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# Yard 'n' Garden

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## STORING VEGETABLES

As the vegetable garden season comes to a close, thoughts usually turn to ways of keeping some of the produce in a fresh condition during fall and early winter. By providing suitable conditions we can keep garden produce in good quality condition for several months.

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Harvested vegetables are still living organisms. Continuing to grow in storage. If growth is rapid, the food stored will soon be used, the quality will deteriorate and the produce will break down and decay. Proper control of temperature and moisture will retard growth and prolong storage life.

\* \* \* \*

Root crops and beets store well in 10-gallon crocks. The temperature should be 32°-40° F. and the air fairly moist. Trimming the crowns of the carrot so no green color remains will help prevent sprouting. If you have -- or can get -- an old electric refrigerator, it will serve you well for storing some of the root crops for winter use.

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Onions keep best in a dry, cool place. After the bulbs have been cured outside so the scales are dry and brittle, they can be placed in mesh bags in a room that is 32 - 40° F, but dry.

\* \* \* \*

Squash and pumpkin should be kept for 2 weeks in a well ventilated room where temperatures are 75-80° F. to harden the shell. Then place them in a 40-55° F. room that is dry.

\* \* \* \*

The tomato season can often be extended by picking fruits at the pink stage or at the green-mature stage. At 40-50° F. pink-stage tomatoes can be kept 7 to 10 days while green-mature tomatoes will keep for 1 to 6 weeks at 50-60° F. Ripening increases with higher temperatures. Just before frost kills the plants, pull them up and hang them in the basement or garage with fruits still attached. The fruit will continue to ripen.

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