



Improving My Gardening "Game"

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If I'm honest, there's not much going on in the kitchen lately. Winter is dragging on and I'm desperate for some fresh, local vegetables.

The 6-day power outage at my farm during the ice storm stole all my heirloom-tomato marinara and pesto I froze last summer; I have a few carrots still in the ground (using it as a fridge) but other than that the landscape is bleak.

Darn that Punxsutawney Phil!

I bought some seeds last week and I'm starting to get my plan together. I keep chanting "NOW is the time to plan" but it's distinctively unenthusiastic when it's still 11 degrees outside, like it was yesterday morning. However, today it's sunny, so I can fool myself into thinking it's warm outside as I gaze out my office window.

Each gardening season I like to try something new. Whether that's drip hoses, a new trellis or cage style, timed watering, a pest-control device, or simply just new varieties of vegetables.

This year, it's gotta be a better trellis.

I still haven't learned my lesson that while the homemade wooden-stake design is nice to look at, it's worthless when it comes to supporting tomato plants.

Last year, I bought a welded-wire mesh panel for a few dollars at Lowe's, primed and painted it, and folded it over once into a V-shape. This was the perfect trellis for my lemon cucumbers, situated in a raised bed.

For me, and I know the same goes for so many of you out there, gardening is like golf. We're always looking to improve our game and it's something that can only be done over time. Lots of time.

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