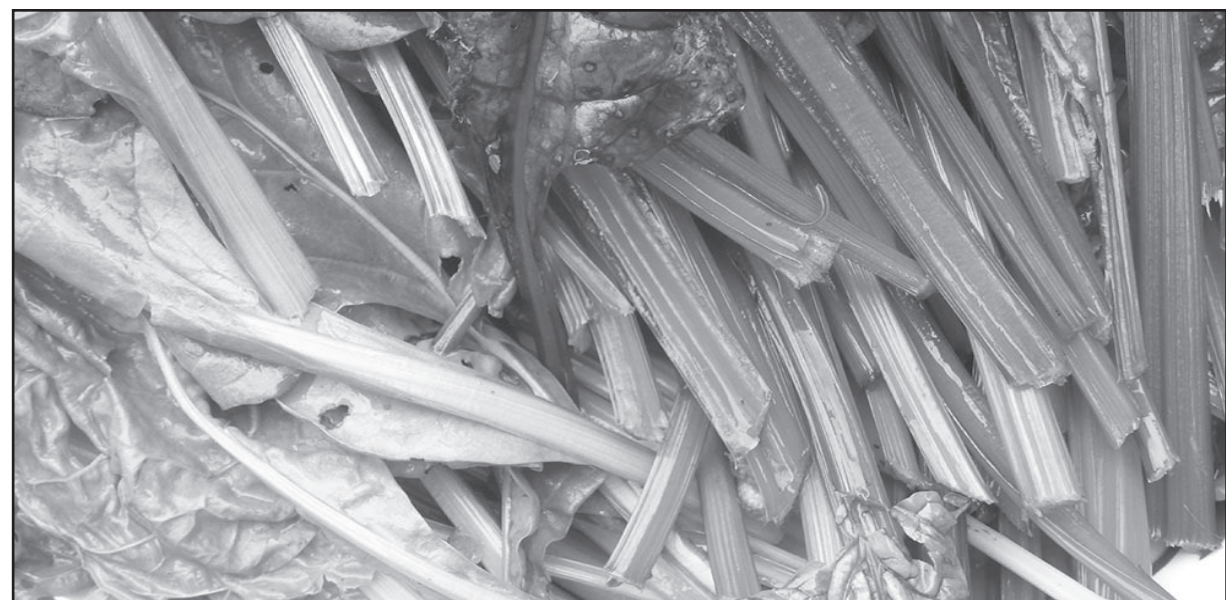


## Dakota Gardener: Top vegetable varieties in 2024

By Tom Kalb, Horticulturist NDSU Extension



The leaf stems of Bright Lights Swiss chard come in brilliant shades of red, orange and yellow. (Flickr photo by Cristina Sanvito)

The first step to growing a great vegetable garden is to select the best varieties.

Which varieties grow best in Dakota gardens?

The answer is simple. To identify the best varieties for gardeners in the Dakotas, we need to test the varieties in the gardens of the Dakotas.

That's why we started the North Dakota Home Garden Variety Trials in 2008. Every year I have worked with over 200 families to evaluate promising vegetable varieties in their home gardens.

This year we assembled a team of 365 families. Let me share with you a few of the highlights from 2024.

The spring of 2024 was cold and wet. That made it a great year to test super sweet corn. Most super sweet corn varieties struggle to germinate in cold, wet soils.

Under these stressful conditions, we tried a new variety

called Bolt. True to its name, the Bolt seedlings jumped out of the ground and produced an early and bountiful harvest of quality corn. It was our highest-rated super sweet corn variety this year. Kate was another strong performer this year.

Good performance in the garden is important, but good performance on the kitchen table is just as important. For the last two years we have tested red carrots. Red carrots may be nutritious, but our team told us that red carrots taste bitter. What good is a nutritious vegetable if nobody wants to eat it? Forget about red carrots.

Fortunately, we found two great orange carrots this year. I encourage you to try Caravel. Our team loved its sweet and crunchy roots. Naval is another great carrot for the Dakotas. It has roots that are beautiful, straight and delicious. Naval roots can be pulled out of the

ground easily without breaking.

