

Plot your garden on paper first

BY LISA COON
Copley News Service

A vegetable garden, or a kitchen garden as some call it, doesn't just have to be row upon row of produce-producing plants.

For someone like gardening teacher Roseann Grosse, planning a kitchen garden brings art and horticulture together.

"I like doing herb gardening, and I think I like the idea of combining art and vegetable gardening," said Grosse.

"I think a lot of vegetable gardens look unkempt and can be a little bit of an eyesore," she said. "It needs to be planned so that you have your herbs close to where you're cooking."

"A well-planned garden becomes an element to better eating," she said. "I like to eat healthy, and using fresh herbs and produce is one way to do that."

Grosse is a fan of the book, "The Art of the Kitchen Garden" by Jan and Michael Gertley (Taunton Press, \$29.95). The book takes a step-by-step approach to planning a kitchen garden, from selecting a design and gridding it out on paper to plant selection.

The first thing to decide is the scale of the garden. Keep it manageable, and remember to allow for pathways. Grosse suggests getting away from the row look and designing a garden that looks like a patchwork quilt or one that is circular in shape. A raised garden could also be designed.

After gridding the garden on paper and deciding your plant placement, begin the garden by defining the boundaries on your prepared site — the area should already have been tilled and the soil worked.

Fertilizers may be required to create a lush kitchen garden and maintain proper plant growth and vegetable production. The soil can be amended with organic material such as equal parts of peat moss, compost and aged, well-rotted manure, the Gertleys' book explains.

Using stakes and string, measure off the garden design using your graph-paper plan as a guide. By plotting it out, you should know the number of plants needed for the garden, Grosse said.

"It's kind of like piecing together a quilt. You have to decide how each section will look," she said. "When you look at something like this, it looks complicated, but it's not. It's just the way you arrange the plantings that makes it look different."

"We usually have a flower garden and a vegetable garden, but most people don't think about blending them," she said.

"There's a little more thought that goes into it. If you put tomato and radish plants together, will they look good when they mature? There's thought to

what mature plants look like," Grosse said.

By blending vegetable and herb plantings with flowers, the look of the garden is ever-changing, evolving throughout the season.

"The look of the garden and produce changes through the season, the dynamic is always there," Grosse said. "This is along the same school of the Victorian carpet bed — kind of an extension of that formal garden but combining it with a French cooking garden."

In addition to the vegetable, herb and flower plantings, Grosse also suggests using interesting mulch to give color and dimension to the area. She recommends cocoa hull mulch and pine straw for contrast and a finished look.

"You want people to walk in the garden," she said.

One other tip, when planting the various selections, choose some starter plants, some grown by seed and some older-growth selections. This way, the

garden doesn't have an uneven look and gives a nice visual presence. Also, new plants are added throughout the season.

"This will make you more cognizant of how to make a successful garden, how to prolong the garden," Grosse said. "I think some people forget about the second garden season that starts in August and goes through the first frost where you have cold crops and root crops."

"And when it's time to harvest, you're not going to just go and pick something like you would from a row garden," she said. "You're going to do it symmetrically — a little here, a little there."



