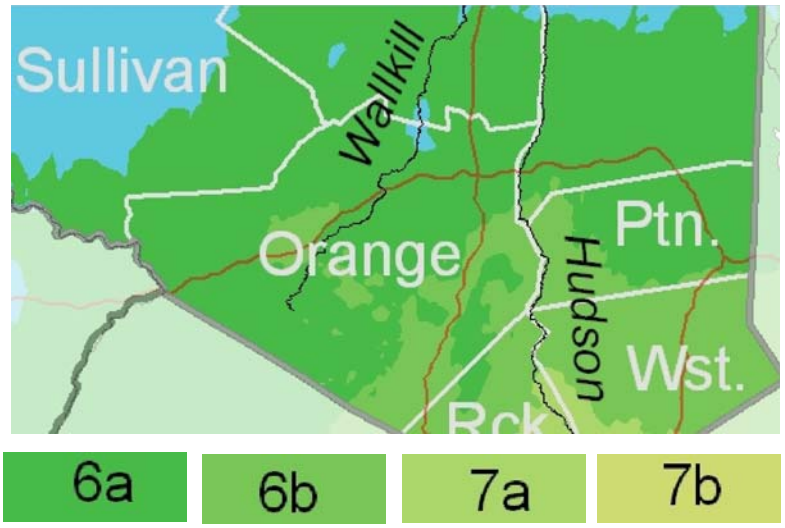
Beginning a Vegetable Garden

Planning, Prepping, Planting and Harvesting Your Own Vegetables Throughout the Gardening Season

Plant Hardiness Zones

When deciding what kind of vegetables to plant in your garden, you need to make sure that the plants will be able to survive in the Zone you live in. Hardiness Zones show the lowest temperatures in a geographic location from the past 30 years. These maps can assist you when choosing vegetables to plant by showing you which plants can and cannot survive in the winter temperatures. Since New York is so large, it is important to research the Hardiness Zone for your specific location through the USDA. However, as a general guideline, the Zones in our area typically range from 5-6.

If the Hardiness Zone changes for your area, you do not automatically have to pull out something in your garden that is thriving. If the plant is thriving, it will most likely continue to thrive. The Plant Hardiness Zone is based on historical information and is only a guideline. There is no guarantee that a plant will survive or thrive based on this guideline.



Frost Tolerant Crops

These crops will tolerate being frosted and can be planted before last frost date. Some can tolerate a heavy frost*, while others can only tolerate a light frost. These will need to be covered.

Brussel Sprouts*	Carrots	Leek	Spinach
Broccoli	Turnips	Turnip	Potatoes
Cauliflower	Rutabaga	Parsley	Kale*
Cabbage*	Kohlrabi	Chard	Radish
Beets	Parsnips	Collards*	Celery

Warm Weather Crops

These crops will have to be planted when there is no longer a danger of frost. In New York, it is typically safe to plant warm weather crops in the third week of May.

Peppers	Eggplant	Melons
Tomatoes	Summer squash	Sweet potatoes
Corn	Winter squash	Tender herbs (basil, dill, parsley)
Beans	Cucumbers	

Perennial Crops

These crops will winter over and produce year after year. Perennial crops need to be planted in an area where you will not have to move them, or dig/till around them.

Rhubarb	Sage	Tarragon	Marjoram
Horseradish	Lavender	Thyme	
Asparagus	Chives	Oregano	

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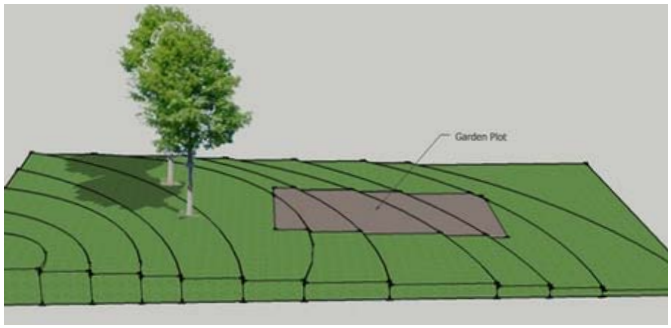
Selecting Your Vegetable Garden Location

Vegetable gardens should be placed in a location that gets at least six hours of direct sunlight daily. The area should have easy drainage (there will be no standing water after a heavy rainfall). If this natural drainage isn't possible, incorporating organic matter or creating raised beds will ensure proper drainage. The garden location should be level and easy to work in. Being able to bring tools, wheelbarrows, carts, and other materials easily into the garden is important to remember when picking a location. When picking a location, also make sure you have easy access to water.



