

# Healthy Habits

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### A Healthy Diet Is Easy to Grow

Of course we've all heard by now that one of the keys to a healthy diet is to eat more fruits and veggies and fewer refined and processed foods. But if you grew up, like I did, in an era when vegetables meant those nasty cans of mixed peas, carrots and beans, it's hard to get excited about eating more veggies.

Most vegetables lose a lot of their flavor and texture in the industrial canning or freezing process, so even though they retain most of their nutrition, they're not always very appealing. Even the fresh produce in the grocery may have been trucked or flown hundreds of miles from where it was grown, and it has been bred to withstand the trip (i.e., it's built tough, not tasty).

For the tastiest vegetables, ones you'll crave rather than dread, you can't beat home-grown. The difference in flavor, freshness and texture is astonishing. And if you grew it yourself, you'll really look forward to enjoying the "fruits of your labor."



Not everyone has the wherewithal or desire (or is it a crazy obsession) to turn their back yard into an urban farm. But there are plenty of delicious vegetables that grow well in a small pot on a sunny patio or windowsill. Lettuce, spinach, kale and chard all do well in pots, as do peppers, some tomato varieties and fresh herbs.

Even the pickiest of veggie-haters (kids) have become veggie-loving converts when they get to eat the crops they grew themselves.

**Action Item:** It's not too late to get a packet of lettuce seeds started indoors or a pot of basil for the patio. Give home-grown a try and see if you don't develop an unusual

fondness for whatever veggies you manage to grow.

Back issues of *Healthy Habits* are available in pdf format on the [Healthy Habits Archive Page](#).

(Photo credit: LeeAnn Langdon. Yes, that's my garden. Yes, I'll freely admit to being just a wee bit obsessed.)



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