Asian and snack cucumbers did well in our trials again this year. Summer Dance will delight you with its crisp, bitter-free fruits. Green Light produces an abundance of delicious cucumbers that you eat when 6 inches long and do not need peeling.

This year, we have identified lettuce varieties that tolerate heat and produce a bumper crop of crisp leaves. These "Summer Crisp" lettuce varieties include Muir, Nevada, Magenta and Chrystal. Grow these varieties and you will enjoy salads all summer long.

I always thought romaine lettuce was hard to grow. My team and I discovered it is easy to grow romaine lettuce if you pick the right variety. Great varieties include Fusion, Newham, Bluerock and a new variety called Sunland. These varieties can tolerate heat and produce thick, crunchy, flavorful leaves.

Maybe okra isn't your favorite vegetable. I understand completely. My wife tells me it is an acquired taste. Okra is difficult to grow in the Dakotas because it demands hot weather and a long growing season. This year we had 15 brave families evaluate okra varieties. We found a new variety, Buffalo Bill 91, which every family liked. A 100% recommendation percentage for any variety is impressive. For okra, it is shocking. It must be a winner.

Other new and notable varieties this year include Abominable pumpkin, which produced stunning, pure white pumpkins. The fruit quality of Butterfingers yellow summer squash was tremendous. The yield of Madonna orange winter squash was truly amazing.

The highest-rated variety we tested in 2024 is not a new variety, but it may be the most dazzling vegetable you have ever seen. The leaf stems of Bright Lights Swiss chard come in brilliant shades of red, orange and yellow. Even if you don't like the taste of Swiss chard, try Bright Lights. You don't have to eat it. Just look at it. You will be awed by its beauty.

What I just described is a small sample of what we discovered this year. To learn more about the best varieties for North Dakota, do a Google search of North Dakota Home Garden Variety Trials or go to [ndsug.org/homegardentrials](https://ndsug.org/homegardentrials).

On this webpage, we list our recommended varieties for all vegetables grown in North Dakota.

## Life's Outtakes: Author's Day by Daris Howard

I enjoy few things as much as going to a school and telling children stories for an author's day. I suppose I'm different from most authors who do that. The ones I have seen often talk to the young people about what it's like to write a book and get it published. Some talk about the publishing process. Others encourage the students to write their own stories. All of those do a great job, but that wouldn't work for me. Instead, I like to dive in and tell stories. For me, the best way I can get them to think of one of their own is to tell them one.

I have had some wonderful experiences telling stories. One day, I arrived at a school, and the principal told me they planned to take me around to the different grades, spending one or two hours in each. They would pull all the classes for the grades into one large group.

I started with kindergarten and first grade. There was one cute little blond kindergartener who was lively and talkative. I told them stories about when I was their age and about my dog, and

she was full of questions.

The next group was second and third grade. In the third grade, there was a blond girl who was the exact duplicate of the one from kindergarten, just older. And sure enough, she was lively and talkative, too. I was dressed in my cowboy clothes, representative of many stories from the days of my youth. As I finished, she begged me to put on my cowboy hat.

When I did, she squealed with delight. "I finally get to meet a real cowboy!"

We skipped a few grades to pick them up later, and I was ushered into a gym. It was set up with a microphone and speaker in front of the bleachers. The seventh, eighth, and ninth graders were brought in.

"What are we here for?" I heard one girl ask another.

"I'm not sure," the second girl replied.

"I heard some teachers talking about how someone is here to encourage us to write," a third girl said.

The first girl rolled her eyes. "That is so stupid. Writing is bor-

ing." I asked the person introducing me to keep it short, so they just said my name and that I was an author. Even that much, and I could see the young people tuning me out.

I started. "Have any of you ever had to run for your life from a pack of coyotes?"

Immediately, I had their attention. I then told them the story of searching one dark winter night to find a cow that had escaped from the corral. I knew she would be calving, and following her tracks in the snow, I finally found her with her newborn calf. But just as I decided I needed to get the wet calf to the shelter of the barn, I heard the first coyote howl. Picking up the calf, I started to run.

