Goldenrods combine well with other late summer and fall bloomers, especially asters, eupatoriums and grasses. They make outstanding cut flowers and many work well in dry arrangements. If you avoid some of the aggressive species like Solidago canadensis, you can enjoy goldenrods in many areas of the garden.

Goldenrods are not fussy. They prefer plenty of sun and will grow in almost any soil, although they do better in good garden loam with adequate drainage. Most goldenrods are drought-resistant and need little supplemental watering once established. Be careful not to over-fertilize or irrigate your plants since too much food and water promotes rapid growth, encouraging your plants to become garden thugs. Just leave them alone and enjoy them.

For Natural Gardens
Below are a few good species for wildflower gardens or meadow plantings.

**Zigzag Goldenrod**
*Solidago flexicaulis* is an all-purpose species that doesn’t get too tall or spread aggressively. It likes a little shade, but isn’t picky about location and tolerates a wide variety of soils. It’s wispy, brilliant yellow flowers spring from the nodes along its stem in alternate directions, earning its common name. Topping out at 3 feet, it combines beautifully with phlox, asters and shorter Joe-Pye weeds like *Eupatorium dubium*.

**Early Goldenrod**
*Solidago juncea* has bright yellow flowers that are borne in showy plume-like panicles atop 3-4’ stems. As the common name suggests, this species has one of the earliest bloom periods (mid-summer) of the many goldenrods and combines well with coneflowers, phlox and Joe-Pyes.

**Gray Goldenrod**
*Solidago nemoralis* is one of the smaller goldenrods, often reaching no more than 2 feet tall. Arching stems with grayish hairs are topped with golden wands in September and October. Native to most of North America, it is one of the easiest species to grow. It is an ideal choice for difficult locations like a hot, sunny slope with rocky soils or a neglected patio container. It combines well with aromatic aster (*Aster oblongifolius*).
Blue-Stemmed Goldenrod

*Solidago caesia* is distinctive goldenrod that is both elegant and shade-tolerant. Arching wands of clustered golden blooms, contrast with blue-green stems in September. This goldenrod adds bright fall color to a dry shady spot and combines well with wood asters and heucheras. It also self sows in good conditions.

For the Garden Connoisseur

These choice cultivars of goldenrod are great for more formal garden plantings and containers, but they are equally at home in more natural settings.

‘Fireworks’ Goldenrod

Rough-stemmed goldenrod, *Solidago rugosa* ‘Fireworks’ is a lovely, vigorous, 3-foot plant that puts on a magnificent show in mid to late September through October. The flowers arch over in a spray, suggesting a shower of gold. It’s a wonderful plant for adding height to the back of the border or to naturalize with smooth aster (*Aster laevis* ‘Bluebird’), *Boltonia asteroides* ‘Snowbank’, or switch grass (*Panicum virgatum* ‘Heavy Metal’), an ornamental grass with dramatic blue-green foliage.

‘Golden Fleece’ Goldenrod

Heart-leafed goldenrod, *Solidago sphacelata* ‘Golden Fleece’, produces an abundance of luminous yellow flowers in a wild display that resembles a chenille blanket with its soft appearance and furrowed texture. This goldenrod reaches about 18 inches tall, give or take a few inches, and is tolerant of dry soils and light shade. Wood asters make great fall companions and the beautiful heart-shaped leaves contrast with the feathery foliage of blazing star (*Liatris* sp).

‘Crown of Rays’ Goldenrod

This clump-forming goldenrod hybrid features tiny, bright yellow flowers borne in dense, horizontal, plume-like panicles on the ends of upright, stiff, alternate-leaved stems growing to 24” tall. It has a long mid-summer to fall bloom period.

‘Little Lemon’ Goldenrod

This diminutive beauty is exceptionally compact with bright, light yellow flowers in late summer or early fall. It is a versatile and easy to grow native that combines well with purple and pink asters in the garden and in containers. Great as a cut flower, it is also very attractive to butterflies! It combines beautifully with *Liatris microcephalus*.