



Vertical Gardening: 10 Reasons To Grow Up Instead of Out

Laurie Neverman – [CommonSenseHome.com](http://CommonSenseHome.com)

---

Marjory Wildcraft: Hello and welcome back to the Home Grown Food Summit. This is Marjory Wildcraft. I am so delighted that you're here on this journey with me. This is amazing. We have at least 8 different presentations on different gardening methods, and this particular segment is going to be one with Laurie Neverman, and Laurie is going to be showing us how to do vertical gardening, actually watching this particular presentation, I was about to plant some tomatoes, and right when I saw this other trellising method, I said "I'm going to do that instead." Before you plant, you might want to watch this one.

Laurie is the creator of Common Sense Homesteading. It's one of the most popular homesteading sites on the internet, and her gardening adventures include companion planting, wild crafting which is using weeds for food and medicine, vertical gardening, herbalism, and permaculture. Her family's green-built certified home includes an attached greenhouse, a root cellar, and a canning pantry. She extends her growing season and allows them to store food for her year-round use.

She hasn't found a wild 'edible she wouldn't try, including quackgrass wine which actually Laurie told me it ended up turning out to be more like a quackgrass liquor, and grows over 100 varieties of fruit, vegetables, herbs, and flowers in her garden each year.

Let me let you get started and watch this really good presentation and inspiring presentation on Growing Up Instead of Out, 10 Reasons to do Vertical Gardening.

Laurie Neverman: Hi, this is Laurie Neverman from Common Sense Homesteading, and I am so excited to be working with Marjory and the rest of the crew to bring you this awesome Home Grown Food Summit.

Today, I'm going to be talking about vertical gardening. Vertical gardening refers to growing up instead of just out and can be accomplished through the use of trellis, arbors, and pergolas, growing trees and shrubs and planting in raised beds and containers. Vertical gardening can be used in just about any landscape from urban to rural and even in brightly lit windows if you don't have any other growing space.

Often when people start talking about integrating a garden or other food crops into the landscape, the design ideas still tend to focus on 2-dimensional diagrams, how many food or vege plants can I fit per square foot? While there's nothing wrong with this per say, it just means that

you're missing out on some great opportunities to optimize growing space you might not even realize that you have.

If you haven't tried vertical gardening, hopefully this talk will win you over, and yes, growing up instead of out take a little bit more work initially, but the end result is well worth it. I use trellises throughout my garden to make plants easier to care for, reduce disease and predation, and produce a larger crop in less space. In the flower garden, vertical elements add visual interests and focal points, and they can be just plain gorgeous.

During the course of this presentation, I'm going to hit on these 10 reasons to garden up instead of out and give examples of each of these.

- 1) More productivity in less space.
- 2) Less disease.
- 3) Less predation.
- 4) Compensate for poor soil.
- 5) Easier weed control.
- 6) Easier harvest and better accessibility.
- 7) Create micro-climates.
- 8) Shelter your home and living areas.
- 9) Create privacy and screen ugly views.
- 10) The fun stuff, adding a "WOW!" factor to your garden.

I had a number of friends who live in both urban and rural settings, pitch in with photos for this. I would like to give them a huge thank you for helping me pull these together in a short amount of time, and I couldn't have done the presentation that we've got here without their help. I'll be mentioning them throughout the program.

Growing more food in less space. In my annual garden, tomatoes, cucumbers, and beans all get the trellis treatment, and any plant that vines, sprawls, or spreads is an excellent candidate for vertical gardening. Trees and shrubs can also be a great addition to your 'edible landscape. This is what my kitchen counter looks like after a typical fall harvest. I

really love how using trellises makes picking easier and allows me to get enough produce in a single harvest for winter use. Need 20 pounds of tomatoes for a big batch of salsa, no problem. Do you have enough green beans to fill up the canner? Yep, we have that covered.

It's so much easier for me to work with the trellises than it was when I tried to do things just laying on the ground, and you'll see as we go through the rest of this program how each of the different vege types are treated in different ways to make them accessible, keep them clean, and keep the critters away.

