

PLANNING A VEGETABLE GARDEN

(Including Planting and Harvest Calendar)

A well-planned vegetable garden provides an economical and continuous supply of fresh, nutritious vegetables throughout the season. An urban gardener with a fairly small plot can expect to raise a substantial amount of fresh vegetables from a good garden. A suburban or farm gardener with plenty of space can raise quantities of vegetables to can, freeze, or otherwise store.

A successful garden begins with planning. First of all, plant what you enjoy. If space and time are limited, select crops that are especially tasty when freshly picked and difficult to buy in your area.

There are many techniques for making the most of garden space, including succession planting of the same crop at different planting dates, interplanting of quick-maturing crops next to long-season crops next to long-season crops, and double-cropping one crop after another has been harvested.

Gardening is fun, but it's also hard work. Planting and caring for a family garden is easy during the first few weeks of spring. The real work starts when the weather gets hot. Weeding, thinning, replanting late crops, and many other jobs are essential to maintain a good garden.

Location and Soil

Urban gardeners have little choice as to garden location, but rural gardeners should give careful consideration to these important points:

- (1) The garden should be convenient to the house, water and tools.
- (2) Soil should be well drained and the best available.
- (3) For maximum sunlight, locate the garden away from trees and buildings.

The size of a family garden depends on the number in the family, the time available, and the amount of canning, freezing and storing to be done. It's better to do a good job with a small garden than a poor job with a large garden.

The Garden Plan

A good gardener plans the garden on paper long before spring. The early arrival of seed catalogs stimulates this desire.

An important reason to plan is to stretch the harvest season. A well-planned garden provides a continuous supply of vegetables from early spring to late fall. Spinach planted in the fall will live over winter and can be picked in early spring. Delaware Cooperative Extension HG-34.1. Vegetable Planting/Harvest Calendar suggests such a planting.

Careful planning also reduces the need to can, freeze and store great quantities of food. Vegetables picked over a seven or eight month period not only decreases the amount of preserving necessary, but also provides a continuous source of fresh vegetables for the family table.

In planning your garden, keep in mind the area available and the needs, likes and dislikes of the family. A rough sketch will do, but it must be fairly accurate to be useful. Make the plan to scale if possible, using 1/8-inch to 1 foot. Determine the shape, length and width of the garden, the space between rows, vegetables to be planted in each row, and late vegetables that will follow the early ones. Consider these factors:

- (1) Perennial crops such as asparagus, strawberries and rhubarb should be located at one side of the garden.
- (2) Tall crops such as corn should not shade small crops such as beets and carrots.
- (3) Include succession crops, a fall garden, small fruits, and over wintered crops to mature in the spring.
- (4) Crops and varieties to be planted. Consider planting dates, whether seeded or transplant crops. Use HG 34.1 to assist you.
- (5) Rotate crops so similar vegetables are not planted in the same location consecutively, if possible.
- (6) Choose varieties that are disease resistant.
- (7) Your Delaware Cooperative Extension Office has additional Facts Sheets on specific crops to assist you.

Your diagram may resemble the simple plan [Del Coop Ext HG-36.2] following this section.

Other Sources of Gardening Information

The HG (Home and Garden) series of fact sheets are intended to be a useful guide for Delaware gardeners. However, there are hundreds of creative and reliable sources on vegetable gardening. Newspapers and magazines often contain good information. The Internet has volumes of material as well as local libraries. Garden and farm supply stores are valuable resources. One of the best sources of gardening know-how is a friend, neighbor, or relative who has gardened a long time. Also, the Delaware Master Gardeners staff the Garden Line in each of the three counties to answer your gardening questions. New Castle County 302-831-8862

