

# PANHANDLE PATH TO HEALTHY LIVING

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TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE

## Save Money Gardening

*Growing a garden has the potential to reduce the amount of money spent on groceries, but this depends on the costs involved in growing the crops, types and amounts of vegetables grown, yields that are derived from the garden, and other factors. So, growing a vegetable garden can save you money, if done wisely.*

**First – you have to know a couple of basics of growing vegetables.**

**Vegetable growing basics** There is a wide variety of vegetables that can be successfully grown. The location of the vegetable garden is crucial. Nearly all vegetables need full-sun and a well-drained soil. The vegetable garden also should be located near a source of water.

**Cool season vegetables** (carrots, beets, lettuce, cauliflower, etc.) are planted in early spring and harvested by mid-summer. Warm season vegetables (tomatoes, pepper, egg-

plant, squash, etc.) are planted after the danger of frost has passed and harvested by early fall. With proper planning, it's possible to grow two or three crops in a given area during the growing season.

Using the same space for two or more crops is called succession planting. Other techniques, such as interplanting and companion planting, are other ways to make efficient use of garden space. The more efficiently you use garden space and resources the larger the potential savings. Below are several other important factors to consider when growing a vegetable garden to save you money.



*Kelli Rehman*



**Select vegetables that you like.** This is simple – you are not likely to take care of - or eat - vegetables that you don't like. So don't waste your time or money planting them in the garden.

**Select vegetables that can be easily stored or preserved.** Selecting vegetables that have a long storage life or that can easily be canned or frozen is a great way to stretch your grocery dollar. Potatoes, onions, sweet potatoes, and winter squash can be stored for several months when stored at the appropriate temperature. Other vegetables, like beans, tomatoes, cucumbers, beets and sweet corn, can be preserved by canning or freezing. Preserving vegetables is a great way to enjoy the “extra” produce later in the year.

**Select vegetables that are expensive to buy in the grocery store.** Grow more expensive items, like tomatoes and melons, or large quantities of vegetables that you purchase regularly. Consider vegetables like beans, beets, onions, spinach, broccoli, peppers, carrots, summer squash, cucumbers, tomatoes, potatoes, lettuce, peas, and Swiss chard. These vegetables provide the biggest returns on your investment of space and time in the garden.



**Do some research and start with a plan.** Decide what you want to grow and determine what will be necessary to be successful. Plan the garden on paper first. Remember, there's no reason why a lack of space means you have to miss out on growing your own food. Container gardening provides the perfect opportunity to grow your own even in the tiniest of spaces.

Research and consider ways to reduce your inputs. Collect rainwater for irrigation, especially if you pay for water. Add compost and well-rotted manure to the garden to improve the soil and reduce the use of fertilizers. Practice the principles of Integrated Pest Management to control insects

and diseases, reducing your reliance on pesticides.



**Start with high quality seeds** – most are relatively inexpensive, and most can be stored for at least one or two years. Find ways to reuse containers, flats, stakes, ties, etc. Remember that saving money with vegetables usually means keeping the costs as low as possible while still growing productive plants.

**Start small.** Like many things, gardening takes practice. Plants will require regular watering, maintenance and harvesting. Growing many different vegetables in a large garden can be overwhelming for new gardeners and can ultimately lead to failure. Limit yourself to just a few types of vegetables the first year. When you become more confident in your abilities and resources, you can increase the size of your vegetable garden and grow a wider variety of crops.

**Finally, have fun growing your own vegetables.** Encourage your neighbors to grow a few vegetables as well. Visit each other's gardens and trade “extra produce” regularly. It's surprising how something as simple as a vegetable garden can impact your life...and hopefully your pocketbook as well!

**Watch for information about upcoming Growing and Nourishing Health Community Garden course near you.**

# The Filing Cabinet

**The filing cabinet was critical to the information infrastructure of the 20th-century. Like most infrastructure, it was usually overlooked.** Craig Robertson

Robertson was researching the history of the U.S. passport, and had spent weeks at the National Archives, struggling through thousands of reels of un-indexed microfilm records of 19th-century diplomatic correspondence when he arrived at the records for 1906.



That year, the State Department adopted a numerical filing system. Suddenly, every American diplomatic office began using the same number for passport correspondence, with decimal numbers subdividing issues and cases. Rather than scrolling through microfilm images of bound pages organized chronologically, he could go straight to passport-relevant information that had been gathered in one place.

**“The filing cabinet is a milestone in the history of storage.”**

Robertson soon discovered that Elihu Root was to thank for making his research easier. A lawyer whose clients included Andrew Carnegie, Root became secretary of state in 1905. But not long after he arrived, the prominent corporate lawyer described himself as “a man trying to conduct the business of a large metropolitan law-firm in the office of a village squire.” The department’s record-keeping practices contributed to his frustration. As was then common in American offices, clerks used press books or copybooks to store incoming and outgoing correspondence in chronologically ordered bound volumes with limited indexing.

