



**Media Contact:**

Sue Markgraf  
GreenMark Public Relations  
847-970-9160 or 847-917-9654  
smarkgraf@greenmarkpr.com

**For Immediate Release**

*News from the Original Sustainable Living Guide*

**Farmers' Almanac Top Tips for Growing Food at Home**  
*Reduce Food Miles for Health Benefits, Fresh Taste and Cost Savings*

**SAVANNAH, Ga. (June 7, 2008)** - With rising fuel prices biting into the grocery checkout line, Patti Moreno, garden expert with Farmers' Almanac, the original sustainable living guide, suggests consumers can save money, eat healthier and help protect the environment by growing their food at home.

If that seems like a daunting task, do not fear. With the majority of produce traveling an average of 1,500 miles before reaching the consumer, growing food at home is much more cost efficient, earth-friendly and fun. Plus, the health benefits and fresh taste cannot be beat. Moreno offers the following tips:

- **You don't need large amounts of space.** Plant tasty vegetables, fruits and herbs in raised beds, window boxes and containers. Grow vine plants up a fence or trellis or allow them to dangle from a hanging basket.
- **Start seeds in eggshell halves stored in egg cartons.** When little sprouts are ready to plant in the ground or a container, place the seedling in the half eggshell right into the soil. The roots will break through the shell, fertilizing the plant. Toss the empty egg carton into the compost bin.
- **Composting is an easy way to recycle** grass clippings, leaves and kitchen waste, and is an inexpensive, natural fertilizer for plants. It's also a great way to save money on your waste disposal. A composting bin can be built from almost anything, or purchased from a local hardware store, farm bureau or park district. Almost anything can be composted, but it's best to leave out certain food scraps like meat and dairy products, which may attract hungry animals, and weeds, since they may contain unwanted seeds.

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## Farmers' Almanac Tips//Add One

- **Worms are nature's recycling machines.** In just three days, two pounds of worms can eat and enrich the soil with almost four pounds of waste. This superhero's organic matter marvelously bulks up sandy soils and helps break down those hard packed by clay. A combination of earthworms and red wigglers (they aren't the same) will add nutrients, aerate the soil and increase water retention.
- **Use organic mulch to cut down on weeds and help retain soil moisture.** Pine needles, hay, leaves and grass clippings make excellent mulch and enrich the soil as the material decomposes.
- **Water plants early in the morning or late evening to minimize evaporation.** To lower water bills and conserve this natural resource, set up a rain barrel to collect rainwater for use in the garden. Rain barrels are available from most home and garden centers, as well as local farm bureaus and park districts nationwide.
- **Plant marigolds, basil, horseradish, mint, chives, onion and garlic near the garden.** The natural odors and root secretions from these plants help repel unwanted insects without the use of chemicals. Welcome ladybugs into the garden as they eat harmful aphids.
- **Freeze, can or dry extra vegetables, fruits and herbs for a fresh tasting meal on a cold winter day.** Share a basket of fresh produce with neighbors or food pantries that serve your community. These local resources serve others hard-pressed by rising food costs.
- **Involve the kids.** Teaching children to grow their own food is not only educational, but a fun family project. Most importantly, you will be encouraging the next generation of sustainable home gardeners.

For more great information from the gardening experts at Farmers' Almanac, including how-to videos and recipes to make using fresh foods from your garden, visit [www.FarmersAlmanac.com](http://www.FarmersAlmanac.com).

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*Farmers' Almanac*, which features an orange and green cover, has been published every year since 1818. It contains useful and interesting articles as well as long-range weather predictions, gardening advice, recipes and more. Editors Peter Geiger and Sandi Duncan are available for lively and informative interviews, either by phone or in person. Both love to talk about the weather, share useful Almanac trivia and advice, and offer tips on how to get back to the simple life.

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**Editors: Caption follows for photo attached.**

Patti Moreno, garden expert with Farmers' Almanac, the original sustainable living guide, says teaching children to grow their own food – like this tasty salad she's making with her daughter, Alejandra Spruill, age 9 – is fun and encourages the next generation of sustainable home gardeners. Visit [www.FarmersAlmanac.com](http://www.FarmersAlmanac.com) for how-to videos and recipes. (Photo courtesy Farmers' Almanac TV)