Companion Planting- a Birdseye view by Welcome123

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It has been eons since man has discovered that he can actually plant stuff and make it grow. He has used this knowledge to his advantage and in doing so has given agriculture its first break. However, the increasing pace of life coupled with the advances in technology has meant that the general public doesnâ€™t need to grow crops for sustenance.

In recent times, though, the focus has shifted back to gardening and growing plants in backyards or gardens or pots et al. In fact many people have started taking such a keen interest in growing their vegetables that ornamental plants, which were planted for their aesthetic value, have taken a backseat.

It has been noticed that certain plants when planted next to some plants really thrive compared to others. This is the essence of companion planting. Different symbiotic relationships exist between plants and between plants and different organisms. Companion planting derives maximum benefit by leveraging these relationships. These techniques are also favored by organic gardeners and those gardeners who wish to reduce their use of pesticides.

Some plants tend to boost the growth of others there are others known as sacrificial plants that protect their neighbors by attracting pests and diseases to themselves. Herbs are known to be excellent companion plants which can not only assist your fruit and vegetables in development but are also useful in their own right. A word of caution though, not all herbs are compatible with all fruits and vegetables.

Moreover, companion plants can also be broadly seen as attractants and repellants. The attractants are those plants that tend that tend to attract all the beneficial insects so that your plants can thrive. The repellants are known to repel pests and diseases and worms et al.

In addition, there are plants which can be seen as allies. It is well known that legumes fix nitrogen from the air, adding nutrition to the soil. In doing so, they provide essential nutrients to the plants acting as natural fertilizers. Plants that make good neighbors don't compete for space, sun, or nutrients. Needless to say they allow for optimum growth of their neighbors.

Looking at it in a broader perspective weeds are exactly the same thing but in reverse! Weeds compete for all the things mentioned above. Furthermore, man has tried to artificially provide fertilizers and pesticides etc. for optimum plant growth but Nature has its own ways of providing these vital nutrients and getting rid of pests. Personally, I think, we should try to understand and promote these rather than using artificial means for everything.

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