

The Super Foods Rx Diet

Garden Column by Peggy Case

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Gardeners should be the healthiest people around since they raise good food and get good exercise. Most gardeners raise fruits and vegetables and many sources say that increased intake of fruits and vegetables is the healthiest way to eat. Gardening involves some lifting, some digging, some stretching and lots of walking, which is the best exercise.

One book on the market, *The Super Foods Rx Diet*, lists fourteen super foods for good health, plus weight control. The super foods listed in the book are: beans, blueberries, broccoli, oats, oranges, pumpkin, salmon, soy, spinach, tea, tomatoes, turkey, walnuts and yogurt. Look at how many of those can be raised in the garden.

The bean category includes string beans, sugar snap peas and green peas, all good garden crops. The blueberry category includes purple grapes, raspberries, strawberries, fresh currants, blackberries and cherries. All these can be raised by home gardeners. The broccoli category includes Brussels sprouts, cabbage, kale, turnips, cauliflower, collards and Swiss chard. These also make good garden crops.

The oats category is not usually a home garden crop, but it does include corn and we can raise that, provided you can outwit the raccoons. Oranges are not garden crops here in Ohio, but citrus crops are excellent foods for good health. The pumpkin category includes lots of wonderful garden crops, carrots, butternut squash, sweet potatoes and orange bell peppers. Anything, with bright yellow flesh is good for you.

True, salmon is not grown in the garden, but keep it in mind to eat with your veggies. A good salmon sandwich on whole wheat bread is great with a salad. Or sprinkle salmon flakes on top of your salad. While soy is usually products made from soy beans, there is a good soy vegetable, the edamame soy bean.

The spinach category includes romaine lettuce, and some of the same vegetables listed with broccoli. Tomatoes are so good and so good for you. They are the top vegetable raised in home gardens and can be canned or frozen. Cooked tomatoes are even better for you, so canning them is a good idea.

Now turkey is not a garden crop, but some small vegetable farms might raise some turkeys for the freezer. You might think walnuts are not raised by home gardeners, but you are wrong. Pick up a catalog for apple trees and you will find nut trees for our area. Besides nuts, the nut category includes pumpkin and sunflower seeds and you can raise those in the garden. Yogurt, of course, is made from milk and most people get it from the super market, but yogurt can be made easily at home from fresh raw milk.

The book, *The Super Foods Rx Diet*, also lists additional foods with healthful nutrients: apples, avocados, asparagus, dark chocolate, dried fruits, extra virgin olive oil, honey, kiwi, onions and pomegranates. The spices considered to be healthful are cinnamon, cumin, garlic, oregano, thyme and turmeric. A few of these can be raised in the herb garden.

When the seed catalogs start to come this winter, look for some of these super foods that you can raise and along with your New Year's resolutions to slim down and get healthy, resolve to raise some super foods next year.