Soil pH Testing

Healthy soil is key to having a successful vegetable garden. The pH of the soil determines if the plants will be able to absorb the nutrients found in the soil. The ideal pH level of soil used for vegetable gardening is between 6-7. Before planting, a soil sample should be taken and brought in to our office for testing. Complete information about testing procedures and amending your garden's soil is available in our Guide for Homeowner's Soil Testing, available online or at our office.

Direct Seed or Transplant?

Most crops may be direct seeded (seeds planted directly into the garden), but many crops perform better when grown from transplants (seeds started ahead in a container of soil). Some vegetables may be started either way. Transplants of popular vegetables may be purchased at a garden center, or grow indoors from seed. Make sure when looking for transplants, that you choose young, sturdy looking plants!

FIRST SEEDING AND TRANSPLANTING DATES

Should be transplanted. | May be transplanted or seeded. If transplanted, probably should be transplanted 2-3 weeks later than date given. | May be transplants, sets, or seed. | Direct Seeds

As early as garden may be worked in Spring (about April 15)		After the date of the area's last average frost (about May 20)	After the soil has become warm in late Spring (about June 1)
Beets	Lettuce	Beans	Basil
Broccoli	Mustard	Eggplant	Cucumber
Brussel Sprouts	Onions	Pepper	Muskmelon
Cabbage	Parsley	Popcorn	Okra
Carrots	Peas	Potatoes ("seed potatoes")	Pumpkins
Cauliflower	Radish	Sweet Corn	Squashes, Summer (or seeds)
Celery	Swiss Chard	Tomatoes	Squashes, Winter (or seeds)
Endive	Spinach		Watermelon
Kale	Turnips		
Kohlrabi	Rutabagas		
Leeks			

Crop Rotation

Crop rotation is the approach to deciding where to plant each crop in your vegetable garden from year to year. The goal of crop rotation is to help manage soil issues. Crop rotation helps avoid and/or reduce problems with soilborne diseases and some soil-dwelling insects. Listed below are some important tips on deciding your crop rotation.

- ✓ Do not plant the same crop family in the same area too often.
- ✓ Vary between deep-rooted crops and shallow-rooted crops.
- ✓ Do not follow a root crop with another root crop.
- ✓ Grow winter crops before late-season planted crops to accumulate organic matter and nitrogen.
- ✓ Never grow any crop right after itself.

Example: General Crop Rotation Plan

1- *Solanaceae* Family

Tomato
Potato
Tomatillo
Eggplant
Ground cherry
Okra
Peppers
Strawberry

2 - *Brassicaceae* Family

Broccoli
Brussel Sprouts
Cabbage
Cauliflower
Collards
Kale
Arugula, Cress
Mizuna, Tatsoi
Radish
Rutabaga

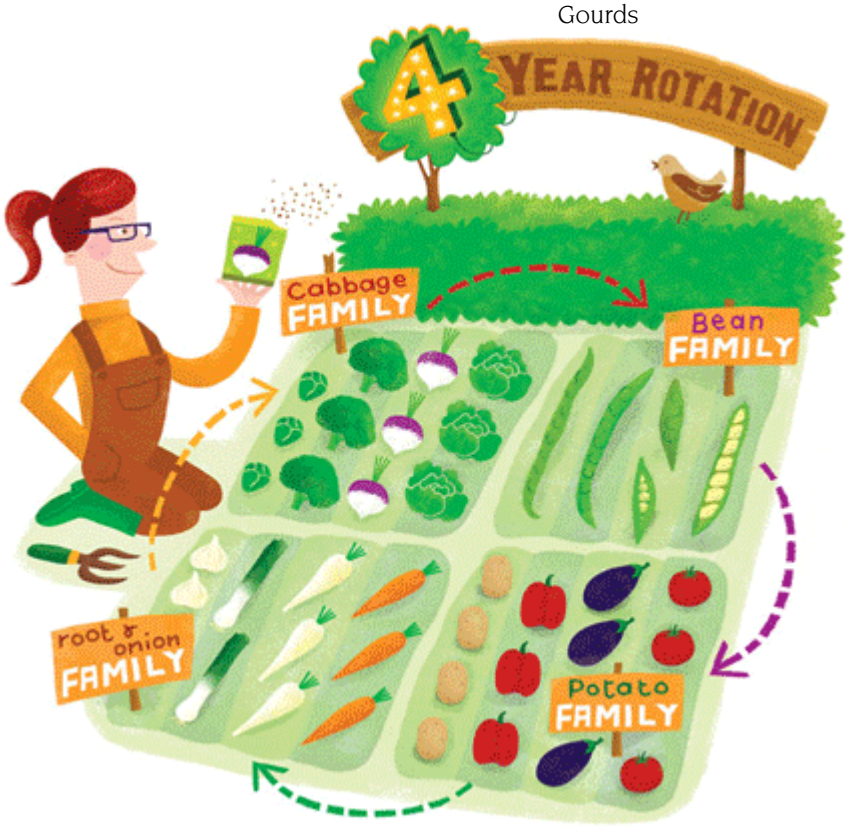
3 - Salad Greens other than *Brassicaceae:*