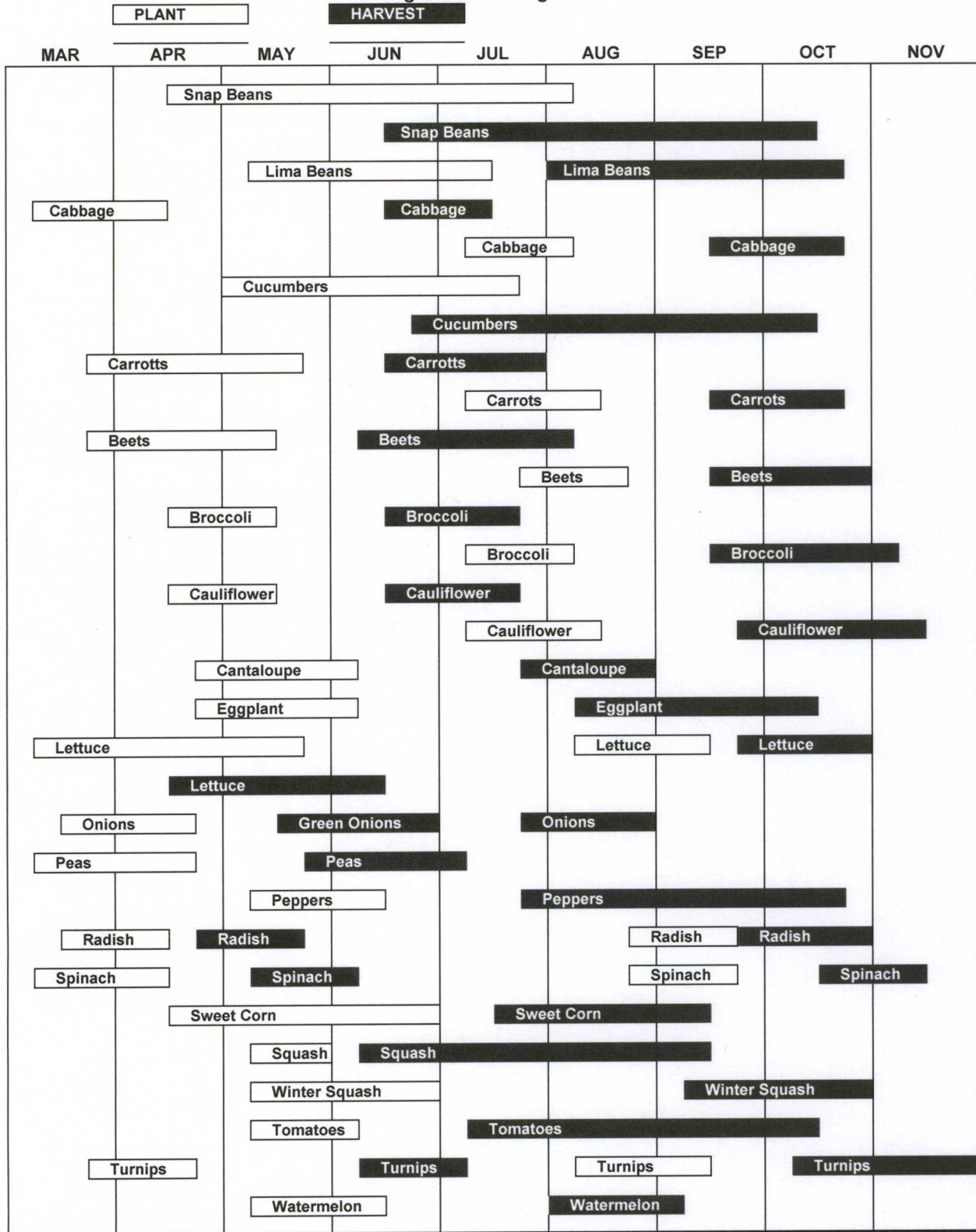
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Vegetable Garden Planting/Harvest Calendar