For Root, the breaking point came when a request for a handful of letters resulted in several bulky volumes appearing on his desk. His response was swift: he demanded that a vertical filing system be adopted; soon the department was using a numeri-

cal subject-based filing system housed in filing cabinets.

The shift from bound volumes to filing systems is a milestone in the history of classification; the contemporaneous shift to vertical filing cabinets is a milestone in the history of storage.

It is easy to dismiss the object: a rectilinear stack of four drawers, usually made of metal. With suitable understatement, one design historian has noted that “manufacturers did not address the subject of style with regard to filing units.” The lack of style figures into the filing cabinet’s seeming banality. It is not considered inventive or original; it is simply there, especially in 20th-century office spaces; and this ubiquity, along with the absence of style, perhaps paradoxically contributes to the easy acceptance of its presence, which rarely causes comment. In countless movies and television shows, one or more filing cabinets line the walls of newsrooms and advertising agencies or the offices of doctors, attorneys, private eyes, police inspectors. Their appearance defines a space as an office but rarely draws attention to the work it does in that office.

**“To underscore their modernity, filing cabinets were called ‘equipment,’ ‘appliances,’ and ‘machines’ — not furniture.”**

Because the modern world depends upon and is indeed defined by information, the filing cabinet must be recognized as critical to the expansion of modernity. But the focus on filing systems ignores the places where files are stored. The filing cabinet was critical to the infrastructure of 20th-century nation states and financial systems.



The vertical filing cabinet was invented in the United States in the 1890s, and quickly became a fixture throughout North America and around the world. It spread globally because it provided a way to store large amounts of paper so that individual sheets could be retrieved easily. The technique of using drawers for storing a sheet of paper on its long edge was significant because loose papers cannot stand upright on their own. Put another way, the filing cabinet technology enabled loose paper to stand on edge so that more sheets could be stored in less space but still be accessed with minimal difficulty. It allowed loose papers to do the work of paperwork.



How does a filing cabinet do this work? According to patents, the early manufacturers drew on techniques and practices from cabinetry and metalwork in new and useful ways.

In a typical patent, a filing cabinet is a collection of steel plates, rollers, slides, walls, ball bearings, rods, flanges, corner posts, channels, grooves, locks, tops, bottoms, sides, arms, legs, and tongues. All these parts were variously combined to create a cabinet that would allow a drawer to open and close even when it was full of paper that might weigh upwards of 75 pounds. The thousands of sheets of paper that manufacturers claimed could fit in a file drawer were organized using guide cards and manila folders, both accented with tabs. Not only did these features help paper stand vertically on edge; more important, they also made visible the organization of the papers.

**“The filing cabinet does not just store paper; it stores information.”**

As the authors of a secretarial textbook from the mid 1920s put it: “The flat file permits the use of but one hand, while with the vertical file both hands are used, thus increasing speed. That is,

papers filed vertically are accessible, compact, and sanitary.”

The filing cabinet had at least two inventors — and likely several others who remain lost to the historical record. The current accepted version attributes the invention to the Library Bureau, the Boston-based company founded in 1876 by Melvil Dewey, inventor of the eponymous decimal system of library classification. Although the Library Bureau would proudly claim the invention, critical developments happened elsewhere. It was the secretary of a charity organization based in Buffalo, New York, a man identified as Dr. Nathaniel Rosenau, who provided the initial impetus for construction of a vertical filing cabinet.

Inspired by the use of cabinets to store index cards on their edges, Rosenau sought a bigger container for papers.

But if the 20th-century workspace was modern, its innovations did not extend to gender roles; from its early arrival in offices, the filing cabinet reflected and reinforced the gendered division between manual work and mental work, or women’s work and men’s work. In the 20th-century office, female file clerks were expected to handle papers, but not to understand their contents; in contrast, it was male managers and executives who read the files, performing jobs that purportedly required thought.





Early user manuals quickly identified the key principle of vertical filing: “the filing of papers on edge, behind guides, bringing together all papers, to, from, or about one correspondent or subject.” Papers stored this way were easy to locate and to access and, as such, essential to the functioning of a

modern, healthy office.

In Burlington, Vermont, on a weedy lot owned by the city, there stands a stack of eleven metal file cabinets slightly more than 40 feet high. 17 Constructed in 2002, the stack contains 38 drawers; eight are partially open. The travel website Roadside America has named the installation “The World’s Tallest File Cabinet.” Its creator, Bren Alvarez, a local architect and gallery owner, has titled it “File Under So. Co., Waiting for...” Back then Alvarez’s intention was to symbolize — and satirize — “the bureaucracy of urban planning.” The 38 file drawers represented the 38 years that a local road project — then called the “Southern Connector” — had been under review.