Here, this is a shot of a shelf at my greenhouse. Now, thankfully, I have awesome neighbors here in the country, and they sometimes have extra produce or extra trees or extra nuts or extra fruit. The wonderful thing about fruit and nut trees is that once they're established and mature, they can provide harvest for many, many years. When you've got a stable food like walnuts, if these are properly cured and they're stored right in the shell, they'll actually stay fresh for over 1 year. That's really handy for me. I don't know if you're familiar with this, but when you buy shelled walnuts at the grocery store, a lot of times they're rancid already when you get them because the walnut oil is not stable once it hits oxygen. I tell the boys, "Don't break the seal.", and as long as the shell stays airtight, the nuts will keep. I keep a batch of these after they're cured in our regular canning pantry in a big 5-gallon bucket.

Some varieties of apples and pears also store well in the root cellar, and most fruits, of course, lend themselves to processing such as drying, canning, freezing for long-term storage. Again with my very nice neighbors, while we're waiting for our trees to mature, we've been blessed with apples, pears, and plums, plenty to enjoy fresh and preserve some for storage. Once you have your trees established in your landscape, if you happen to be blessed with an abundant crop of fruit or nuts yourself, odds are you'll be able to find neighbors who would also enjoy some and may have things that they would like to barter or share in exchange.

Here's an example from one of my friends who is an avid gardener who lives right in the center of Green Bay, and she does much of her gardening in 5-gallon buckets. My friend, Lei, planted potatoes in 5-gallon buckets, and she actually starts these potatoes inside at the end of January, which I don't know how many of you are familiar with Wisconsin climate, but pretty much nothing grows here at the end of January. It's frozen solid, but because she's got these inside in a bucket, she can get them started. If you look at the left side, you can see those little bitty

potato sprouts that are sticking out. She's got these inside in January, and then, she keeps them inside for about a month. After that point, she steps them out onto her porch, and then during the say when it's warmer, she sets the buckets outside. Then, she brings them in at night. By the time most of us are just starting to think about getting our potatoes in the ground, like mid April, she's got these huge plants that are already well leafed out and getting ready to blossom and set potatoes. If you're looking for portable harvest or portable planters, 5-gallon buckets are really amazing. She says with only 1-1/2 potatoes per bucket, she grows 5 to 7 pounds of potatoes in each pail, which I think is pretty amazing.

Here's another option from my friend Heather at Green Eggs and Goats. She turned this boring privacy fence that was kind of an eye-sore into a thriving salad bar for her family. Heather and her husband purchased three 10' lengths of gutter with right and left end caps and special mounting screws from their local home improvement store. They mounted these gutters at a slight angle on the wall for drainage with drainage holes drilled at the bottom of the lowest side of each gutter. As you can see, they kind of angle back and forth across the wall. When you water at the top, it drips down into the next and into the next. Then, the lowest gutter drains into a container, which you can see at the lower left. There's the silver tub at the bottom there. That gathers the runoff for reuse in the garden or back up in the lettuce patch. As the season went on instead of just boring wall, she ended up with this all you can eat salad buffet. Although, she did have some problems. As the season went on, she noticed that her salad greens were disappearing, and she kind of thought that maybe the squirrels were getting into it or something. Then, she realized that the kids were snacking on it as they were playing on the deck. I guess that's one way to get your kids to eat their greens.

Here's another example from an online friend. This is from Melissa at Evergrowing Farm, and she got really creative when it came to fitting in as much as possible into their 1/8 acre urban farm garden, I guess you could call it. They had a number of fruit trees in their yard, and 4 out of their 5 trees were spliced with different varieties of the same fruit. They were able to fit 17 different varieties of fruit into that tiny backyard space. They had 2 apple trees that were espaliered, as you can kind of see against here in the center top photo, the trees kind of spread out and growing along the fence. That's called an espalier. Each tree had 4 main branches, and each branch carried a different variety of apple. They had Red Fuji, Gala, Granny Smith, and Golden Delicious.

Their pear tree was also espalier, and it was spliced with 4 main branches and 4 varieties of pears: Red Bartlett, Red Anjou, Bartlett, and Comice.

The cherry tree was not espalier, but it was spliced with 4 main branches and 4 varieties of cherries: Bing, Lapins, Van, and Rainier.

