

## The week ahead

TUESDAY

### Healthy Living

**FAT FACTS:** Getting to the bottom of this thing that torments us

WEDNESDAY

### Taste

**BARBECUE TRAIL:** Hill Country hotspots round out a quest for flavor

NEXT WEEK

### Home

**DECORATING ON A BUDGET:** Textile designer uses hand-me-downs and flea market finds in M streets home

## Now on dallasnews.com

### Who serves the best steak?

**GUIDE AND GUIDELIVE.COM** are launching a new dining feature to spotlight the Dallas-Fort Worth area's best restaurants. We're kicking it off with steakhouses, and we want your opinion. What chophouse most



sets your carnivorous heart atwitter? **See our critics' choices, and post your picks and feedback at dallasnews.com/eats, or e-mail dining@dallasnews.com.** We'll publish some of these comments in a future issue of Guide.

## Home

© 2008 The Dallas Morning News dallasnews.com

**Features Editor:** Cathy Barber  
**Home Editor:** Mariana Greene  
**Assistant Editor:** Misty Bailey  
**CONTACT US**  
**Phone:** 214-977-8834  
**E-mail:** home@dallasnews.com  
**Mail:** P.O. Box 655237  
 Dallas, TX 75265  
**Advertising:** 214-977-8000

### CHORES

# Buddy system may help your garden

By **RICK ROSEN**  
 Staff Writer  
 rrosen@dallasnews.com

Companion planting, which means growing certain plants near specific vegetables to repel destructive insects or attract beneficial ones, has great appeal to those who don't use chemicals. But be aware: It's difficult to tell whether the method works.

Many gardeners, especially organic practitioners, swear by companion planting. They note that marigolds have been scientifically shown to deter root-killing nematodes, and that the fragrance of the herb tansy repels moths. The orange color of nasturtium may scare off flying insects.

But was it the basil planted next to the tomatoes that fended off the tomato hornworms, or did the hornworms merely decide to skip your garden this year? Was it the garlic that kept the nematodes away from the squash roots, or were there simply no nematodes around? Outside of conducting controlled scientific experiments, it's hard for the average gardener to know.

"Some of the old-timers swear by some of these things," says Edith Hiett, editor of the newsletter for the Heritage Herb Club in Dallas. She has planted garlic beside her roses to repel aphids, and she has heard that garlic also drives away Japanese beetles and helps raspberries produce better.

"Whether they really help with growth, I'm not really sure of that," Ms. Hiett says. "How do you prove it?"

Janice Bunting, president of the Greater Fort Worth Herb Society, notes that companion planting is part of the organic gardener's philosophy of encouraging a diverse mix of plants. "If you have biodiversity, you attract beneficial insects," she says.

For those who want to try companion planting, here are pairings worth a shot.



Cornell University

**Basil is said to repel hornworms** when planted near tomato plants.



FILE photo

**Nasturtium is said to drive off cucumber beetles.**



FILE photo

**Dill also attracts wasps** that feed on cabbageworms.



FILE photo

**Try controlling aphids** with dill, which attracts predatory ladybugs.

### The power of herbs

**Basil:** Plant near tomatoes to repel tomato hornworms.

**Catnip:** Useful near eggplant and collards as a barrier to flea beetles.

**Dill:** Attracts lacewings and ladybugs, beneficial insects that eat aphids. Also, near members of the cabbage family, dill attracts the tiny beneficial wasps that control imported cabbageworms and other cabbage pests.

**Marigolds:** Interplant marigolds with beans to repel Mexican bean beetles. They purportedly kill root-feeding nematodes near peppers, eggplants and tomatoes after the first year.

**Nasturtium:** Reputed to drive away cucumber beetles. Habitat for beneficial insects that prey on other insects. Also plant near cabbage, melons and lemon.

**Onions and chives:** Interplant with carrots to repel rust flies. Plant near roses and raspberries to bust Japanese beetles and aphids.

**Rue:** Japanese beetle defense.

**Tansy:** Repels moths.

**Thyme:** Near cabbage, puts the kibosh on imported cabbageworm.

**Wormwood:** Deters rodents.

SOURCES: Texas AgriLife Extension Service, *Organic Gardening* magazine, *The Pleasure of Herbs* (1986) by Phyllis V. Shaudys.