Alvarez got the file cabinets from a local business that was discarding them. Some were vintage, with brass nameplates and handles on the outside and springs and levers on the inside. Alvarez welded the cabinets together and used an interior steel post to position them in the middle of the path of the proposed roadway; were the Southern Connector ever built, they would have to be removed. Almost two decades later they remain in place, the road project still under discussion — still “waiting for...”

In 2019 the Burlington City Council finally approve a design and construction budget for the road project, now called the Champlain Parkway; as the mayor declared, “The time for debate, amendment, and appeal has long passed.” Perhaps unsurprisingly, however, state and federal agencies once again delayed the project.



In the early 21st century, the file cabinet is associated with inefficiency. No longer an exemplar of productivity, rationalization, and speed, it instead represents our collective failure to save time and optimize labor.

The transition from the file to the pile was part of a deeper change in workplace hierarchies, as anxious executives were forced to confront the “information processing” that had long been coded as clerical. The arrival of the desktop computer accelerated this change. Initially promoted as a kind of personal assistant, the proliferation of computers meant that many high-level white-collar workers no longer had somebody else to do their clerical chores.



As the cultural historian Ben Kafka argues, bureaucracy now functions as an all too handy explanation for why people cannot get what they want; it is “the story,” he writes, “of how paperwork, even when it works, fails us.” 20 **“No longer an exemplar of productivity and speed, the file cabinet now embodies the facility of bureaucracies to produce paper, to delay, to leave us waiting.”**

The file cabinet remains an icon, its meaning and symbolism reversed, because it remains operational. If, for example, you work for the federal government and you want to get paid in retirement, your paperwork must be processed, by hand, by an employee of the Office of Personnel Management whose workspace is located deep underground in a former limestone mine in north-west Pennsylvania.

There your employee records will be located in one of 28,000 (and counting) file cabinets. Today these paper documents are so precious (and combustible) that hot meals (including pizza) are delivered daily to the site’s 600 workers because open flames and toaster ovens are banned in the lunchroom. Aboveground, the excess that constitutes bureaucracy-as-paperwork is no less weighty.

Several years ago, at a regional office of the Veterans Benefits Administration in North Carolina, the cumulative weight of file cabinets and paperwork threatened the structural integrity of the six-story building. In this case, the backlog of claims was so great that there were some 37,000 files stacked two-feet high atop the cabinets.

Beyond governmental bureaucracies, the failure of file cabinets to contain paper pose a different problem for a different set of office workers. Back

in the 1970s and ’80s — just before the rise of personal computing — piles of paper on the desks of managers and executives became the main way to signify the new phenomenon of “information overload” — a popular uptake of a concept that had emerged from social psychology and systems theory.

In those years, according to media scholar Nick Levine, a desktop piled high with paper epitomized “the stressed-out white collar worker overwhelmed by paper and his or her contradictory expectations to be at once a creative decision-maker and an information processor.

In the 1980s and ’90s, organizational researchers argued that a well-kept pile was a more efficient way to store and process information than a file cabinet. It allowed a worker to find a document simply by glancing at the edge of the pile, and noting whether the pile was organized by color or thickness, or whether the most urgent projects were on top; or it provided a place to store ideas that could not be easily categorized or that seemed important but



had no immediate application. Some pile-keepers were motivated too by a dislike of formal classification found in a file cabinet. In the early 1990s, a team of researchers who interviewed workers at Apple concluded, “Piling requires less mental effort.”

At the same time, piles of paper on a desktop, if kept to a manageable height, could also be understood as exemplary information management practice.



**“Almost from the start, the user interface of the digital ‘desktop’ featured icons that represented files as paper documents stored in tabbed folders.”**

The focus on Apple employees was timely and appropriate. In those years research into the use and organization of physical desktops was to a large extent a response to the appearance, on computer screens, of icons symbolizing paper documents,



manila folders, and file cabinets — an attempt to improve or replace the “desktop metaphor

In 1984, Apple supercharged the metaphor with the launch of the successful and influential Macintosh, in which the “desktop” organized a user interface that featured icons representing files as paper documents stored in tabbed folders or discarded in a wastepaper basket.

The computer user was given a desk with drawers and a typewriter, calculator, telephone, account book, and Rolodex. Next to the desk was a three-drawer file cabinet with a clock on top of it. Most of the icons were merely for show; only the clock, typewriter, and file cabinet were operational. To save a document, you had to open a file drawer by using a joystick to position a disembodied white hand with an extended index finger over the file drawer icon. Inside the drawer were ten yellow lines placed vertically in a list; each line had a tab to simulate a “folder” that you could select and name. Likewise, the Windows operating systems used file cabinet icons throughout the 1990s.

