



SPRING PLANTING GUIDE

The time to plant vegetables is based on the weather. In the spring, you should plant vegetables that are susceptible to cold after all danger of frosty weather is over.* Plant cold-hardy vegetables before the frost-free date, and early enough for them to mature before the weather gets too hot.

Keep in mind that the last frost date is an average. If a frost occurs later than average, it may damage some plants less able to tolerate cold, and some of the harvest may be lost. You can minimize this problem by keeping heat from escaping from the garden by covering plants with a light blanket, a clear plastic shower curtain or a row cover that you buy.

Some crops with special considerations are noted on the chart and explained below:

Potatoes are propagated vegetatively (not from seeds). Potatoes are grown by planting “seed” potatoes, which are sections of large potatoes that have been cut into chunks including an “eye,” or node. The new growth will emerge from these nodes. Shallots can be grown from seeds; however, they are usually planted as “sets,” or small mature bulbs, in early winter.

Vine crops are generally grown on raised beds with 7 to 10 feet between each row. You can plant squash, cucumber and small watermelon varieties closer together; dwarf varieties need the least amount of space between plants. You can conserve space between rows by using a trellis, which allows vines and fruits to grow vertically. This method may also discourage diseases.

T Transplants can be grown by either seed or transplant; you may want to do both. Tomatoes are not included in the seed list, because transplants are normally used in spring plantings. Although peppers can be grown from seed, generally they are grown from transplants too. You can plant transplants earlier because the plants are more established and take less time to reach the harvest stage. Tomatoes and peppers benefit if you cover the top of the root ball with 2 to 3 inches of soil. Plant all other transplants so that the root ball is completely covered with a layer of soil no more than ¼ inch thick. If you leave the root ball exposed, it may wick water into the air away from the plant, and the plant may dry out and die.

* The recommended planting dates can vary greatly depending on where you live. Contact your county Extension office for information to complete your Spring Planting Chart.