

PLANNING A VEGETABLE GARDEN

(Including Planting and Harvest Calendar)

A successful garden

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 maintaining a good garden.



Figure 1: Planting lettuce in a garden

Location and Soil

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

- The garden should be convenient to the house, water and tools.
- Soil should be well drained and the best available.
- 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.



Figure 2: A backyard vegetable garden in raised beds

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 large quantities of food. Vegetables picked over a seven—or eight-month period not only decrease the amount of preserving necessary but also provide 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:

- Perennial crops such as asparagus, strawberries and rhubarb should be located on one side of the garden.
- Tall crops such as corn should not shade small crops such as beets and carrots.
- Include succession crops, a fall garden, small fruits, and overwintered crops to mature in the spring.
- Crops and varieties to be planted. Consider planting dates, whether seeded or transplant crops. Use HG 34.1 to assist you.
- Rotate crops so similar vegetables are not planted in the same location consecutively, if possible.
- Choose varieties that are disease-resistant.
- Your Delaware Cooperative Extension Office has additional fact 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 is 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 for 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

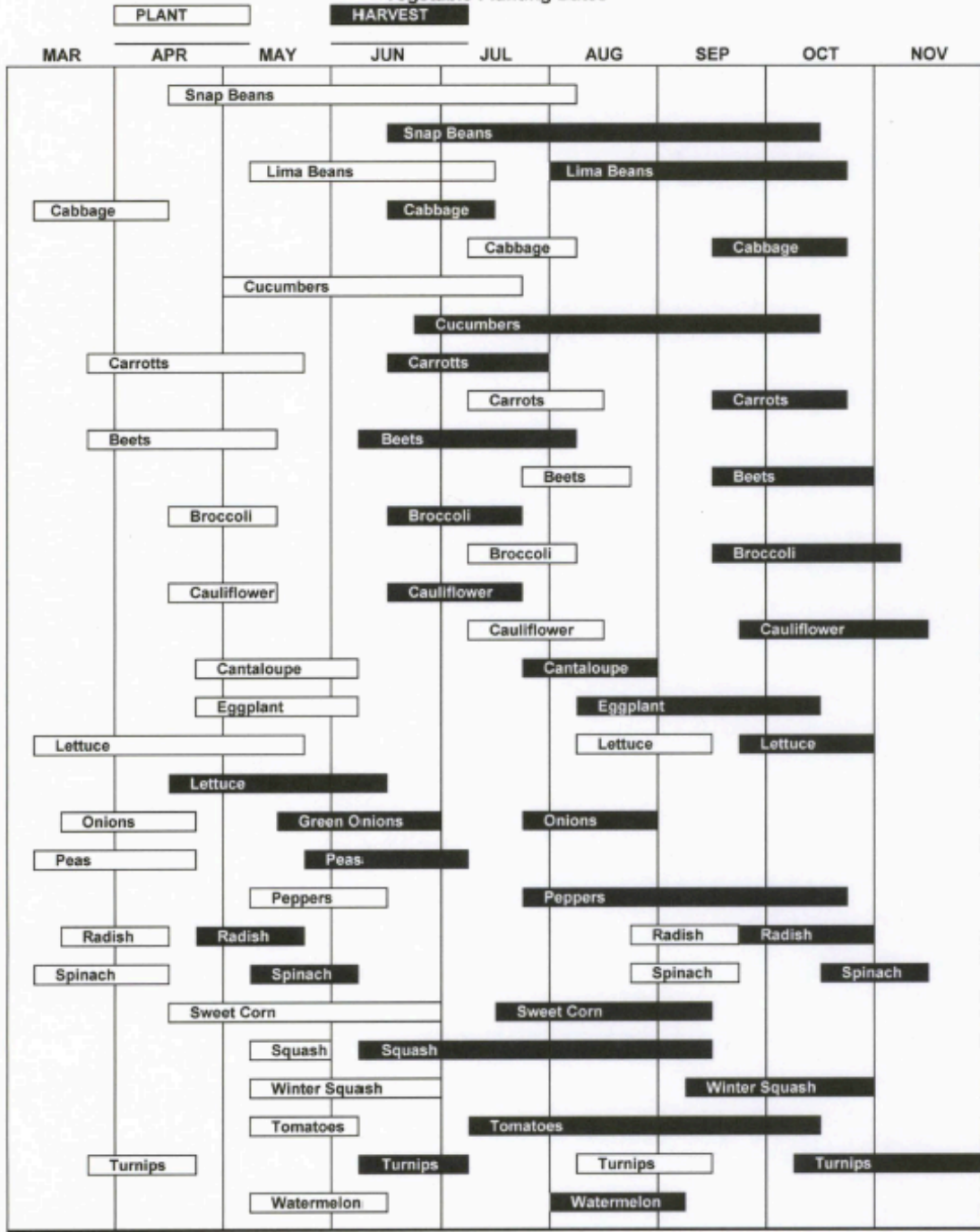
Prepared by NCCo Master Gardeners, assisted by University of Delaware Cooperative Extension Service Agents and Specialists