HG 34.1

Vegetable Planting Dates



Suggested Garden Plan For A Home Vegetable Garden HG-34.2

Row No.	Dist. Between Rows
1	2'
-----Strawberries ----- 4/1 - 4/15 ----- Alternate plantings	
2	2'
-----Strawberries ----- 4/1 - 4/15 -----	
3	3'
----- Cabbage --- 3/10 - 4/10 -- (Snap Beans --- 8/1 - 8/15) -----Snap Beans --- 4/20 - 5/1 -	
4	2-1/2'
----- Peas ----- 3/10 --- dbl row ----- (Late Cabbage ----- 7/20 - 8/10 -----	
5	2-1/2'
----- Peas ----- 3/10 --- dbl row ----- (Late Broccoli & Cauliflower --- 7/25 - 8/5)-----	
6	2-1/2'
----- Kale --- 3/20 - 4/15 -----Lettuce --- 3/20 - 4/15 ----- Radish --- 3/20 - 4/15 ----- (Snap Beans --- 7/15 - 7/30) (Spinach --- 8/1 - 8/15) (Spinach --- 8/10 - 8/20)	
7	2'
----- Onions --- 3/20 - 4/15 ----- Carrots --- 3/20 - 4/20 -----	
8	2'
----- Lettuce -- 4/15 - 4/30 ----- Swiss Chard --- 3/20 - 4/20 ----- (Fall Radish --- 8/10 - 9/10)	
9	2'
----- Snap Beans --- 5/1 - 5/15 ----- Snap Beans --- 6/1 - 6/15 ----- (Fall Cucumbers --- 7/15 - 7/30) (Fall Lettuce --- 8/25 - 9/15)	
10	2'
----- Bush Lima Beans --- 5/5 - 5/15 ----- Bush Wax Beans --- 5/5 - 5/20 -----	
11	2-1/2'
----- Tomato Plants --- 5/1 - 5/10 -----	
12	2'
----- Pepper Plants --- 5/1 - 5/15 ----- Eggplant Plants --- 5/5 - 5/15 -----	
13	2'
----- Summer Squash --- 5/1 - 5/10 ----- Cucumbers --- 5/1 - 5/10 -----	
14	2'
----- Cantaloupe --- 5/1 - 5/10 ----- Watermelon --- 5/1 - 5/10 -----	
15	3-1/2'
Sweet Corn --- 4/20 - 5/5	
16	2-1/2'
Sweet Corn --- 5/5 - 5/15	
17	2-1/2'
Sweet Corn --- 5/15 - 5/25	
18	2-1/2'
Sweet Corn --- 5/25 - 6/5	
19	2'
----- Pole Lima Beans --- 5/5 - 5/15 ----- Winter Squash --- 5/5 - 5/15 -----	