Asteraceae:
Lettuce, Endive

Chenopodiaceae:
Spinich, Chard, Orach

4 - *Cucurbitaceae* Family

Cucumbers
Melons
Squash
Gourds



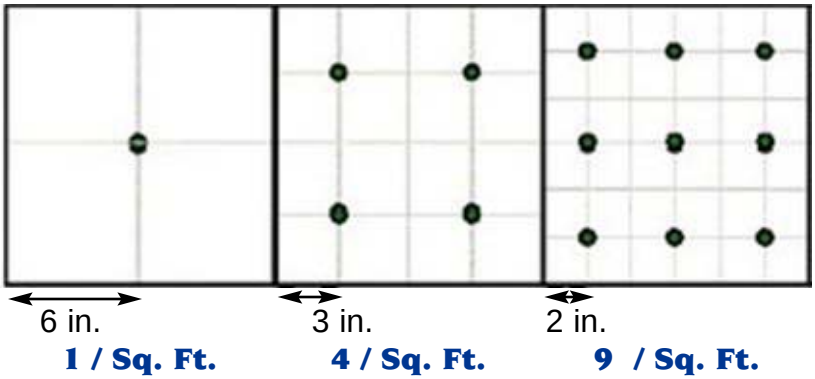
Planting For a Family of Four

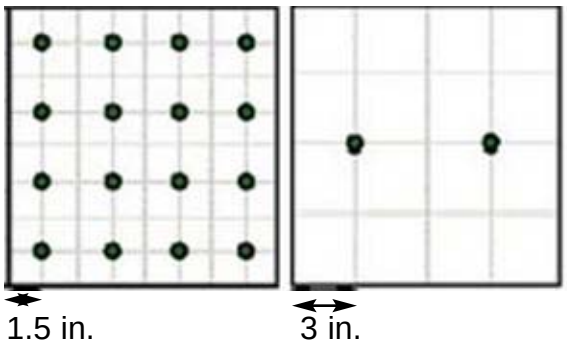
Crop	Family of Four
Asparagus	25 plants
Broccoli	5 plants
Brussel Sprouts	5 plants
Bush Beans	5-6 plants
Pole Beans	3 poles
Cabbage	5 plants
Carrots	12 ft.
Cauliflower	5 plants
Corn	40 plants
Cucumber	2 vines/4 bushes
Chard	5 plants
Eggplant	7 plants
Kale	5 plants
Leaf Lettuce	26 ft.
Melon	4 plants
Onion	80-100 sets
Peas	70 plants
Pepper	8-10 plants
Potato	40 plants
Radishes	5 ft.
Spinach	30 feet
Squash	3 plants
Tomatoes	4-6 plants
Turnips	10 ft.
Zucchini	4 plants

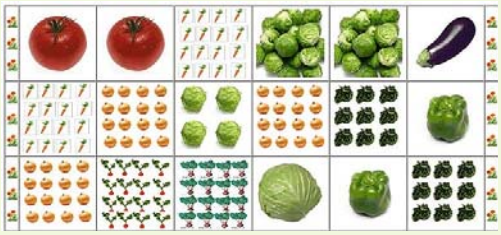
Square Foot Gardening

To calculate how many plants per square foot, look on the back of the seed packet. Completely ignore the row spacing and just look at the plant spacing:

- ✓ **12" apart:** plant 1 per square
- ✓ **6" apart:** plant 4 per square
- ✓ **4" apart:** plant 9 per square
- ✓ **3" apart or less:** plant 16 per square







Square Foot Garden Spacing

Plant	Number per Square
Asparagus	1 or 4
Bean, Bush	9
Bean, Pole	8
Beet	Large-9; Small-16
Broccoli	1
Cabbage	1
Carrot	16
Cauliflower	1
Chard, Swiss	4
Corn	4
Cucumber	2
Eggplant	1
Lettuce	4
Melon	1 per 2 sq. ft.
Okra	1
Onion	16
Parsley	4
Pea, Sugar Snap	8
Pepper	1
Potato	1
Radish	16
Spinach	9
Strawberry	4
Winter Squash	1 per 2 sq. ft.
Tomato	Bush: 1 per 9 sq. ft. Vine: 1 per 1 sq. ft.
Basil	Small: 4 Large: 1
Chive	16
Cilantro	1
Mint	1
Oregano	1

Traditional Companion Planting

Companion planting is described as the establishment of two or more plant species in close proximity so that some cultural benefit (pest control, higher yield, etc.) is derived..

