

20 Garden Veggies That Could Each Save You \$25 or More (Including One Worth \$600)

See how much planting a garden can save you at the grocery store. Then plant your own garden.

By Dan Shapley



If you shop at the grocery store for tomatoes, potatoes, zucchini, salad greens or strawberries -- and who doesn't? -- then you are the perfect candidate for becoming a kitchen gardener.

Growing your own will save you an incredible amount of money -- more than \$1,200 if you plant all five, according to the analysis of one Maine gardener.

Roger Doiron, the founder of Kitchen Gardeners International (and a 2009 **Heart of Green Award** winner), undertook the painstaking process of determining how much his garden was worth. He weighed what he grew and compared it to the cost -- on a per pound basis -- of buying the same amount of conventional produce at the grocery store, local produce at the farmers market or organic produce at a nearby Whole Foods.

Doiron has a pretty big garden -- 1,600 square feet -- and he estimated spending \$282 on seeds, supplies, a soil test, compost and water during the year of his analysis. He grew 834 pounds of produce -- 35 varieties of vegetables, fruits and herbs. All told, he saved between \$1,914.50 (compared to conventional produce at the grocery store), \$2,149.15 (compared to local produce at the farmers' market) and \$2,266.93 (compared to organic produce from Whole Foods).

Try and find a better financial bet in this -- or any economy. His return on investment was a whopping 678% (assuming he'd have bought that much produce at a grocery store).

Here's a look at the 20 vegetables he grew that were worth \$25 or more each, listed from most lucrative to least. For simplicity, we're listing only the value of the garden crop as compared to buying conventional produce at a grocery store. We've also rounded to the nearest pound and dollar. To see the comparison to farmers' market and Whole Foods prices for all 35 of Doiron's crops, and every decimal place, check out his [raw data](#).

20 Garden Vegetables Worth \$25 or More

<u>Crop</u>	<u>Pounds</u>	<u>Value</u>
1. Tomatoes	158	\$630
2. Potatoes	142	\$211
3. Salad Greens	26	\$198
4. Zucchini	72	\$136
5. Strawberries	35	\$104
6. Onions	54	\$81
7. Carrots	34	\$68
8. Cucumbers	34	\$68
9. Peas	12	\$62
10. Nasturtiums	1	\$53
11. Snap Beans	21	\$53
12. Winter Squash	47	\$46
13. Leeks	12	\$46
14. Celery Root	10	\$39
15. Eggplant	21	\$38
16. Peaches	13	\$38
17. Basil	4	\$32
18. Cabbage	40	\$31
19. Endive	6	\$28
20. Asparagus	9	\$27

Read [Doiron's account of his garden accounting](#) and find more tips and encouragement for growing your own garden at [Kitchen Gardeners International](#).

Thanks to KGI for sharing the data, and the cool money crop photo. The vegetable photo is by Sue Wilson/Getty Images.