←----- 40' -----→

Crops in () are succession crops

Vegetable Planting Guide HG-34.3

Type Crop	Amount per 100'	Per	Approx. Days		Spring Dates		Start Inside	Fall Dates		Feet of Row per Person	Depth to Plant inches	Planting Distances Between Rows (inches)	Planting Distance in Rows (inches)	Type Crop
			Germin.	to Harvest	Spring Dates	Fall Dates								
Asparagus *	100	crowns			20-Mar	15-Apr				20	6-8	36-60	12-18	Asparagus *
Beans, Lima	1	lb.	6-10	75-90	10-May	10-Jun		20-Jun		25	1-1/2	24-30	3-4	Beans, Lima
Beans, Snap	1	lb.	6-10	50-60	5-May	30-Jun		1-Jul		60	1-1/2	24-30	1-2	Beans, Snap
Bush Pole Beans, Lima	3/4	lb.	6-10	70-85	17-May	15-Jun		15-Jun				36	6-8	Bush Pole Beans, Lima
Bush Pole Beans, Snap	3/4	lb.	6-10	50-65	12-May	30-Jun		1-Jul				24	6-8	Bush Pole Beans, Snap
Beets	2	oz.	7-14	60-65	1-Apr	15-Jun		20-Jun		25	1/2	15-24	2-3	Beets
Broccoli *	67	oz.	6-10	55-75	7-Apr	1-May	yes	20-Jul		20	1/2	24-36	12-18	Broccoli
Broccoli *	1/2	oz.	6-10	55-75	7-Apr	1-May		20-Jul		20	1/2	24-36	12-18	Broccoli *
Brussell Sprouts	1/2	oz.	6-10	90-110	1-Apr	1-May	yes	1-Jul		10	1/2	24-36	18-24	Brussell Sprouts
Brussell Sprouts *	67	plants		90-110	1-Apr	1-May		1-Jul		10	1/2	24-36	18-24	Brussell Sprouts *
Cabbage	1/8	oz.	6-10	65-75	21-Mar	15-Apr	yes	10-Jul		15	1/2	24-36	12-18	Cabbage
Cabbage *	100	plants		65-75	21-Mar	15-Apr		10-Jul		15	1/2	24-36	12-18	Cabbage *
Cabbage, Chinese	1	packet	4-8	75				1-Jul		5-10	1/2	18-30	8-12	Cabbage, Chinese
Cantaloupe	1/2	oz.	7-10	80-95	20-May	15-Jun				25	1	48-72	24	Cantaloupe
Carrots	1/2	oz.	8-14	65-75	15-Apr	1-Jun		10-Jul		20	1/4	15-30	2-3	Carrots
Cauliflower	1/8	oz.	6-10	50-60	5-Apr	1-May	yes	1-Jul		10-15	1/2	24-36	18-24	Cauliflower
Cauliflower *	67	plants		50-60	5-Apr	1-May		1-Jul		10-15	1/2	24-36	18-24	Cauliflower *
Celery	1/8	oz.	14-21	80-140	15-Mar	15-Apr	yes					18	6	Celery
Celery *	300	plants		80-140	15-Apr	1-May		1-Jun		10		18-36	4-6	Celery *
Chard, Swiss	2	oz.	7-10	55-65	20-Apr	10-Jun		15-Jun		5	1/2	18-36	6-8	Chard, Swiss
Chives	1	packet		80	25-Mar	20-Apr					1/2	15-24	clusters	Chives
Collards	1/3	oz.	6-10	70-80	1-Apr	1-Jun		10-Jul		15	1/2	24-36	18-24	Collards
Collards *	67	plants		70-80	1-Apr	1-Jun		10-Jul		15	1/2	24-36	18-24	Collards *
Cress	1	packet		10-50	10-Apr	10-May		1-Sep			1/4	15-30	2-3	Cress, Upland
Cucumbers	1/2	oz.	7-10	50-75	15-May	1-Jun	yes	15-Jun		15	1	48-60	18	Cucumber
Dill	1/4	oz.		65-70	1-Apr	20-May								Dill
Eggplants	1/8	oz.	7-10	75-95	15-May	10-Jun	yes			6	1/4	30-42	18-24	Eggplant
Eggplants *	67	plants		75-95	15-May	10-Jun				6		30-42	18-24	Eggplant *
Endive	1/4	oz.	4-8	80-90	5-Apr	5-May		10-Jul		5-10	1/4	18-36	12	Endive
Fennel	1/4	oz.	7-10	50-65	15-May	15-Jun								Fennel
Garlic Sets	1-1/4	lb.		Summer	20-Mar	15-Apr					1-1/2	18-24	3	Garlic Sets
Garlic Sets	400	cloves		to Fall	20-Mar	15-Apr					1-1/2	18-24	3	Garlic Sets
Horseradish *	67	roots			5-Apr	1-May				5	2	18-36	12-18	Horseradish *
Kale	1/4	oz.	7-10	55-65	1-Apr	1-May		10-Jul		15	1/2	18-36	8-12	Kale
Kohlrabi	1/4	oz.	7-10	45-55	1-Apr	15-Aug				5-10	1/2	18-36	4-6	Kohlrabi