Crop	Companion	Incompatible
Asparagus	Tomato, Parsley, Basil	
Beans, Bush	Irish Potato, Cucumber, Corn, Strawberry, Celery, Summer Savory	Onion
Beans, Pole	Corn, Summer Savory, Radish	Onions, Beets, Kohlrabi, Sunflower
Cabbage Family	Aromatic Herbs, Celery, Beets, Onion family, Chamomile, Spinach, Chard	Dill, Strawberries, Pole Beans, Tomato
Carrots	English Pea, Lettuce, Rosemary, Onion Family, Sage, Tomato	Dill
Celery	Onion & Cabbage families, Tomato, Bush Beans, Nasturtium	
Corn	Irish Potato, Beans, English Pea, Pumpkin, Cucumber, Squash	Tomato
Cucumber	Beans, Corn, English Pea, Sunflowers, Radish	Irish Potato, Aromatic Herbs
Eggplant	Beans, Marigold	
Lettuce	Carrot, Radish, Turnip, Cucumber, Corn, Beans	
Onion Family	Beets, Carrot, Lettuce, Cabbage Family, Summer Savory	Beans, English Peas
Parsley	Tomato, Asparagus	
English Pea	Carrot, Radish, Turnip, Cucumber, Corn, Beans	Onion Family, Gladiolus, Irish Potato
Irish Potato	Beans, Corn, Cabbage Family, Marigolds, Horseradish	Pumpkin, Squash, Tomato, Cucumber, Sunflower
Pumpkins	Corn, Marigold	Irish Potato
Radish	English Pea, Nasturtium, Lettuce, Cucumber	Hyssop
Spinach	Strawberry, Fava Bean	
Squash	Nasturtium, Corn, Marigold	Irish Potato
Tomato	Onion Family, Nasturtium, Marigold, Asparagus, Carrot, Parsley, Cucumber	Irish Potato, Fennel, Cabbage Family
Turnip	English Pea	Irish Potato

Vegetable Planting Guide

Seed Indoors

See seed packet or catalog for specific varieties

10-12 weeks prior to last frost

Chinese/Garlic Chives (80)
Leek (100-120)
Onion, seed (100-140)
Scallion, seed (90-120)

6-8 weeks prior to last frost

Early Crops:
Broccoli (60-80)
Brussels Sprouts (90-120)
Cabbage (65-80)
Cauliflower (55-60)
Kale (55-75)
Kohlrabi (50-70)
Lettuce, head (60-85)
Lettuce, leaf (50-60)
Parsley (80-100)

Late Crops:
Eggplant (75-90)
Pepper (65-80)

4-6 weeks prior to last frost

Tomato (70-90)

Less than 4 weeks prior to last frost

Cucumber (60-65)
Melon (70-80)
Pumpkin (100-120)
Squash, summer (40-55)
Squash, winter (85-100)
Sweet Potato, slips (90-150)
Watermelon (80-90)

Direct Seed Outdoors Early Spring

Spring (Mid April) Soil Temp.>50°F

Beet (55-65)
Carrot (70-80)
Chard, Swiss (60-75)
Chinese/Garlic Chives (80)
Chinese Broccoli or Kale (55-70)
Chinese Cabbage/ Bok Choy (40-50)
Endive (65-85)
Escarole (45-50)
Green Onion, Scallion (65-75)
Kale (55-75)
Kohlrabi (50-70)
Lettuce, head (60-85)
Lettuce, leaf (50-60)
Mustard Greens (40-50)
Peas (60-80)
Peas, edible podded (58-72)
Parsnip (90-120)
Radish (25-30)
Rutabaga (28-100)
Spinach (38-45)
Turnip (40-60)

Transplant Outdoors Early Spring

(Late March to Mid-April) Soil Temp.>50°F

Asparagus (bears 2nd or 3rd year)
Broccoli (60-80)
Brussels Sprouts (90-120)
Cabbage (65-80)
Cauliflower (55-60)
Chinese/ Garlic Chives (80)
Kale (55-75)
Leek (100-120)
Lettuce, head (60-85)
Lettuce, leaf (50-60)
Onion, plants or sets (90-100)
Parsley (80-100)
Potatoes (70-90) Mid-April to Early May
Scallion, plants (90-120)
Shallot, sets (90-150)

