinth Bean - bean pods and flowers edible
- Sweet Potato - leaves, vine tips and tubers edible
- Shiso - red/purple leaves edible
- Sweet William and Pinks (*Dianthus barbatus*, *D. deltoides*) - petals edible
- Scented Geranium - flowers and leaves edible
- Climbing Pea (including Beach Pea) - tendrils and peas edible (Sweet Pea is NOT edible)
- Ox-eye Daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*) - young leaves and unopened buds are edible
- Bachelor Buttons (*Centaurea cyneus*) - edible flowers
- Forget-me-nots (*Myosotis sylvatica*) - edible flowers
- Love-in-a-Mist (*Nigella damascena*) - edible seeds
- Tuberous Begonia (*Begonia tuberosa*) - edible leaves, flowers, stems
- Wax Begonia (*B. cucullata*) - edible leaves, flowers
- Fuschia (*Fuschia x hybrida*) - edible flowers and berries
- Sweet William (*Dianthus barbatus*) and Pinks (*D. plumarias*) - edible flower petals
- Amaranth - edible leaves and seeds
- Safflower (*Carthamus tinctorius*) - edible leaves, seeds and flower petals
- Blue Ethiopian Wheat - edible seeds

Ornamental "Edibles" that are NOT Edible:

- Ornamental Kale
- Ornamental Cabbage
- *Some* Sweet Potato Vine cultivars (esp those with dark foliage)
- Sweet Pea
- Ornamental Millet

Perennial Herbs:

- Thyme (Winter, Creeping)
- Oregano and Marjoram
- Lavender
- Sage - various foliage shades
- Tarragon
- Anise Hyssop
- Lemon Balm
- Salad Burnet
- Winter Savory
- Common Valerian
- Lovage
- Mint

Annual Herbs:

- Parsley
- Basil (various colors) - flowers also edible
- Dill - flowers also edible
- Fennel (several colors)
- Cilantro - flowers also edible
- Chervil
- Lemon Grass
- Epazote
- Papalo
- Stevia
- Summer Savory

Boldly Textured Edible Plants

- Globe Artichoke - bud hearts are edible
- Cucurbits (cucumber, pumpkin, squash, melon, gourd)
- Brassica group (rutabaga, broccoli, kale, cabbage, cauliflower, kohlrabi, horseradish, brussels sprouts, turnip, collard, sea kale)
- Rhubarb
- Sweet Corn
- Okra

Finely Textured Edible Plants:

- Carrot family (carrot, dill, cilantro, fennel, celery, celery root, cumin)
- Chamomile
- Saltwort
- Asparagus
- Love-in-a-Mist (*Nigella damascena*)

Grasslike/Upright Edible Plants:

- Lemongrass
- Onion/Scallion
- Leek
- Chives
- Garlic
- Salsify and Scorzonera
- Sweet Corn
- Amaranth
- Blue Ethiopian Wheat

Edible Fruiting Shrubs/Trees

- Asian varieties of apple, plum, pear, peach, cherry, mulberry, quince, persimmon, currants, blackberries and raspberries
- Native varieties of:
 - Highbush Blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*) and Lowbush Blueberry (*V. angustifolium*)
 - Serviceberry/Juneberry (*Amelanchier* spp)
 - Wild Cherry (*Prunus serotina*, *P. virginiana*) and Wild Plum (*P. americanus*), Beach Plum (*P. maritima*)
 - Common Persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*)
 - Red Mulberry (*Morus rubra*)
 - Hawthorn (*Crataegus* spp)
 - PawPaw (*Asimina triloba*)
 - Blackberry, Raspberry (*Rubus* spp)
 - Currants/Gooseberry (*Ribes* spp)
 - Native Viburnum, including Hobblebush (*Viburnum lantanoides* or *alnifolium*), Nannyberry (*V. lentago*) and Black Haw (*V. prunifolium*)
 - Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*)
 - Huckleberry (*Gaylussacia* spp)
 - Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*)

Edible Twining/Vining Plants:

Annual:

- Pole Beans, Runner Beans
- Peas
- Cucumbers
- Sweet Potato Vine
- Malabar (New Zealand) Spinach
- Tomato
- Tomatillo
- Eggplant (some types)

Perennial:

- Grapes (*Vitis* spp)
- Groundnut (*Apios americana*) - edible beans and tubers
- Hog Peanut (*Amphicarpa bracteata*) - edible underground tubers
- Catbriar and Carrion Flower (*Smilax* spp) - growing tips can be cooked like asparagus

Large Trees with Edible Nuts:

- Shagbark Hickory (*Carya ovata*)
- Pignut (*Carya glabra*)
- Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*)
- American Chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) * (blight-resistant seeds and saplings will be available soon)
- Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*)
- White Oak (*Quercus alba*) - acorns can be boiled and ground into flour

Edibles with a 2-year Harvest Cycle (Biennial)

- Parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*) - roots harvested spring 2nd year
- Garlic (*Allium sativum*) - cloves planted in fall, bulbs harvested following summer. Flower scapes also edible.
- Burdock (*Arctium minus*) - roots harvested 1st year, stems in 2nd year
- Wintercress/Yellow Rocket (*Barbarea*) - leaves and unopened flower bud clusters (2nd year)
- Evening Primrose (*Oenothera biennis*) - roots harvested at end of 1st year, stalks in 2nd year. Flower buds and seeds also edible.

