



Association pour la santé environnementale du Québec
Environmental Health Association of Québec

ECO-JOURNAL



Gardening in small spaces, or the zero-waste option



With an increasing number of us living in cities, gardening may seem impracticable. Our indoor spaces are already limited while outdoor spaces are usually cramped and polluted... if they even exist. We are then left dependent on grocery stores for the food we eat. And yet, you would be surprised to know the number of things you can easily grow in a small space with limited resources. Let's see how you can exploit the full potential of your vegetables and how you can become a little more self-sufficient, even in an urban center.

Recycling your waste

Have you noticed all the things we waste when cooking? And yet, there are so many things you can regrow from what you already have, and with just water! Being the leafy heads or rooty legs, these are parts we automatically throw away. Remember what you have in your fridge or shelves is still alive! Of course, when you cut a part you want to regrow, be generous: leave around two centimeters of vegetable to give the plant a chance to grow.

An easy plant you can start with are **scallions**. They are always sold with their roots, and instead of throwing this part away, place them in water so that the roots are submerged. Within a few days, the roots and new leaves will start to grow. After one to two weeks, place them in soil until your scallions have completely regrown and you can use them again. The same process can be applied to **leeks**, **onions**, **bok choy**, **lettuce** or **celery**, just to name a few! They are also convenient as their roots are shallow and thus do not require deep soil.

The same goes with **root vegetables** such as **carrot, radish, beetroot, rutabaga.....** However, you will not be able to regrow the whole vegetable, only the leaves which are edible as well..

Three other incredibly easy vegetables you can grow are **tomatoes, red peppers** (green ones are not ripe and thus the seeds will not sprout), and **potatoes**. A tomato and pepper have an enormous amount of seeds in just one fruit. Place just few seeds in the soil, not too deep, and keep the soil humid. They will begin to sprout after a week. Finally, we all have noticed that potatoes get these green sprouts after a few days or weeks. Just place a potato in the soil. A plant will grow from it and will produce many more potatoes. Of course, these vegetables require deeper soil to grow properly, unlike the previous vegetables

Finally, to become more autonomous, do not hesitate to have herbs in pots instead of always buying branches. You can even grow herbs from cuttings if you are patient enough. By removing the leaves from the bottom half of the branch and placing it in a glass of water, the roots will be long enough for you to plant after a few weeks. These includes **basil, rosemary, thyme, sage, oregano** or **mint**, for example..

Potting

As we noted earlier, although your peppers and tomatoes will need actual deep pots, the others do not. Of course, there is always the possibility to go buy pots that fit the size that you need. However, the talk on recycling we began earlier is not over yet. As you start sprouting your tomatoes and pepper, you can recycle empty **cans** or empty **glass jars**. As for your scallions and carrots, you can recycle the **crates** you get when you buy some vegetables and fruits. Line them with paper and you can use them as miniature gardens! As long as they get enough light from a window or on your balcony (if you have one), they will grow happily.



Author: Clémentine Pierrefeu



Happy gardening !



Association pour la santé environnementale du Québec / Environmental Health Association of Québec
(ASEQ-EHAQ)

P.O. Box 364, Saint-Sauveur, Québec J0R 1R0

☎ 514-332-4320 📠 450-227-4143 ✉ office@aseq-ehaq.ca

www.aseq-ehaq.ca / www.EnvironmentalSensitivities.com / www.ecoasisquebec.ca