By the time I got to the point where the coyotes caught up to us and surrounded us, the students were on the edge of their seats as I told them that I set the calf down and turned to fight. When I finished that story, I turned to a story about a famous racehorse I took care of. As the lunch bell sounded, many of the

students surrounded me, wanting to ask questions.

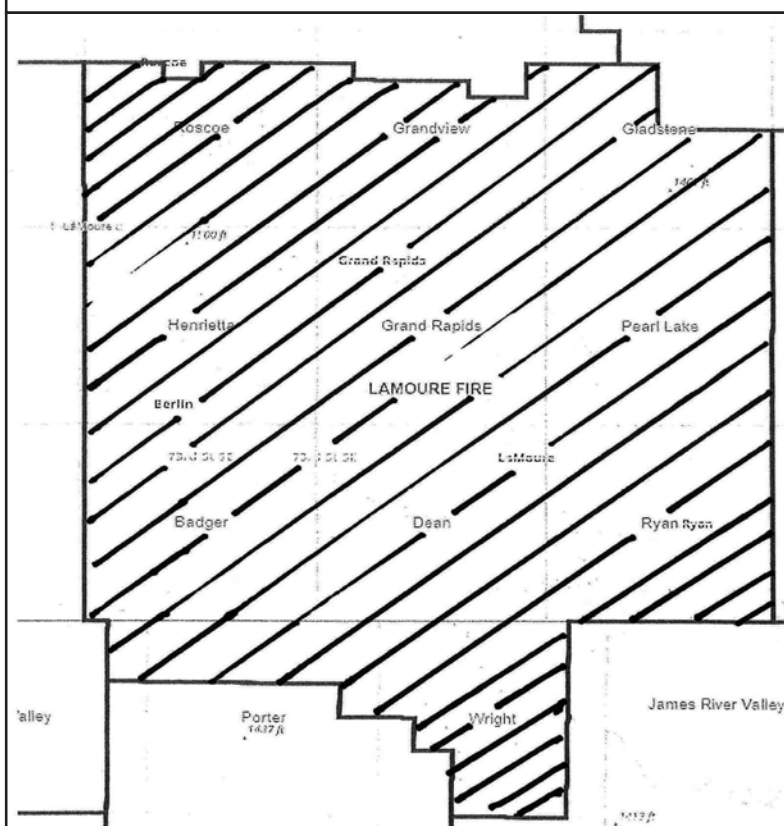
After lunch, my last group was the fourth, fifth, and sixth graders. I considered which stories would be best for them. I thought the ones about the dog might be too simple, but the coyote one might be a little scary. I decided to go with the coyotes but pulled back on it a little.

I could tell they were with me into the story. Sometimes, when they are intent on the story, they will gradually scoot forward an inch or so at a time until I am surrounded. I don't think they even realize they are doing it. When I told them about the coyotes surrounding us, one sweet little fourth grader blurted out, "Did you live?"

Some teachers grinned, but I simply said, "Yes, but let me tell you how."

As the students leave, they often share a story of their own with me that they will now write down. And that is awesome, because that's when I know I've done my job.

NOTICE OF HEARING ON PETITION TO ESTABLISH A RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT TO ALL PERSONS RESIDING IN OR HAVING ANY INTEREST IN REAL OR PERSONAL PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THE FOLLOWING BOUNDARIES: 335 SQUARE MILES SHOWN IN THE FOLLOWING MAP DEMARKED WITH DIAGONAL LINES:



AND INCLUDING ALL THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS IN LAMOURE AND DICKEY COUNTIES:

Agency	Township	County	Range	Sections
LaMoure Fire	Dean	LaMoure	133-61	1-36
LaMoure Fire	Ryan	LaMoure	133-60	1-36
LaMoure Fire	Pearl Lake	LaMoure	134-60	1-36
LaMoure Fire	Gladstone	LaMoure	135-60	7-9,16-36
LaMoure Fire	Grandview	LaMoure	135-61	7, south half of 8-10, east half of 12, 13-36
LaMoure Fire	Grand Rapids	LaMoure	134-61	1-36
LaMoure Fire	Henrietta	LaMoure	134-62	1-36
LaMoure Fire	Roscoe	LaMoure	135-62	7-8,south half of 9, 10-36
LaMoure Fire	Badger	LaMoure	133-62	1-36
LaMoure Fire	Porter	Dickey	132-60	1-13
LaMoure Fire	Wright	Dickey	132-59	2-11,14-18,20-23,26-28,33-35
LaMoure Fire	Valley	Dickey	132-61	1,12
LaMoure Fire	City of LaMoure			
LaMoure Fire	City of Berlin			