As an icon within a metaphor, the late 20-century file cabinet was as efficient as the early 20-century filing cabinet.

**“The widespread adoption of the ‘desktop’ metaphor underscored that early personal computers would become workplace technologies.”**

File cabinets eventually disappeared from computer screens; they disappeared in the early 21st century when the logic of the desktop metaphor lost its monopoly on the user interface — when cell phones and “Googlization,” which enabled keyword search, provided alternatives to the location-based search-and-storage logic represented by icons of tabbed manila folders.



From a 1921 issue of *Filing and Office Management*—Employee named Mr. Google

**“A century ago, the leading symbol of information management was the filing cabinet; by the turn of the millennium, it was Google search.”**

# Physical Activity for Life

Have you ever heard the saying “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure?” According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), physical activity can prevent one in ten premature deaths. Physical activity can help maintain and improve your health, however, studies show that only half of adults get the amount of physical activity that they need to prevent chronic diseases.

There are benefits for getting the recommended amount of physical activity across the life span. In children, it can reduce the risk of depression, improve bone health, and improve attention. For adults, physical activity lowers the risk of high blood pressure and stroke and reduces arthritis symptoms. Benefits for older adults include improved balance, improved joint mobility, and reduced risk of falling.

## Recommendations by Age

### Preschool-aged Children (ages 3-5 years)

- Physical activity every day throughout the day
- Active play through a variety of enjoyable physical activities

### Children and Adolescents (ages 6-17 years)

- 60 mins (one hour) or more of moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity daily
- A variety of enjoyable physical activities
- As part of the 60 minutes, on at least three days a week, children and adolescents need:
- Vigorous activity such as running or soccer

- Activity that strengthens muscles such as climbing or push ups
- Activity that strengthens bones such as gymnastics or jumping rope

### Adults (ages 18-64 years)

- At least 150 minutes a week of moderate intensity activity such as brisk walking
- At least two days a week of activities that strengthen muscles
- Aim for the recommended activity level but be as active as one is able

### Older Adults (ages 65 years and older)

- At least 150 minutes a week of moderate intensity activity such as brisk walking
- At least two days a week of activities that strengthen muscles
- Activities to improve balance such as standing on one foot
- Aim for the recommended activity level but be as active as one is able.

**Contact us for information about ‘Modified Yoga’ for Seniors held on Monday’s at the Randall County Extension Office.**



**BETTER LIVING  
FOR TEXANS**  
TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

*Written by Cory Edwards, Extension Agent - Better Living for Texans  
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# Path to Randall County

One way to avoid leaving and losing your tools in the garden or the grass is to paint the handle bright red or yellow. You could use some leftover house paint, but even better choices are model paint and nail polish, which will make the tool stand out against the greenery. While you're at it, mark every 6 inches or so along the handle so the next time you need to take a measurement in the yard, you've got a convenient ruler in hand!



## Wendish Egg Artistry & Culture



In May, TEEA members learned about the Wendish culture, the wax-batiked egg painting technique, and tasted authentic Wendish Noodles.

Scan QR Code to visit the Texas Wendish Heritage Museum website.




**DINNER TONIGHT**

### SALAD BAR FOOD SAFETY

- CLEAN** & SANITIZE ALL SURFACES/CONTAINERS. WASH ALL PRODUCE.
- SEPARATE** ALL INGREDIENTS INTO DIFFERENT CONTAINERS AND EACH CONTAINER SHOULD HAVE ITS OWN SERVING UTENSILS.
- COOK** ALL NECESSARY INGREDIENTS BEFORE CHILLING AND PLACING THEM IN THE SALAD BAR.
- CHILL** SALAD BAR ITEMS TO CORRECT TEMPERATURE (BELOW 41 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT)

Find us on Facebook to learn about upcoming events, programs, and educational information.

@RandallCountyFCH



# TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

Panhandle Path to Healthy Living is a Family and Community Health information resource for area families in the Texas Panhandle Counties. The newsletter is published monthly. Readers are encouraged to read the newsletter and then pass it on. Any information may be reproduced for education purposes in any form and credit cited appropriately.



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Postage

*Return Service Requested*

## Path to Plate..... **Tomato Cucumber Garden Salad**

### INGREDIENTS:

2 cups garden lettuce torn into small pieces

1 cup roughly chopped tomatoes

1 cup roughly chopped cucumber

### Dressing:

2 Tbsp chopped fresh basil

2 tsp crushed garlic

3 Tbsp lemon juice

2 tsp olive oil

1/2 tsp dry red chili flakes

### DIRECTIONS:

Combine all ingredients along with the dressing and toss well. Serve immediately.