Their apricot tree was simply dwarf, no splicing, no espalier, just apricots. Not a bad thing because I love apricots and homegrown apricots are the bomb. You just can't get them in the grocery store anymore. They're woody. They're mealy. They taste more like ping pong balls than apricots. I know we finally got apricots off of our tree 2 years ago, and they were just absolutely amazing, so sweet, so juicy, so delicious. If you can get apricots in your garden and you're an apricot fan like I am, I highly recommend them.

I was just really impressed with what Melissa did here, growing so much in such a small space. As I was reading on her blog, I found out that last year, she and her family moved to 6 acres in the country. If she's cramming this much into an urban yard, I can just wonder what's she going to accomplish out with 6 acres. That's going to be pretty impressive.

Here's another shot from another friend. She used an arch to grow her squash. This is from Amy at Get Busy Gardening, and she worked with her husband to build this squash trellis out of PVC pipe and metal garden fencing. They painted the PVC pipe black to dress it up a little and make it look more like wrought iron. This works great for small to mid-size squash and pumpkins. I wouldn't attempt to grow something like a Dill's Atlantic Giant. PVC and metal have their limits. Melons would be another option, although they have a little bit flimsier vines. You'd probably want to make sure you watch them and use some type of sling to hold the melons.

To support the squash, Amy tucks them up above the trellis so that the fencing actually holds them up. You can kind of see one right on the front there forming, that little green guy on the right-hand side to the top left of the photo. Another option is to tie them up with a cloth sling or swaddle connected to the trellis. I was reading the comments on this blog post which is hilarious. One of her readers reported using an old bra to support their melons with good results. I have not verified this, but you use whatever you have on hand, and it's all good.

In our area, it's fairly humid. We're about 15 miles from Lake Michigan. It's inevitable that as the season goes on there will be some fungal issues in the garden, like powdery mildew or downy mildew, which are really

nasty on squash. Anybody whose run into them, sees that pretty soon you're foliage turns gray and gets a powdery covering, and it can spread very quickly and often times the squash plant is a goner. Trellising opens up the plant to better airflow, so they dry more quickly, which minimized the impact of fungal diseases like the mildews. If you have a problem with soil-born plant problems too, getting the foliage up and away from the soil and putting down a layer of mulch can help with that. I thought this was a really cool-looking thing. You can see she built raised beds that it's braced into and then arched up and around. I thought this was really ... I could see how this would be quite the garden conversation piece too. It's just cool looking.

This is another shot from my garden. I like to grow all my slicing cucumbers on a lattice trellis, and cucumbers, like many vine crops, are also prone to powdery mildew. Anything you can do to promote air circulation is a help. For our trellis, we used two 6' steel fence posts and attached the trellis to them at the top with fabric strips or twine. I use recycled fabric strips all over my garden. My boys live in sweatpants, so we always have worn out sweatpants to use.

The year this photo was taken, 2014, the summer was cooler than normal. I added black landscape fabric to the south of the trellis to soak up the heat of the sun and keep the weeds down. In a hotter year, I'd use a thick layer of straw mulch to cool the soil, and to the north of the trellis, a shaded micro-climate is created that's perfect for growing lettuce and other greens that don't care for the summer heat. Using a little bit of shading like this can really help extend your greens season and keep them from bolting.

The cucumbers might need a little bit of help getting started up the trellis, and sometimes, I tie them on with more cloth strips, but once they get established and get going, their little tendrils latch on and pull them up to cover the whole trellis. While I do let some of my garden weeds grow because I use them for food and medicine, and you can read more about that in the Weekly Weeder Series on my website. I don't let them grow completely out of control. By mixing mulched areas, landscaped fabric and unmulched areas, I can have my weeds without them taking over the garden.

Here is a pea trellis. We love shelled peas and snap peas. My boys just can't get enough of them. Fresh, they taste so much better than frozen peas. Most of the peas you get in the store, they're picked too big, and then, they let them sit around and loose their sweetness. They're like 2

different vegetables. If you have room in your garden, I highly recommend home grown peas.

I use trellises for my snap peas and both my shell peas. For the standard size peas, I use a 3' trellis. That's 3' metal fencing and 4' stakes. The 4' stakes are put down the row at roughly 3' intervals. You don't want to skimp on your garden stakes, because the pea plants really can get quite heavy as the season goes on, and a poorly staked row will topple over in a good wind storm. Ask my how I know this, it has happened before.

