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Prickly Pear

Today on Gardening in a Minute: prickly pear.

For a low-maintenance plant that can take the sun and survive with little water, try prickly pear.

This evergreen cactus makes an attractive backdrop in mixed borders, and even adds some color of its own.

Prickly pear is drought tolerant and salt tolerant, has few pest or disease problems, and grows in even the sandiest soils. It provides food and shelter for animals, making it a great Florida-friendly choice for any yard.

Gardeners love the bright yellow flowers that appear in spring and summer, and then give way to bright red, egg-shaped fruits.

The fruits have a tart watermelon-like flavor. Just be sure to peel or singe them before eating, since they do have spines.

Or try growing one of the spineless types for all the fun without the hassle!

For more information about prickly pear and many other gardening topics, contact your county Extension office or visit Gardening in a Minute dot com.

Gardening in a Minute is a production of the University of Florida's Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology, IFAS Extension, and WUFT-FM.