Direct Seed Outdoors Late Spring

(Late May to Mid-June) Soil Temp.>70°F

Amaranth, vegetable/ Tampala (80-100)
Bean, bush (50-60)
Bean, pole (65-75)
Carrot (70-80)
Chinese Broccoli or Kale (55-70)
Chinese Okra or Ridged Gourd (100)
Corn (80-100)
Cucumber (60-65)
Lettuce, leaf (50-60)
Melon (70-80)
Okra (50-80)
Pumpkin (100-120)
Soybean (65-85)
Spinach, Malabar (70-80)
Spinach, New Zealand (55-65)
Squash, summer (40-55)
Squash, winter (85-100)
Watermelon (80-90)

Helpful Hints:

- ✓ Temperature and general growing conditions vary from year to year and from one microenvironment to another within a landscape.
- ✓ Allow wet soils to dry enough after snow melt or rains that the soil does not become cloddy when worked. A handful of soil should crumble somewhat after you squeeze it.
- ✓ Vegetable names in the above charts are followed by average days to maturity – add two weeks for summer/fall crops to compensate for shorter days. Days to maturity will vary depending on cultivar, as some mature earlier than others, and due to variations in site and weather conditions from year to year. Check catalogs and seed packets for maturity time. Keep this information over the course of the growing season so that you may refer to it.
- ✓ All times are approximate - as you gain familiarity with the varieties you grow and your site, let your experience be your guide.
- ✓ **Most crops may be direct seeded** (seeds planted directly in the garden), but many perform better when grown from transplants (seeds started ahead in a container of soil). Some vegetables may be started either way. Transplants of popular vegetables may be purchased at a garden center. Choose young, sturdy looking plants.

Orange County Average Frost Dates:

- ✓ **Last spring frost: May 20** (in some years, killing frost occurs after these dates) Safe for tender vegetables June 1st (in a warm spring you may plant a week or two earlier, but be prepared to protect transplants from cold)
- ✓ **First fall frost: October 3** (in some years, killing frost occurs before these dates; consider protection to extend season)

Transplant Outdoors Late Spring
(Late May) Soil Temp.>70°F

- Cucumber (60-65)
- Eggplant (75-90)
- Melon (70-80)
- Parsley (80-100)
- Pepper (65-80)
- Pumpkin (100-120)
- Squash, summer (40-55)
- Squash, winter (85-100)
- Sweet Potato, slips (90-150)
- Tomato (70-90)
- Watermelon (80-90)

Summer/Fall Direct Seed Outdoors
(July to August) Faster maturing vegetables up to mid-September

- Bean, bush (50-60)
- Beet (55-65)
- Broccoli (60-80)
- Cabbage (65-80)
- Carrot (70-80)
- Chard, Swiss (60-75)
- Chinese Broccoli or Kale (55-70)
- Chinese Cabbage / Bok Choy (40-50)
- Endive (65-85), Escarole (45-50)
- Kohlrabi (50-70)
- Lettuce, leaf (50-60)
- Lettuce, head (60-85)
- Mustard Greens (40-50)
- Peas (60-80)
- Peas, edible podded (58-72)
- Radish (25-30)
- Radish, winter/Asian (30-60)
- Rutabaga (28-100)
- Spinach (50-70)
- Turnip (40-60)

Summer/Fall Transplant Outdoors
(July to August)

- Cabbage (65-80)
- Cauliflower (55-60)
- Kale (55-75)
- Lettuce, head (60-85)

Summer/Fall Transplant Outdoors
(Late September to Mid-October)

- Garlic, cloves (90-150)
- Shallot, sets (90-150)

Fall Crops

Some fall crops are killed by frost, and must be planted early enough to allow them to mature and be harvested before the first frost date. In order to determine the planting dates, find the average first frost date in the area. For example, the average for the area surrounding Middletown, NY, is October 3. Then, count backward from that date, the amount of days to maturity for a particular crop – that is the planting date.

Crop	Days to Maturity	Cold Hardiness
Basil	30-60	Killed by frost
Beets	50-60	Survives high 20s
Bush Beans	45-65	Killed by frost
Broccoli	50-70	Survives light frost
Brussel Sprouts	90-100	The hardiest: down to 20°
Cabbage	50-90	The hardiest: down to 20°
Cauliflower	60-80	Survives light frost
Cilantro	60-70	Survives light frost
Collard Greens	40-65	The hardiest: down to 20°
Garlic	Harvest the following june	Winters over in ground
Green onion	60-70	Survives high 20s