Pursuant to: N.D.C.C. § 18-10-01 et seq.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE: that on the 14th day of January, 2024, at 8:00 p.m. at the basement meeting room of the LaMoure County Courthouse located at 202 4th Ave. NE, LaMoure, ND 58458, a public hearing shall take place involving a joint meeting of the boards of county commissioners of LaMoure and Dickey Counties to determine whether the proposed district is suited to the general fire protection policy of each county as a whole, and to determine the boundaries of the proposed district and whether as suggested in the petition or otherwise, and to make a written order of such determination which must describe the boundaries of the district and be filed in the office of the county auditors of each county in which such district is situated and all persons residing in or owning taxable property within the proposed district shall have an opportunity to be heard respecting the formation of such district or the location of the boundaries thereof.

(December 26, 2024 & January 2, 2025)

### TRUCK DRIVER WANTED

Agriswine Alliance is looking for OTR livestock truck driver. Med card and CDL required. Will Train. Benefits available.

605-725-6906

### Dickey County Public Transportation

Handicapped Accessible Vehicles

Ellendale: Monday - Thursday 8:30am - 4:30pm

Oakes: Monday - Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm

To Aberdeen: The third (3) Monday of each month

If you need a ride, call: 742-3509

The McIntosh County Bus goes through Ellendale on their way to Aberdeen the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month. If you would like to catch a ride call: 701-731-0072

### Dickey County Senior Menu

Ellendale: 349-4513 Oakes: 742-3509

Friday: Sloppy Joe on a bun, Peas and Carrots, Tator Tots, Banana, Ketchup, 1% Milk

Monday: COOK'S CHOICE SURPRISE!!

Tuesday: Knoephla Soup, Sausage & Sauerkraut, Green Beans, Saltine Crackers, Cranberry Velvet, 1% Milk,

Wednesday: CLOSED HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

Thursday: Tater Tot Casserole, Corn, Peaches, Whole Grain Bread, Soft Margarine Cup, 1% Milk

### ACCEPTING BIDS FOR MOBILE HOMES

Dickey County is accepting bids for the sale of mobile homes that will need to be removed or work out lot rent agreement with mobile home property owner and will be sold as is.

Bids will be opened January 14, 2025, at 10:00 am at the Dickey County Sheriff's Office, 309 2nd St. N, Ellendale ND. Bidders Information: Each bid envelope shall contain only one bid proposal and shall be marked with words Mobile Home along with unit #. Each envelope can only contain 1 unit number, separate envelopes for each unit.

Mail bids to Dickey County Sheriff's Office, PO Box 297, Ellendale, ND 58436. Bids must be in the possession of the County Sheriff's Office before 4:30 p.m., January 13, 2025.

The Sheriff's Office reserves the right to reject any and all bids. The top bidder will be notified and must be taken care of within 48 hours of being notified.

Unit # 40-001 Huebner Lot 66 1975 Homette Homes Oakes, ND  
Unit # 39-031 Westside Mobile Home Court Lot 18 1976 Rega Ellendale, ND

(December 26, 2024 & January 2, 2025)

### TRUCK DRIVER WANTED

Dakota Plains Feed & Grain in Hecla is looking for a feed truck driver. CDL & Med Card required. Will Train. Benefits available.

605-725-6906

### Rental assistance is available



Great Plains Housing Authority rental assistance can help put money back in your pocket to better afford groceries, medical expenses, and more! Contact GPHA to apply at 701-252-1098 or apply online at:

WWW.GREATPLAINSHA.COM

Available only to residents in Stutsman, Foster, Eddy, Wells, Logan, Dickey and Sargent Counties. 300 2nd Ave NE - Suite 200 | Jamestown, ND 58401