I plant a double row of peas, and then when they're little and once they've popped up out of the ground, I lay a damp newspaper between the rows and cover it with straw. This keeps the pea roots cool, which the peas like, and it keeps the pesky weeds from growing up into the trellis where they are difficult to remove. I also like to use onions as companion plants to my peas to deter the bunnies from turning them into a meal. Most of the time, I'll plant onions on one side and leave a mulch path for walking or picking on the other. You can see on this photo, on the left is a path and on the right are the onions. A lot of times, I'll have my row of peas at the north side of one of my garden beds. I'll tack the onions on the outside of the bed, because that's usually where the bunnies try to sneak in for the attack.

This is a shot of my pole beans, and this year, I had 2 double row of pole beans. On the right, you can see me picking, and they're nice and easy to reach for the most part. They set beans along the from top to bottom. There is some bending, but it's so much nicer than bush beans. When I was younger, my mom grew bush beans, and picking those boogers was one of my least favorite garden tasks. As the season would go on, the bean plants would get thicker. We might have overcrowded them a little bit, but some of the beans would always get missed from one picking to the next, and I blame this on my older brothers. I think they were slackers. I'd end up finding these beans slimy and rotting, covered in mud or dust on the other side of the bean plant. Rust was always a huge issue too. In wet years, the beans would get covered in brown flecks, and it looked like rust, but it's actually caused by bacterial and fungal infections. Rust infected beans are not recommended for eating or processing. It's not a good thing.

Growing pole beans has greatly reduced the incidents of rust on my bean plants, which means more beans that are safe for eating. Pole beans are available in green, purple, yellow, and shell bean varieties. The purple and yellow are great for kids because they're easily saw against the green foliage. When I send my boys out picking, they're getting better now that

they're teenagers. They would inevitably miss a lot of the green beans when they were little because they are camouflage in the foliage. When you've got purple or yellow popping out against the green, they're a lot easier to spot.

Pole beans will yield all season long if they're kept picked, which means that even a short row can keep a family in fresh beans during the growing season. I say again, I love how much easier they are to pick.

My pole beans and my tall peas, like sugar snap and alderman, get trellis netting supported every 5 feet by 6' tall metal fence posts. At the top of that, you can kind of see in the left-hand photo, there's the tall fence post, and then, there's the trellis netting attached to that. A wooden cross piece is placed on top between the different fence posts to connect each fence post. Then, the trellis netting is tied to that. This reduces the sagging as the season goes on. With 2 double rows of beans, that's a lot of mass. You can see how bushy and tall they are when the full growth was on. I don't necessarily bother with that for the peas, because they don't tend to get nearly as bushy as the beans do, but the pole beans really need the cross apart. As I mentioned, we have trellis netting tied on the edges and then tied on the top, and then in between when I do 2 rows like this, it's a beautiful shaded area. The boys, when they were littler, would love to go and play in that spot. "That's our hangout spot in the garden. Don't bother me, Mom."

Now, this is one of my tomato trellises, actually 2 of my tomato trellises near the end of one of the gardening seasons. They are a little bit beat up by the wind, and I've stripped back some of the foliage to finish up the ripening on the tomatoes. In my garden, the tomatoes get a combination trellis system. Each tomato plant gets 3 or more 4' wooden stakes to start them on their journey upward. Again, they're tied on with strips of old sweatpants, because I tie everything up with old sweatpants. After they've started to stretch beyond the stakes, I drop tethers down from a wooden cross piece. You can see that at the top of the photo. There's the wooden cross pieces, and those cross pieces are braced on top of 7' tall metal fence posts. In a good year, the heirloom indeterminate tomato plants will easily reach 6' tall, even in our relatively short growing season.

This photo as I mentioned is from near the end of the season, and some of the lower foliage has been removed to speed up ripening. You can see the top supports, and this was not a great growing season. Otherwise, the plants really would've filled up the trellis. We've had a couple of really rough cool summers these last few years. I prefer this method over boxes or cages, because it gives me better access to the fruit and

accommodates the often rampant growth of heirloom tomatoes. The posts are driven in fairly deep, about 1' on the tall posts and at least 1/2' on shorter posts, so that they can withstand out high winds. It is windy out here.