Crop	Days to Maturity	Cold Hardiness
Kale	40-65	The hardiest: down to 20°
Kohlrabi	50-60	Survives light frost
Leaf Lettuce	40-60	Survives light frost
Mustard Greens	30-40	Survives light frost
Peas	70-80 (longer than if planted in spring)	Survives high 20s
Radishes	30-60	Dig until soil freezes
Spinach	35-45	Survives light frost; may overwinter
Swiss Chard	40-60	Survives light frost
Turnips	50-60	Survives light frost

Common Vegetable Problems

** Indicates a problem that is insect or disease related and may require a pesticide application for corrective action. Consult our Garden Helpline for recommendations (845-343-0664 or mghelpline@cornell.edu)

Crop	Problem	Possible Causes	Corrective Action
Asparagus	Tip of spear black	Frost	Remove affected spears.
	Tip of spear brown	Fusarium wilt	Remove affected spears and relocate asparagus bed to new location if yields are seriously reduced.
Snap beans	Large, brown areas on leaves l	Scorch caused by sunight on wet leaves	None
Beets	Poor germination	Crusted soil or seeded too deeply	Plant about 1/4" deep and cover with light soil..
	White areas or tunnels in leaves	Leaf miner (an insect)	**
	Cavities in sides of roots	Boron deficiency	Supply boron by adding manure or compost.
Broccoli	Very stunted plants	Plants exposed to sustained low temperatures before transplanting	Keep young plants above 60°F until planted
	Strong plant, but only "button" for a head	Plants chilled in garden by near freezing	Transplants after danger of frost.
	Plants wilt during sunny days, even with sufficient water	Root maggots or clubroot	**
Cabbage	Very stunted plants or plants wilt	(see broccoli)	
Carrots	Poor germination	Crusted soil or seeded too deeply	Plant about 1/4" deep and cover with light soil.
Cauliflower	Very stunted plants	(see broccoli)	
	Heads not white	Head exposed to sun	When head begins to form, tie outer leaves over head with a rubber band or try a self-blanching variety.
Swiss Chard	Poor germination (see beets)		
	White areas in leaves (see beets)		
Sweet Corn	Yellow leaves	Dry weather and/or nitrogen deficiency	Add water and/or add nitrogen.
Cucumbers	Brown spots and/or jelly on fruits	Scab-caused by a fungus	Use resistant varieties & **
	Plants suddenly wilt	Bacterial wilt-spread by cucumber beetles	Control beetles and **
	Fruits with pointed ends	Lack of nitrogen and potassium	Add potassium & nitrogen.
	Bitter fruits	Stunted growth due to dry weather or nutrient deficiency	Add water and/or fertilizer.

Many different factors cause vegetables to grow poorly or abnormally. Some of the more obvious problems are insect or disease related. But other problems can be related to environment, weather, nutrition, variety peculiarities – even animals and people.

Here are some common problems and corrective actions for specific vegetables, followed by a list of general problems that could affect any or all crops.

Crop	Problem	Possible Causes	Corrective Action
Eggplant	Large plants but few fruits	Poor fruit set due to adverse weather or excessive nitrogen	Don't plant extra early and don't overfertilize with nitrogren
Lettuce	Bottom rot	Soilborne disease	**
	Bitter flavor	Stunted growth, or going to seed	Add water and/or nitrogen, or harvest before going to seed.
Muskmelon	Late maturity	Late season varieties or soil and weather	Use earlier variety and use black plastic mulch.
	Plants suddenly wilt	Bacterial wilt-spread by cucumber beetles	Control beetles and **
Onions	Plants fail to form bulbs	Lack of vigorous growth	Provide ample water and nitrogen. Grow only varieties recommended for the Northeast.
Peas	Stunted growth and plant turns yellow, beginning at bottom	Root rot	Use resistant varieties and plant in well-drained, light soil.
Pepper	Large plants but few fruits	Poor fruit set due to adverse weather or excessive nitrogen	Try hybrid varieties (and see eggplant).
Potatoes	Scab on tubers	pH too high	Plant in soil with a pH of 5.1 - 5.4.
Radish	Going to seed and no enlarged roots	High temperature	Plant earlier or in late summer.
Rhubarb	Seed stalk formation	Exact cause unknown	Remove seed stalks as they appear.
Spinach	Going to seed	Long days and high temperature	Plant very early in spring or in late summer.
Summer Squash	Young fruits rot (blossom end rot)	Fungus which thrives in wet blossoms	**
Tomatoes	Catface (rough area on blossom end)	Low night temperature (below 60°F) during fruit set	Plant a little later
	Leaf roll	Too much rain or very bright sun	None
	Blossom end rot (brown leathery spot on blossom end of fruit)	Fluctuating soil moisture	Provide uniform moisture during entire season.
	Brown or black spots on foliage that spread until infected leaves die	Early or late blight	Handpick affected leaves on a daily basis or **