# What's wrong with my caladium bulbs?

I planted several caladium bulbs about five weeks ago. There is a white patch on the soil surface where I planted each bulb. The caladiums have not sprouted, and I'm wondering whether this is some type of mold.

V.J., Plano

It could be a bad sign. If the soil has been moist and cool since the caladium bulbs were planted, they may have decayed. They need warm soil. If you see mold or fungus in or on the soil, apply whole ground cornmeal or horticultural cornmeal at a rate of 1 pound per 100 square feet and lightly scratch it into the soil. Granulated garlic also can be used at a rate of 1/2 pound per 100 square feet.

I recently bought tomato transplants at a garden center. I planted them in pots so I could move them into the garage if it got cold. The weather did get cold, and now some of the plants look unhealthy. When tomato plants are stressed, do they recover? Or is it better to throw them away?

R.B., Fort Worth

Tender food crops such as tomatoes have a hard time rebounding. It's best to start over.

### ORGANIC ANSWERS



**HOWARD GARRETT**  
 home@dallasnews.com

**What is the application rate for dry molasses on a lawn? And how should I set the spreader?**  
 E.S., Dallas

Most broadcast or cyclone spreaders will put out about 10 pounds per 1,000 square feet when the setting is wide open. I usually make two passes to put out 20 pounds per 1,000 square feet.

A benefit of organic fertilizers is that no harm is done when the application rate isn't exact.

### RESOURCES

**ONLINE:** www.dirtdoctor.com for free organic-program handouts

**RADIO:** KSKY-AM (660), Saturday 11 a.m.-noon and Sunday 8-11 a.m. www.ksky.com.

**MAIL:** P.O. Box 140650, Dallas, TX 75214

**PIERRE DEUX®**

**RUG SALE**

**20% OFF**

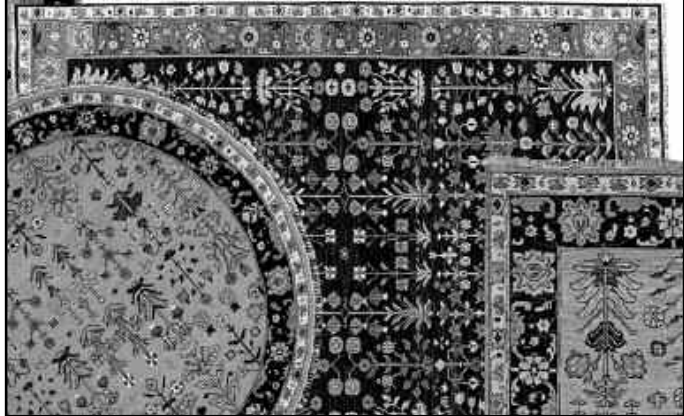
Now through May 27<sup>th</sup>

1525-A Hi Line Drive  
 Dallas, TX • (214) 749-7775

Consumers welcome.

Fabrics • Furniture  
 Home Décor • Lighting • Wallpaper • Gifts  
 Trade Program • Custom Studio

Some restrictions apply. Ask for details.



Let your **Personal Account Manager** help you manage your **Dallas Morning News** account 24/7 at **dallasnewsaccount.com**.

The Dallas Morning News  
 dallasnews.com

Live Better Here.



## Readership has its rewards.

Like a chance to win tickets to the hottest shows and biggest games in town. Special access and discounts for local and national retailers. And invitations to special events with *Dallas Morning News* journalists. The program is called Exclusives. It's brand new. It's absolutely free. And it is exclusively for loyal *Dallas Morning News* subscribers. Like you.

Sign up for Exclusives at **dmnexclusives.com**.

Not a subscriber? Call **1-800-925-1500**.

The Dallas Morning News  
**EXCLUSIVES**

"The **RIGHT PLACE**

**SHADES OF GREEN INC.**

for the **RIGHT PLANT™**

www.shadesofgreeninc.com

8801 COIT ROAD, FRISCO  
 (2 MILES NORTH OF HWY. 121)

**972-335-9095**

MONDAY-SATURDAY 8:00AM - 5:30PM  
 SUNDAY 10:00AM - 5:00PM