This is not a pretty tomato, but it happens. Once in a while even with the trellises, some fruit sets close to the ground. These low-hanging fruit are always the ones that get attacked by slugs and mice if they're in the area. I've even found gnaw marks on the skin of my winter squash, which is a pretty big problem, because damaged pumpkins and squash don't cure properly, and they can't be kept for months in the root cellar. That chewing mark always leaves a soft spot, and then, it rots from wherever that damage is.

If you use trellises and grow up, it adds a layer of protection from these little garden marauders, and it doesn't, obviously, solve everything, but slug damage is significantly reduced because, of course, slugs hide on the ground. They hide under logs and things, and then, they crawl up and slime over your tomatoes. I found this poor thing hidden under some foliage close to the ground. Mice are climbers, but again, at least I make them work for whatever they're going to get at. As a side note, if you plant, use companion planting, or you mulch with strongly scented herbs, that will also help to deter pests including rabbits. Many herbs act as a habitat for beneficial insects. One word of caution with that, while catnip keeps the bunnies away, it may attract cats. I have that problem. We have 3 cats, and they regularly patrol the garden, which is great for keeping the mice down, but every once in a while, they go a little bit crazy in the catnip patch. Be warned.

Back at our last home, the soil was terrible. We had wet, heavy clay that was really, really difficult to work with. One time, my mom came to visit during planting season. I had dug the holes to put the plants in. She went and filled the first hole with water like she used to do in her garden. I yelled for her to stop, but it was too late. Instead of soaking in, the water just sat there in the hole creating muck. It was just not good. I think we ended up abandoning that planting hole and coming back to it the next day, because the clay did not drain.

To get around the mess, we ended up putting in 23 raised beds built out of cedar in our backyard. These beds significantly improved the results of my gardening efforts. It was a very good thing, as well as making the garden a little more decorative and easy to maintain, which was appreciated by my neighbors who kept their yards heavily groomed and never did seem to understand my desire for a huge garden. The options

are endless for planting containers and raised beds, from straw bale gardening, custom-built wood constructions such as strawberry pyramids. Those are really cool. Some day, I want to have one of those. Upcycle discard is like planting in an old pair of boots. If you've got a container, you can probably turn it into a growing space. With raised beds and containers, you don't walk in your planting area. That prevents soil compaction too. They also make weed control easier because you can mulch the areas around the raised bed.

This shot is, on the left we have a blossom from our yard long beans, and on the right, we have one of our little garden friends who is coming to visit my bean patch. I've noticed that as our garden has grown and matured, it's just really nice. It's beautiful, and it's so very alive. A lot of it isn't very flashy, because it's a productive food garden. You walk into the garden, and it's humming, because there's bees and other insects, the occasional small snake, the frogs. It's just a pleasure to be in. In my mind, that's yet another good reason to include these different elements.

Here we have the retaining walls that are in the front of our house. When we built our house, it's a walk out ranch, what was left near our front door was this drop off that went straight down about 10'. It was kind of scary to walk to the front door. To replace the steep and easily eroded hillside, we had a series of retaining walls put in near the southeast corner of our home to create planting beds. These walls are attractive and provided more growing space for my flowers and herbs, but the down side of these walls is that in order to make sure the walls have excellent drainage and last for many years, the drainage is so good, the beds tend to stay a little bit too dry for many plants. Initially, we tried to put in blueberries in the bottom section, because we thought "Ah, it's [self-facing 00:29:02]. It's protected. They're be out of the wind." They lived, but they failed to thrive. It was too dry for them. We ended up transplanting them to their own spot elsewhere in amended soil, and they're doing much better. We had our first very nice blueberry harvest last year.

Through trial and error, we found an assortment of hardy perennials that are spreading to fill in the entire area with flowers and herbs. Working along the edge of the upper bed while standing in the lower bed is a treat, because you don't have to bend over. You can do something similar with raised planting boxes that wouldn't require the excess drainage, and that would be great for those with limited mobility or difficulty bending. The [stone mass 00:29:45] also traps and radiates heat. It can offer protection for plants growing near to it. Be flexible and think about what's going on when you're looking at different planting options.