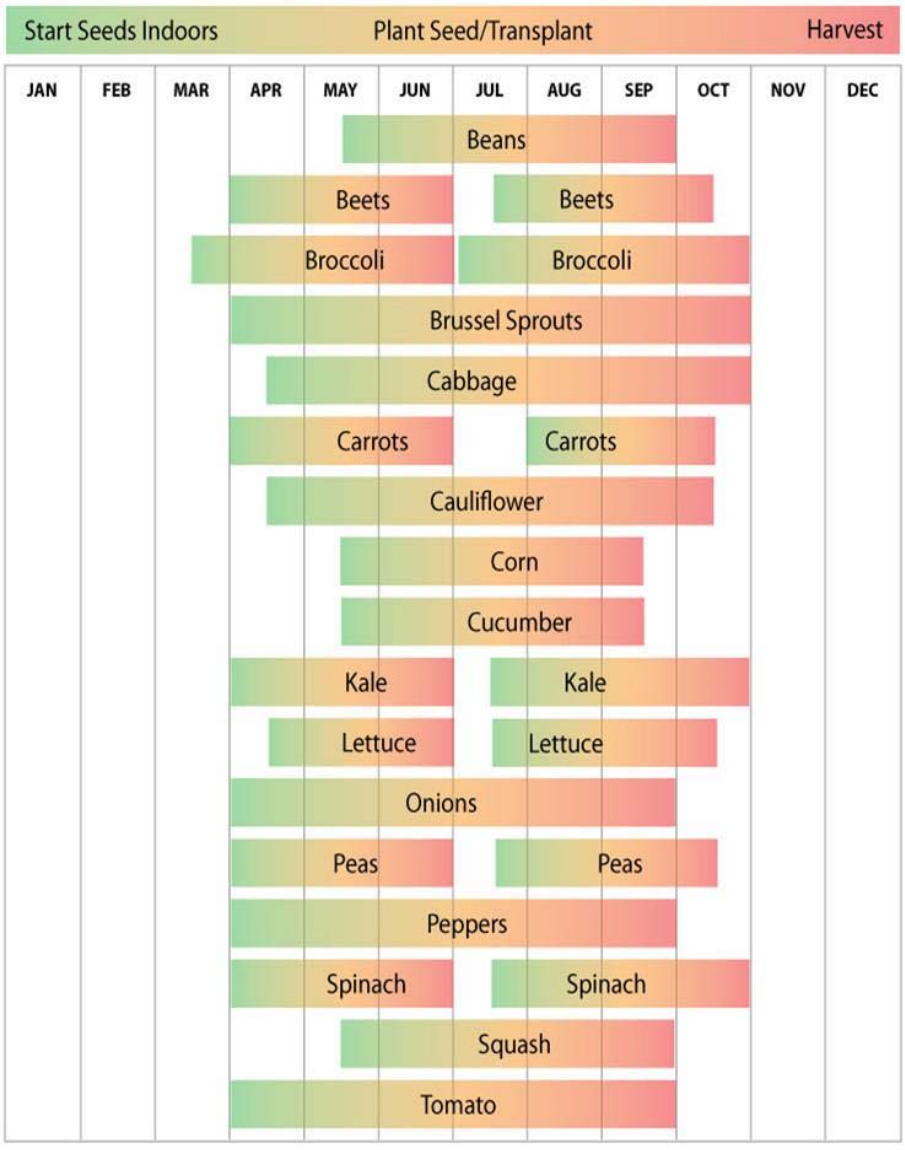
Planting and Harvesting

Vegetable	Warm Season	Cool Season	Days to Germinate	Days to Harvest	Direct Seed	Transplant
Beans, Snap	X		5-10	45-60	X	
Beans, Lima	X		5-10	65-80	X	
Beets	X	X	7-10	50-60	X	
Broccoli		X	3-10	60-80		X
Brussel Sprouts		X	10-20	100-110		X
Cabbage		X	4-15	60-110		X
Carrots		X	6-18	55-75	X	
Cauliflower		X	4-20	50-60		X
Celery / Celeriac		X	9-16	100-120		X
Corn	X		5-8	65-95	X	
Cucumber	X		4-6	45-60	X	
Eggplant	X		6-13	60-75		X
Kale	X	X	5-8	50-65	X	X
Leek	X	X	7-14	75-115		X
Lettuce		X	6-8	30-50	X	X
Melons	X		3-8	75-120		X
Onion		X	4-6	80-120	X	X
Parsley	X	X	15-29	75		X
Peas		X	6-14	50-65	X	
Peppers	X		9-14	70-85		X
Potato, Sweet	X			Before frost	X	X
Potato, White	X	X		65-90	X	X
Radish		X	5-11	25-35	X	
Spinach		X	7-12	35-45	X	
Squash	X		3-8	45-55	X	X
Swiss Chard	X	X	7-10	50-60	X	
Tomato	X		6-12	50-80		X