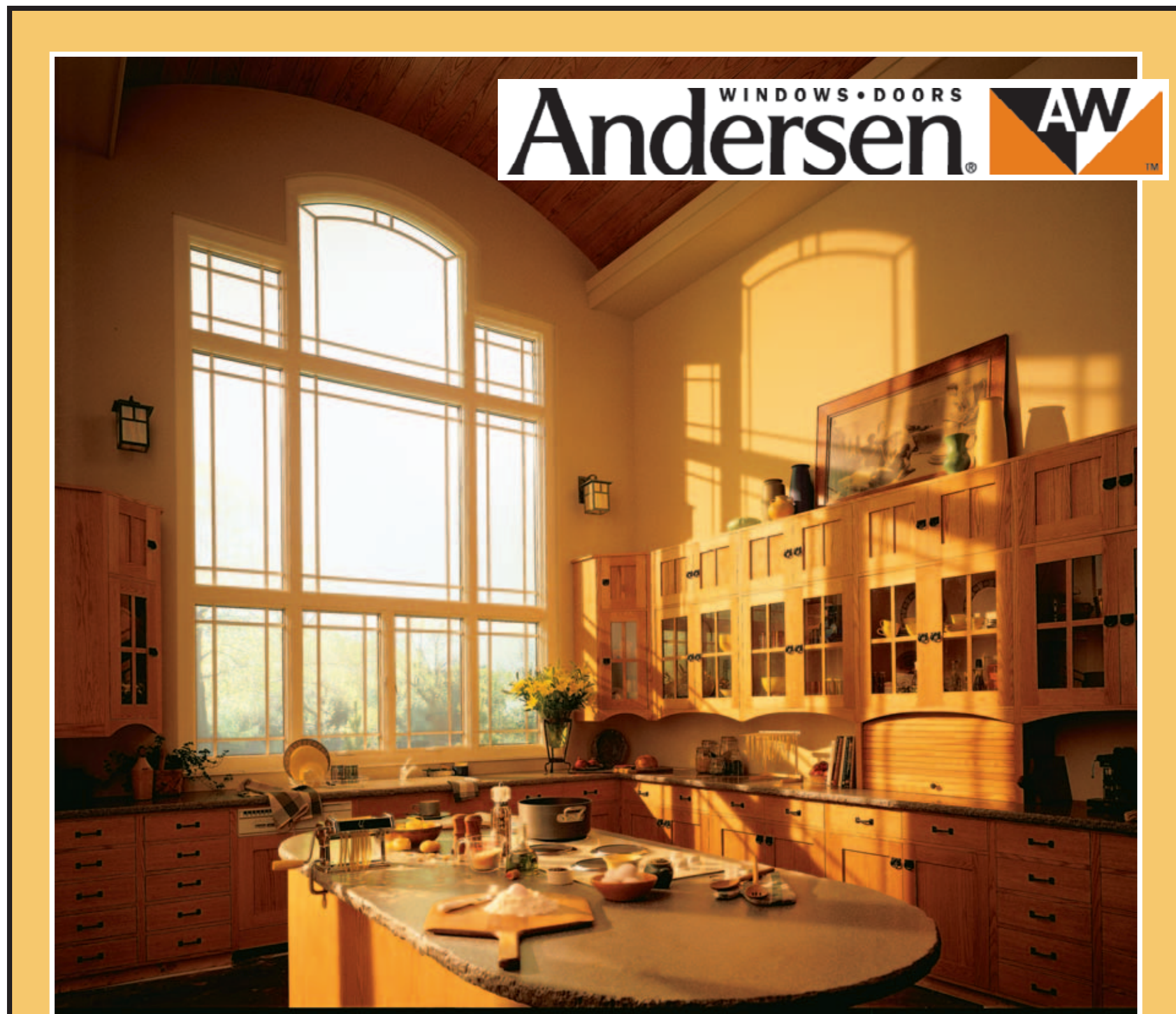
Copley News Service

Planning ahead will help you design a better kitchen garden. After gridding the garden on paper and deciding your plant placement, begin the garden by defining the boundaries on the site. The area should already have been tilled and the soil worked.

MICHIGAN GUTTERS
SEAMLESS
*Licensed Insured
Free Estimates
CALL 933-1244
4/13-742972-HM

Gardeners Wanted!
Organic Plant-It
ORGANICS & HYDROPONICS
Northern Michigan's Largest Selection of Organic Fertilizers, Nutrients and Hydroponic Supplies
www.organicplantit.com
468 U.S. 31 S • Traverse City
Just north of Chum's Corners across from G.T. Homes
(231) 943-0385
4/13-742970-HM

Beautiful **sunbrella** Retractable Awnings
ADVANCED Awnings • Upholstery • Canvas
5474 M-72 E • PO Box 157 • Acme, MI 49610
231-938-2233 • 800-953-2288
1.5 Miles East on M-72 in Acme. Look for us under the red canopies.
4/13-742989-HM



WINDOWS • DOORS
Andersen **AW**

A Window for All Seasons

Our products with High-Performance™ Low-E insulating glass, insulate your home better than windows with standard dual-pane glass. This translates into comfort in heat, cold, rain or shine. Andersen windows can also help lower your energy bills — and saving money is always in season.
LONG LIVE THE HOME™
See your independently owned and operated Andersen dealer for 20/10 year limited warranty details.

SRW CONTRACTING PAVING
6724 East Railway Commons
PO Box 58 • Williamsburg
Asphalt Paving
Residential & Commercial
• Driveways
• Parking Lots
• Subdivisions
• Private Roads
• Tennis Courts
• Resurfacing
We also offer complete excavation services!
231-267-9750
*** FREE ESTIMATES***
4/13-742980c-HM

Where Dreams Become Reality
BROWN
SINCE 1904
LUMBER COMPANY

1701 S. Airport Road
Traverse City
947-1400
4/13-742964-HM