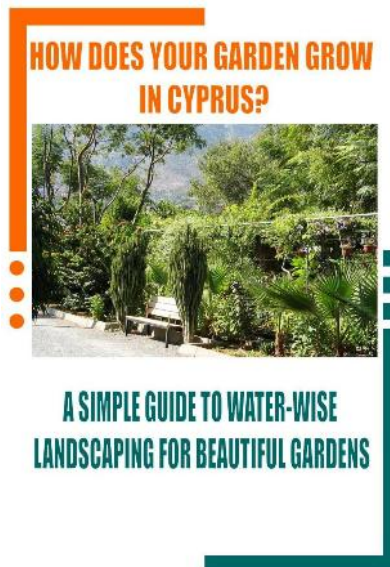


**“How Does Your Garden Grow in Cyprus?”
Guide now available – How smart gardening can help SAVE Water**



Everyone is looking for ways to save water, especially ways that will not sacrifice the gardens that make Cyprus so beautiful! As part of its work to promote water conservation, the Supporting Activities that Value the Environment (SAVE) Project has developed a guide on water-wise landscaping. The guide, titled “How Does Your Garden Grow in Cyprus: A Simple Guide to Water-Wise Landscaping for Beautiful Gardens”, demonstrates how to save water while maintaining a lush, beautiful garden even in the face of Cyprus’ high temperatures and water shortages. The guide is available to anyone who wants to garden in a more environmentally sustainable way!

“How Does Your Garden Grow in Cyprus” explains the seven key elements in water-wise landscaping: 1) Planning and Design; 2) Soil Types; 3) Plant Selection; 4) Grass Use; 5) Watering; 6) Mulch Use; and, 7) Appropriate Maintenance. It applies these elements to the specific gardening conditions on the island and includes a section on home composting and a list of additional resources for the true enthusiast.

Water-wise landscaping is commonly called xeriscaping, which means “dry gardening”. But this does not mean that your garden is dry and brown! Instead, xeriscaping encourages the use of native and acclimatized plants combined with a series of water-saving planting and maintenance techniques. The result is beautiful flowering gardens that simply use less water and are healthier for the environment. This approach is becoming increasingly popular worldwide, especially in other arid and semi-arid climates, and is reminiscent of traditional Cypriot practices.

Printed in color and full of helpful pictures and graphics, this guide is easy to both use and understand. Special emphasis is placed on mulching and home composting since they are both excellent ways for any household to sustainably recycle garden and kitchen wastes into products that will enrich garden soil (compost) and minimize water loss (mulch). The communities of Lefke/Lefka and Beyarmudu/Pergamos have already experimented with mulching and home composting through SAVE pilot projects intended to demonstrate just how easy and effective these garden activities can be. For more information on these projects, xeriscaping, mulching and composting, contact SAVE.

“How Does Your Garden Grow in Cyprus” is available in Turkish and English from SAVE and through several garden centers and participating organizations. The guide is also available from the internet at www.save-irg.com

SAVE works to build local capacity to better protect and manage Cyprus’ natural and cultural resources. SAVE is a key component of the overall U.S. assistance program in Cyprus funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Table of Contents

Water-wise Landscaping.....3
 The Basics.....4
 Step 1: Planning and Design.....5
 Step 2: Soil Types.....6-7
 Step 3: Plant Selection.....8-9
 Step 4: Grass Use.....10
 Step 5: Watering.....11-12
 Step 6: Mulch Use.....13-14
 Step 7: Appropriate Maintenance.....15
 How to Home Compost.....16-17
 Additional Resources & References.....18-19



Water-wise Landscaping

This guide is for anyone that wants to know how to use the least amount of water possible and still maintain a beautiful flowering garden. The answer is water-wise landscaping, also known as xeriscaping.

Water-wise landscaping is ideal for the Cyprus household that wants a responsible alternative to traditional gardening. It is also perfect for holiday homes which may otherwise suffer from irregular maintenance. This does not necessarily mean a garden dominated by rocks and cactus. Water-wise landscaping minimizes water use by using plants acclimatized to the Mediterranean zone without compromising the garden aesthetics and also ensures that none of the water used in the garden is wasted. It is easy and cost-effective, so get started now!



Step 4: Grass Use

Traditional grass lawns are not actually traditional for Cyprus and should be avoided as they have the greatest watering needs. This is especially true for holiday homes which are empty for large parts of the year – there is no need to water a large green lawn that gets used for only a few months. However, if you still love your grass too much to give it up, then selecting the right kind of grass and the right place to plant it can make all the difference.



A water-wise lawn means using low-water drought-tolerant grass varieties. Selectively and strategically deciding where they should go is the next step. Lawns should be used in combination with making the most of patios, walkways and other planting areas. Keep grass areas limited. Ensure that lawns can benefit from rainwater runoff to cut down on watering needs. Also, be sure to only water lawns when they need water, not on a preset schedule. Consult with your local nurseries for the various types of grasses best-suited to our climate and available in Cyprus. Examples include grasses such as Bermuda, Lippia-Paspals and Purple Maiden among others.



Careful consideration of aesthetics and functionality of grass areas can help you incorporate them into your water-wise landscape. You can still have green areas, but patios, decorative areas, or walkways can be great alternatives or fillers.

Keep in mind that narrow areas and small odd-shaped areas are difficult for any irrigation equipment to efficiently water.



You can water and maintain blocky grass areas more easily and efficiently.



Efficient watering is all about making the most of every drop that goes into your garden.

Step 5: Watering

Whether you are watering by hand or with a state-of-the-art drip irrigation system, how and when you water matters. A well-planned approach to irrigation can save tons of water a year. How much water you should give to your plants depends on a variety of factors, such as:

- Soil type
- Plant type
- Mulch being used
- Time of year

Watering Advice:

- Let the soil partially dry out before watering again. The soil will look less dark than wet soil, but not be completely dried out and looking crumbly or hard and cracked.
- Know the recommended water needs for your plant and soil type. For example, you do not need to water cactus as much as more arid plants.
- Plants (established plants do not need as much watering as new plants).
- Water less during the rainy winter months.
- Irrigate during the coolest times of the day – early morning and evening when you lose less water to evaporation and the wind.
- Use low-flow irrigation, such as a drip irrigation system, a container with a spout, or just a hose pipe with a low flow-rate. Ensure water is delivered directly to the base of the plant. Let the soil absorb the water slowly reaching the roots of the plants. Sprinklers are one of the least efficient ways to water.
- Pay attention while you water so that you do not overwater.
- Water your plants only – not the hardscape (i.e. pavements, tiles, driveways, sidewalks).
- Use mulch around your plants. It is one of the easiest and cheapest ways to keep the water in the soil as long as possible for your plants. If using drip irrigation, place the drip lines under the mulch.

Tea tray

Low-flow irrigation

Drip irrigation

Mulch with drip irrigation

