

Male superiority

Asparagus is the first vegetable to harvest in spring—and what a delight it is! If you have never grown asparagus, you should give it a try. It's very easy to grow and will reward with a bountiful harvest for 15–20 years.

Since growing asparagus is a long-term investment, selecting the best variety is key. The sister varieties 'Mary Washington' and 'Martha Washington' have been popular choices for decades. They resist rust disease and are productive. But today we have better options. It all comes down to male superiority!

Did you know there are male and female asparagus plants? As is the case throughout most creatures in nature, the women live a balanced life. They are productive and yet they devote a lot of attention toward the children.

In the case of asparagus, female plants produce spears but they also devote a lot of energy toward the production of seeds, which are in the form of red berries. These berries are beautiful, but most of us grow asparagus for spears, not for berries.



This may be the only case in nature where men are superior. Male asparagus plants devote all of their energy toward spear production—they are much more productive than women plants, especially when young. We recommend the all-male lines from Rutgers University, 'Jersey Supreme' and 'Jersey Knight'. *DG*

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