Vegetable Planting Guide HG-34.3

Crop	per 100'	Germin.	to Harvest	Inside	Row per Person	Plant inches	Distances Between Rows (inches)	Distance in Rows (inches)	Crop
Leeks	1/4 oz.	10-15	100-154	1-May	3	1/2	12-20	2-3	Leeks
Lettuce, Head	1/8 oz.	5-8	60-80	1-May	10	1/4	18-30	12	Lettuce, Head
Lettuce, Head *	100 plants		60-80	1-May	10		18-30	12	Lettuce, Head *
Lettuce, Leaf	1/4 oz.	5-8	60-70	1-Jun	15	1/4	12-18	4-6	Lettuce, Leaf
Mustard	1/4 oz.	5-10		10-May	15	1/4	18-24	3-4	Mustard
Okra	2 oz.	7-14	50-60	1-Jun	10	1	36-48	12-18	Okra
Onion (sets)	2 lb.		50-100	20-Apr	12	1-2	15-24	3-4	Onion (sets)
Onion (plants) *	400 plants		100	20-Apr	12		15-24	3-4	Onion (plants) *
Onion (seed)	1/2 oz.	10-14	50-100	20-Apr	12	1/2	15-24	3-4	Onion (seed)
Parsley	1/4 oz.	21-25	70-80	1-May	1	1/4	15-24	6-8	Parsley
Parsnips	1/4 oz.	15-25	100-125	1-May	10	1/2	18-30	3-4	Parsnips
Peas	1/2 lb.	6-10	65	1-May	60	1-2	8-24	1	Peas
Peppers	1 gram	10-14	60-75	15-Jun	6	1/4	30-42	18-24	Peppers
Peppers *	67 plants		60-75	15-Jun	6		30-42	18-24	Peppers *
Potatoes	8 lbs.		80-100	10-May	200	4	30-36	12	Potatoes
Pumpkins	1 oz.	7-10	90-120	10-Jun	10	1	60-96	48-72	Pumpkin
Radish	1 oz.	5-8	22-26	15-May	10	1/2	12-24	1	Radish
Rhubarb *	33 roots			15-Apr	10		36-48	36-48	Rhubarb *
Rutabagas	1/2 oz.	5-10	90		10	1/4	18-30	3-4	Rutabaga
Salsify	1 oz.	6-10	120	15-May	10	1/2	18-30	3-4	Salsify
Shallots	1 lb.		60-120	1-May		1-2	12-30	2-3	Shallots
Soybeans	1 lb.			15-Jun	50	1-2	24-30	2	Soybeans
Spinach	1 oz.	7-12	45-55	27-Apr	40	1/3	12-24	2-4	Spinach
Spinach, New Zealand	1 oz.	7-12	45-55	1-May	5	1	30-42	15-18	Spinach, New Zealand
Squash, Summer	1 oz.	7-12	45-70	1-May	6	1-2	48-60	18-24	Squash, Summer
Squash, Winter	1 oz.	7-12	80-110	15-Jun	15	1-2	60-84	36-48	Squash, Winter
Sweet Corn	1 lb.	7-10	65-90	15-Jun	100	1-2	30-36	10-12	Sweet Corn
Sweet Potatoes *	100 plants		110	10-Jun	40		30-42	12-15	Sweet Potatoes *
Tomatoes	1 gram	7-10	65-90	15-Jun	20	1/4	30-42	18-30	Tomatoes
Tomatoes *	67 plants		65-90	15-Jun	20		30-42	18-30	Tomatoes *
Turnips	1/2 oz.	6-10	45-80	5-May	15	1/4	18-30	2-3	Turnips
Watercress	300 plants			20-Mar			18-24	4-6	Watercress
Watermelons	1 oz.	8-10	75-90	15-May	20	1-2	60-96	48-60	Watermelon

* Plants, Dates are for transplant

Average Last Frost Wilmington - 25-Apr., Newark - 6 May, Milford - 4-May, Dover - 19-Apr., Georgetown - 7-May

Average First Frost Wilmington - 15-Oct., Newark - 5-Oct., Milford - 2-Oct., Dover - 15-Oct., Georgetown - 2-Oct.