Here we have a shot from our last home. You see planting vines on a trellis or pergolas located on the south side of your home can help block intense summer sunshine. In colder areas like ours, the southern face also represents a protective micro-climate that may act as if it's a zone or 2 warmer than your geographic location would indicate. At our previous home where this was shot, the south side of our house showed an assortment of grapevines that grew some of the best grapes I have ever tasted, and unlike store grapes, which are mostly bland and sweet, our grapes had a really intense grape flavor. They were so good. We were also able to grow 2 dwarf peach trees, which can be difficult to keep alive in our area because we're so far north. The peaches were also amazing, just like the grapes.

When you're looking at this and the home landscape, this means you need to think about placing your trees, shrubs, walls, trellises, and other vertical design elements, not just for the view or the convenience but with thought for how they will affect the micro-climate of your garden area. If it's too hot and there's too much sun, you plan for taller elements to the west to block away the afternoon sun or consider a pergola to trail vines to provide dappled shade conditions for growing underneath. If it's too cold, plant trees and shrubs as wind blocks and add high mass elements like stone walls to trap and slowly radiate heat.

There's a ton of different vining plants, but here's just a few of the options that can be grown on trellises and other vertical supports. Vining plants are naturally adapted to trailing up and over anything they can latch onto. Why not take advantage of that habit. Some common edible vining plants include but are not limited to berry vines such as kiwi vines and grapevines, squash and pumpkins, which squash and pumpkins are actually botanically the same thing, but for some reason, we have a reverence for the orange globes. ... cucumbers and melons, legumes like beans and peas including snow peas, butterfly peas, and hyacinth vine, and edible flower vines like jasmine, hops, clematis, climbing roses, climbing nasturtiums, passion flowers, and wisteria.

This is an area photograph of our current homestead, which is located on 35 acres out in the country. This particular shot shows a few acres surround the house, and it was taken by my boys when they were treated to an airplane ride by their grandpa, who used to be a pilot. If you look along the right edge of the photo, you can see a series of bright green dots. This is our tree line, which was one of the first things that we planted to help block the very strong winds that we are battered out here. Kewaunee County has some of the strongest winds in the entire state of Wisconsin. There's also a second tree line just to the north, which

would be just past the bottom edge of the photo. The tree line will help reduce the heating load of our home over time because it's creating a sheltered micro-climate with reduced wind.

We placed the garden beds to the south of our home so that the home would act as an additional wind break for the garden. The yellow dots mark where we plan to put in swales and shrubs as part of our permaculture plantings. Currently, that south-facing slope is home to a series of grape trellises, but the winds have proven too harsh here for the grapes to thrive. The wind comes right across that driveway from the north and scours the grapevines, and by adding additional vertical elements, the shrubs and the swales, we hope to buffer the wind and trap more water on the hillside. The raised land of the swales will also create additional growing area.

Planting edible landscape plants as protective green wall around your garden, can help shelter tender seedlings, moderate extremes of both hot and cold temperature. Trees and shrubs also draw moisture from deeper in the soil and transpire it out through their leaves, which is cool. Studies have shown that this helps trees make rain, and literally, this is why the rain forest needs to stay forest. They cool the area that they shade. It's not just because they block out the sun. It's literally possible to green the desert through strategic tree and shrub planting, which I thought was just absolutely amazing and gives hope to those people in the areas of the world that have been deforested. You can bring it back and make it productive again.

Here, there is not a whole lot to see just yet, but this is a photo from last fall after the plants had gone dormant. Each of those little cages contains a hazelnut shrub, and this hazelnut shrub hedge will grow into a wind break and an edible landscaping element. These shrubs grow to be around 8' to 12' tall, and we have them located to the west of our garden between the garden and the tree line mentioned in the previous slide. The shrubs were set back their first winter by mouse and deer attacks, which is why they're now enclosed in fencing and have a cat on standby. They've recovered nicely, and I expect them to really take off this growing season, because they have the little catkin things on them last fall. I have hopes for nuts this year. Once mature, trees and shrubs and brambles may produce food for your every year. Why would you have just a regular hedge when you can have a hedge that grows food, right?