General Crop Problems

** Indicates a problem that is insect or disease related and may require a pesticide application for corrective action. Consult our Garden Helpline for recommendations (845-343-0664 or mghelpline@cornell.edu)

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Corrective Action
Poor growth and stunted plants	Low pH and/or poor nutrition and weed competition	Add lime and fertilizer according to soil test. Control weeds.
	Low temperature	Plant later or use soil warming methods such as black plastic.
	Insects and diseases	**
Spindly plants	Too much nitrogen or plants growing in shade	Avoid excessive nitrogen, and plant in full sun.
Holes in leaves, yellowish or distorted leaves	Insects or diseases	**
Leaves with white powdery covering or various spots: brown, red, black	Diseases	**



Guidelines for Harvesting Vegetables

Asparagus: Snap 6"-10" spears off at ground level; wait until stems are pencil thin or 6-8 weeks

Beans, Lima: When pods are filled, but before yellowing; harvest slightly immature for tender, fully mature for meaty

Beans, Snap: Pods will be most tender when small seed inside is 1/4 normal size

Beets: Begin when 1" diameter for tender greens; main harvest at 2"-3" diameter. Harvest spring before hot weather, fall before first moderate freeze

Broccoli: Harvest terminal head while florets are still tight and dark green

Brussel Sprouts: When they are firm in size starting from bottom; light frost improves flavor

Cabbage: When heads are solid

Cabbage, Chinese: Only in fall; after first moderate frost

Cantaloupe: When stem slips easily from vine, surface netting turns beige, and blossom end is soft and smells sweet

Carrots: 1"-2" thickness; spring carrots before hot weather; fall carrots before ground freezes

Cauliflower: Tie outer leaves above head when curds are 1"-2" in diameter. Heads will be ready for harvest in 1-2 weeks.

Chard, Swiss: Continuously, by breaking off outer leaves

Corn, Sweet: When tip feels full through husk; silks will be dry and kernels filled out. Open top of ear and press a kernel with thumbnail, if exudes a milky sap, ready for harvest.

Cucumber: Best slightly immature; when spines soften and before seeds become half-size

Eggplant: When fruits are nearly full-grown but color is still bright and shiny

Horseradish: After several severe freezes

Kale: Harvest leaves and leaf stem when they reach suitable size; frost improves flavor

Kohlrabi: When the swollen stems are 2"-3" in diameter

Lettuce, Head: Entire plant when head feels firm, before center bolts

Lettuce, Leaf: Outer leaves as they attain suitable size

Okra: When 2"-3" long and snap easily

Onions, Green: When attain sufficient size

Onions, Dry: at 1/4 -1" for table use; 1"-1.5" for boiling/pickling. Cure out of sunlight 3 - 4 weeks.

Parsnips: In late fall after several moderate freezes

Peas, Garden: When pods are light green and filled out

Peas, Snow: When they attain full sizes and seeds begin to show

Peppers, Hot: As needed; young are hotter than mature

Peppers, Sweet: When fruits are firm and full size

Potato: New potatoes 2 weeks after blooming; main crop after tops have died down and when ground is dry. Cure for 10-14 days at 45-60°F

Radish: When 1/2"-1" diameter; spring radishes before hot weather; winter radishes before ground freezes

Rhubarb: Leaf stalks when 1/2"-1" in diameter; DO NOT USE LEAVES!

Spinach: When attains suitable size; break off outer leaves as plant grows or harvest entire plant at once

Squash, Summer: Best when young and tender; skin should be easily penetrated with thumbnail

Squash, Winter: Mature fruit will be hard and impervious to scratching; before first hard frost with a sharp knife, leaving at least 1" stem attached. Cure in dry, well-ventilated area 10 days, 75-85°F

Sweet Potato: In fall before frosts and freezing temperatures. Cure 1 week at 80-85°F

Tomato: When fruits are uniformly red, but before end softens

Turnip: Can be harvested from the time they are 1" in diameter; can withstand several light freezes; frost improves flavor

Watermelon: Thumping a mature watermelon gives a dull, hollow thud

Cornell Cooperative Extension Orange County Garden Helpline

CALL OR EMAIL US WITH YOUR GARDENING QUESTIONS.

E-mail: mghelpline@cornell.edu Phone: 845 - 343 - 0664

April – November: Mon., Wed., Fri., 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM All other times, please leave a message.