17 February 2004

Vegetable Garden Planting/Harvest Calendar

HG 34.1

Vegetable Planting Dates



NCCO Master Gardeners
Revised 16Feb04

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**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 -----	

Crops in () are succession crops

NCCo Master Gardeners
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Vegetable Planting Guide HG-34.3

Type Crop	Amount per 100'	Per	Approx. Days to		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.	Harvest										
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	10-Jul	25	1-1/2	24-30	3-4	Beans, Lima
Beans, Snap	1	lb.	6-10	50-60	5-May	30-Jun		1-Jul	5-Aug	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	5-Jul			36	6-8	Bush Pole Beans, Lima
Bush Pole Beans, Snap	3/4	lb.	6-10	50-65	12-May	30-Jun		1-Jul	5-Aug			24	6-8	Bush Pole Beans, Snap
Beets	2	oz.	7-14	60-65	1-Apr	15-Jun		20-Jun	1-Aug	25	1/2	15-24	2-3	Beets
Broccoli	1/2	oz.	6-10	55-75	7-Apr	1-May	yes	20-Jul	20-Aug	20	1/2	24-36	12-18	Broccoli
Broccoli *	67	plants		55-75	7-Apr	1-May		20-Jul	20-Aug	20		24-36	12-18	Broccoli *
Brussell Sprouts	1/2	oz.	6-10	90-110	1-Apr	1-May	yes	1-Jul	1-Aug	10	1/2	24-36	18-24	Brussell Sprouts
Brussell Sprouts *	67	plants		90-110	1-Apr	1-May		1-Jul	1-Aug	10		24-36	18-24	Brussell Sprouts *
Cabbage	1/8	oz.	6-10	65-75	21-Mar	15-Apr	yes	10-Jul	20-Aug	15	1/2	24-36	12-18	Cabbage
Cabbage *	100	plants		65-75	21-Mar	15-Apr		10-Jul	20-Aug	15		24-36	12-18	Cabbage *
Cabbage, Chinese	1	packet	4-8	75				1-Jul	5-Aug	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	1-Aug	20	1/4	15-30	2-3	Carrots
Cauliflower	1/8	oz.	6-10	50-60	5-Apr	1-May	yes	1-Jul	1-Aug	10-15	1/2	24-36	18-24	Cauliflower
Cauliflower *	67	plants		50-60	5-Apr	1-May		1-Jul	1-Aug	10-15		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	20-Jul	10		18-36	4-6	Celery *
Chard, Swiss	2	oz.	7-10	55-65	20-Apr	10-Jun		15-Jun	25-Jul	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	10-Aug	15	1/2	24-36	18-24	Collards
Collards *	67	plants		70-80	1-Apr	1-Jun		10-Jul	10-Aug	15		24-36	18-24	Collards *
Cress	1	packet		10-50	10-Apr	10-May		1-Sep	1-Oct		1/4	15-30	2-3	Cress, Upland
Cucumbers	1/2	oz.	7-10	50-75	15-May	1-Jun	yes	15-Jun	10-Jul	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	15-Aug	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	10-Aug	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
Type	Amount	Per	Approx. Days		Spring Dates		Start	Fall Dates		Feet of	Depth to	Planting	Planting	Type

Vegetable Planting Guide HG-34.3

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