Vertically gardening elements are also a key part of permaculture landscape design, and in a permaculture landscape, trees, shrubs and vines combined with different heights of ground cover to create a food

production biome that takes advantage of sunlight coming in from ground height all the way up to the top of the canopy. Again, more food, less space.

This photo is courtesy of my friend, Amber, from the Coastal Homestead. Amber and her family created raised bed planters at the base of the privacy fence surrounding their pool. As the season progresses, the greenery and the flowers really dress up and brighten the fence as well as adding precious growing space to there mostly shaded yard. You can see that they also added additional hanging flower planters attached to the fence at the left of the photo. Strategically placed hedges and trellises can shield windows of your home and other living areas from overly curious passers by, and alternatively in combination, you can also use hanging your tiered planters inside near the swales to create a plantscape to bring the outside in. A vertical planting elements can also shield unsightly views such as garbage can storage or a busy roadway. Of course, blocking works both ways.

In Amber's situation, she doesn't want to get rid of any trees because they keep the house cooler in the summer, which means that she really has very limited growing space because she's got a pretty small city lot. She likes to sneak in growing space wherever she can. I thought this was really a pretty neat little setup there.

Here's another photo from Amber. As you can see, she's got this nifty trellis pergolas combination over her swing. The pergolas is doing double duty here. It's acting as a support for the swing, and then, it's offering additional growing space too. As the season progresses, the vines grow up, enclose the swing area, which is a real blessing for blocking out the sultry summer heat of their South Carolina home. In [southern 00:37:44] climates, dabbled sunlight can keep plants from overheating in the summer sun, whereas in norther climates like mine, I need the full day of sun to get the same amount of growth. Again, you have to plant thoughtfully and work with your climate. This would be nice for me if I put it somewhere to the south or south facing with full exposure, and I think I should get my husband to build one of these so I can sit near the garden and watch, maybe. I didn't think so. I just thought this was really pretty and bright.

Here are some different options for trellis materials. These are from a couple of my online friends. On the left, my friend, Heather from Green Eggs and Goats, upcycled some used pallets with some paint and some baling twine to create the bright and cheerful trellis/tomato cage option on the left. Terry, from Homestead Honey, is lucky enough to have a

husband who is a blacksmith. He created a number of twisting forms to their garden like the trellis on the right, which you can see has a raspberry plant twisted up and around it. If you don't happen to have a blacksmith in the house, you may be able to find interesting pieces at your local craft fairs or hardware stores.

This is from our previous home, and we added simple off the shelf wrought iron triangular trim pieces on each side of our entryway to act as a trellis for clamantis. You can see this photo shows the trellis shortly after the clamantis was planted. The right trellis is hidden behind the windchime, but those are just simple triangular wrought iron pieces, and we put in some hunks of rebar up into the bottom of the pieces. We pounded the rebar down in the soil to stabilize the wrought iron. Normally, the wrought iron would be part of a porch or fencing or something, but we jerry-rigged it to turn it into a planter.

This is from my friend Susan at Learning and Yearning, and she shared this great trellis that her husband built using cedar planks, [UHMW 00:40:06] plastic strip, and 7' T-post, which are really sturdy which is good because as the season went on this trellis really got boogered up. This trellis arches from one raised bed to the other creating additional growing space and great air circulation for her crops. It's strong as well as beautiful, and a trellis like this would make a great focal point in any backyard. That's just pretty and a fun play area for the kids. Can you imagine sitting in the shade under this trellis on a hot summer day, reaching up to pick a sweet juicy tomato. She also had, on the right-hand side, tromboncino squash, which I don't know if you've ever seen those, but they get to be 3' long. They're these long bulbous monster squash that are probably really delicious, but they needed a sturdy trellis to hold it all up.

This next shot is an herb spiral, and that's from my friend Isis at Little Mountain Haven. You can see this is something a little bit different. This is a raised bed with a twist. It's made with stacked stones in a spiral shape. It's a little bit more interesting than your standard raised bed, and if you wanted, you could also bury containers right into the beds to control aggressively spreading herbs like mint. I think it would be kind of pretty if you put a fountain or a sculpture or birdbath in the center to dress it up a little bit more. With the rocks, trailing herbs like thyme, creeping thyme would look beautiful flowing over the stonework, but I thought this was really cool and a really fun and interesting way to dress up a regular herb patch.