Perennial Food Plants:

- Asparagus - spring spears
- Jerusalem Artichoke (*Helianthus tuberosus*) - tubers
- Rhubarb - (*Rheum x cultorum*) - leaf stems
- Horseradish (*Armoracia rusticana*)- roots
- Ground Cherry (*Physalis* spp) - fruits (some species are annuals), all other plant parts toxic!
- Strawberry (*Fragaria* spp) - fruits and flowers

- Alpine Strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*) - fruits and flowers
- Watercress (*Nasturtium officinale*) - leaves
- Sea Kale (*Crambe maritima*) - shoots, leaves and flower buds
- Dandelion - young leaves, unopened flower buds, flowers, and roots
- Stinging Nettle (*Urtica dioica*) - young foliage
- Pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*) - young spring shoots, all other plant parts toxic!
- Sheep Sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*) - young leaves and seeds are edible

Edible Groundcover Plants:

- Strawberry (*Fragaria* spp)
- Violets (*Viola* spp)
- Sweet Potato (*Ipomoea batatas*)
- Creeping Thyme (*Thymus serpyllum*)
- Roman Chamomile (*Chamaemelum nobile*)
- Sweet William (*Dianthus barbatus*) and Pinks (*D.plumarias*)- flower petals

Edibles for Shade:

- Mushrooms
- Indian Cucumber (*Medeola virginiana*) - roots are edible but harvest very sparingly!
- Solomon's Seal (*Polygonatum commutatum*) - edible roots
- False Solomon's Seal (*Maianthemum racemosum*) - young shoots and fruits are edible
- Canada Mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense*) - small berries are edible but cathartic in large quantity!
- American Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*)- edible roots used for tea and medicine
- Partridgeberry (*Michella repens*) - edible berries
- Wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumens*) - edible fruits and leaves
- Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*) - foliage and stems
- Wild Ramps (*Allium tricoccum*) - leaves
- Ostrich Fern (*Matteuceia struthiopteris*) - emerging fiddleheads are edible in April
- Lowbush Blueberry (*Vaccinium angustifolium*)
- Black Huckleberry (*Gaylussacia baccata*)
- Serviceberry/Juneberry/Shadbush (*Amelanchier* spp)- fruit flavor a cross of cherry and almond
- Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) - dry and crush berries for a peppery seasoning

Aquatic Edibles:

- Arrowhead/Duck Potato (*Sagittaria latifolia*) - tubers are edible
- Bog Cranberry (*Vaccinium macrocarpon*) - berries
- Cat-tails (*Typha latifolia*) - shoots, stalk hearts, immature flower spikes, pollen and rhizomes are all edible
- Fragrant Water Lily (*Nymphaea odorata*) - blossoms and unopened flower buds edible
- Pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*) - young leaves and seeds edible
- Spatterdock (*Nuphar lutea*) - leaves, seeds and flowers edible
- Sweet Flag (*Acorus calamus*) - hearts are edible

- Watercress (*Nasturtium officinale*) - leaves and stems are edible
- Wild Rice (*Zizania palustris*) - seeds are edible (annual)

Plants for Brewing Tea and Other Drinks:

(plus the plant part used)

Annual:

- Chamomile - flowers
- Lemon Verbena (*Aloysia triphylla*)- foliage and flowers

Perennial:

- Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*) - leaves, flowers and roots
- Anise Hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*) - foliage and flowers
- Hyssop (*Hyssopus officinalis*) - foliage
- Catnip (*Nepeta cataria*) - foliage
- American Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) - root
- Bee Balm/Oswego Tea (*Monarda didyma*) - foliage, flowers and roots
- Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*) - foliage
- Mountain Mint (*Pycnanthemum*) - foliage
- Mint (*Mentha* spp) - foliage and flowers
- Sheep Sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*) - foliage
- Wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*) - foliage (berries also edible)
- Sweet Fern (*Comptonia peregrina*) - foliage
- New Jersey Tea (*Ceanothus americanus*) - foliage
- Rose (*Rosa* spp) - flower petals and hips (fruits)
- Sumac (*Rhus glabra*, *R. typhina*) - fruits
- Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) - root bark
- Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) - twigs
- Basswood (*Tilia americana*) - flowers (raw young leaves also edible)
- Black Birch (*Betula lenta*) - peeled twigs

Other Plants with Edible Flowers:

- Kale
- Broccoli
- Mustard
- Basil
- Arugula
- Collard
- Squash
- Okra
- Chervil
- Radish
- Climbing Pea (NOT Sweet Pea)
- Rose
- Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) (flower buds and young pods)

- Day Lily
- Clover
- Chicory
- Salsify
- Lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*)
- Garden Phlox (*Phlox paniculata*)
- Tulip (flower petals)

**MA Invasive Plants that are also Edible: aka Eat All You Want But NEVER Plant it!
(Preferably Yank It)**

- Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) - spring stalks/shoots are edible
- Bishop's Weed (*Aegopodium podagraria*) - edible stems and leaves (**but easily mistaken for highly poisonous Water Hemlock!!!**)
- Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) - flowers, leaves, roots and seeds all edible
- Dames Rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*) - edible flowers
- Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) - edible flowers
- Autumn Olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*) - edible fruits
- Curly Dock (*Rhumex crispus*) - roots and leaves

IMPORTANT: NEVER eat any part of a plant growing wild unless you are 100% certain of its identity and know what parts of the plant are edible. Many plants have parts that are edible and parts that are inedible or toxic! Also, not all edible plants are safe for everybody to consume, and some plant parts should only be eaten in small amounts.