

FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING

A fall garden can be more productive, taste sweeter, and yield a higher quality of vegetable than a spring garden. Experienced gardeners know that our late summer and fall weather favors more productive growth than the harsher spring climate. Likewise the quality and even the sweetness increases with the cooler weather. The cooler fall air will result in a longer harvest period and actually increase the sugar content making for a bountiful and tasty crop.

PLANNING YOUR FALL VEGETABLE GARDEN

Careful planning of your fall garden will help to maximize this ideal growing period. There are four classes of fall crops that are classified by their tolerance of freezing temperatures. The following chart will help you to plan your garden even if you begin late in the season.

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| <p style="text-align: center;">WARM SEASON CROPS (Must be planted early. Killed by frost. Seed start in Aug. Plant starts can be planted until mid September) Snap bean • Southern pea • Summer Squash • Winter Squash Cucumber • Sweet Corn • Early Tomatoes • Early Peppers</p> <p style="text-align: center;">COOL SEASON CROPS (Damaged by light Frost. Seed start or transplant seedlings in September) Head Lettuce • Cauliflower • Kohlrabi • English Pea • Celery • Cabbage • Broccoli</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HARDIER COOL SEASON CROPS (Tolerate repeated light frosts. Seed start or transplant in September) Carrot • Parsnip • Beet • Brussels Sprout • Leaf Lettuce • Endive • Radish Mustard Greens • Rutabaga • Turnip • Watercress</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HARDEST COOL SEASON VEGGIES AND ROOT CROPS (Survive winter weather. Seed or plant starts as early as September. Can plant until Spring) Bulb Onion • Green Onion • Chives • Garlic • Leek • Shallot • Spinach • Parsley • Collard • Kale • Buttercrunch and Romaine Lettuce</p> |
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*It is easiest to begin seeding in the house and then transplant seedlings after 4-5 weeks. Or purchase your seedlings from Little Red Riding Hood in the beginning of August.

PREPARING THE SOIL AND FERTILIZING

You can improve our heavy clay soil by helping it to become well drained yet at the same time moisture retentive. Till in well-rotted manure, Nature Life Composted Cotton Burrs, and fertilome Gardener's Special. Mid-season apply fertilome Gardener's Special a second time.

WATERING

Proper watering can mean the difference between good production and poor production. Vegetables need 1 inch of water per week during their active growing periods. Always soak the soil thoroughly when watering.

CONTROLLING WEEDS & INSECTS

Cultivate just deeply enough to cut the weeds off below the surface of the soil. Be careful not to damage the plants when cultivating. You can apply corn gluten after plants have emerged to organically control other weed invaders. For insects, spray or dust with Sevin insect killer. For Cabbage Worms use Dipel Dust.

HARVESTING

Harvest Cabbage when the heads reach a usable size. To harvest, cut the head off above the outer leaves. Heads will split if they are left on the plant too long. Harvest cauliflower by cutting when the head or "curd" reaches a useable size. If they are left on the plant too long they will discolor and become loose or ricey. Broccoli, unlike cauliflower, produces useable heads for several weeks. Lateral shoots will develop after the central cluster has been removed. Harvest the heads by cutting, before the yellow flowers open. Instead of producing one large head like cabbage, Brussels sprouts produce many small heads. Pick the lowest heads on the plant each time you harvest. As the lower heads are picked, more will develop at the top. Start picking before the lower leaves on the plant turn yellow. After freezing weather occurs remove the leaves, cut the plants off, and stack them upright in a cool dark place. The sprouts on the plant can be picked during the winter. Harvest kohlrabi when the bulb is 2-3" in diameter. If the bulb gets too large, it will become tough and woody.

If you have any question please call, write or drop by:

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