This is from our previous home, and although it's a little difficult to tell from this photo, this massive amount of roses was actually 2 climbing roses trained over a white metal archway that we used as a backdrop during our wedding ceremony nearly 20 years ago. The roses added a gorgeous bold blast of color to our front yard. As you pulled up to the house, this is what you could see. You can see the driveway is right behind it. Between the roses and the other garden beds, my mom said she knew right away when she came to visit which house was ours. Depending on the size of the trellis you have available, there's many different options to choose from. If you remember me mentioning earlier, edible flowers include jasmine, hops, clamantis, climbing roses, climbing nasturtiums, passion flowers and wisteria just to name some of them. Think about it. Flowers can be edible. You have to do double duty, add something that's visually interesting and appealing to the neighbors as well as something that can be used for food and medicine.

Here we have an overview of my main garden beds, and the beds are centered around a circular arrangement of beds that's formed into a wagon wheel shape. It's pretty cool. If you go and look up my house on Google Earth, you can actually see my gardens from space. I look at this view every single day out my kitchen window that's above my sink. I like to keep it pretty and interesting. If you look at the upper left of the photo, there's a bed with a double row of peas and 2 double rows of pole beans and 2 rows of tomato trellises, and then the next bed to the right, there's another double row of pole beans and corn. Then center right, there's a big raised bed of squash. Just next to that, you can see a snippet more of tomato trellises. In the main center circle, there's a couple other trellises going up, and then, there's some black landscape fabric on the right-hand side and those water jugs, that's where my melon patch was that year. The black landscape fabric helps me get a melon harvest here in Wisconsin where it tends to be on the chilly side.

I just enjoy spending time in my garden and looking for ways to try different things, different shapes, different varieties of fruits and vegetables. Each year, I try to grow at least one new thing, typically more than 1 new variety, and it just keeps me and my kids engaged and interested and enjoying our food growing and harvesting.

We have reached the end of our presentation. Thank you so much for joining me, and I hope that this has encouraged you to continue growing your own food if you are and get started growing your own food if you're not. Gardening is a great way to stay active and eat healthier, and with a little creativity, even small places can be very productive. Don't forget to plan.

I didn't mention this earlier, but you can see in this shot, this is part of my center garden bed. I have a birdbath there. I'd like to encourage you also to plan for birds and beneficial insects in your garden too. Even a small birdbath like this that has gently sloping sides is friendly to both birds and the bees, and of course, flowers are a delight to the humans and animals alike. To me, a garden isn't a garden without flowers. I think I get that from my momma. I hope this presentation has inspired you to look at your potential growing space in new ways and that you'll stop by Common Sense Homesteading for even more gardening ideas.

Marjory Wildcra: That was a really, really insightful presentation. You get to see where Laurie has been living for the last however long, all her different yards and all the different plants she's left behind. It's kind of fun. You can subscribe to Laurie's blog over at Common Sense Homesteading. She has 22,000 like-minded people who are working to be more self-reliant, and she covers such topics as gardening, food storage, preparedness, natural health, herbalism, [inaudible 00:46:39], home remedies, and getting started with homesteading basics, green building and remodeling, and she also does book and product reviews and also recipes.

If you go through there and subscribe, she'll send you an eBook called Common Sense Homesteading 101, 7 Steps to becoming More Self-Reliant. Now, all you have to do is click on that button over to the right, and that will take you right over to Laurie's blog. You can sign up and get that right there.

Today in addition to what we have with Laurie speaking, I hope you can catch some of these other presentations. We're having Joel Salatin, America's Farmer, talking about how to work with kids so kids will want to work with you.

Leslie Parsons, who's talking about detoxing your garden soil. If you're concerned about heavy metals or agricultural runoff or even Fukushima radiation, Leslie has real solutions for your organic garden. Gary and Valerie, 7 Ways We Change The World When We Grow Our Own Food, a very inspiring talk. Jill Winger is going to be talking about another form of gardening called mulch gardening.

I hope you stay with us with these other presentations. I've really been having a great time having you along with me. This is Marjory Wildcraft, and you're at the Home Grown Food Summit.