

VEGETABLE GARDEN PLANTING GUIDE **FOR SAN DIEGO COUNTY**

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This planting guide covers the coastal and inland regions of San Diego County. Planting periods for some common cool and warm season vegetables are given for a year having average weather conditions. The beginning and end of a planting period can vary by several weeks from year to year. Gardeners need to exercise more judgment when planting early or late in the season. Suitable planting dates are dictated to a large extent by the amount of time a vegetable takes to grow from seed to a harvestable size and by the vegetable's climatic requirements. Seed packets and catalogs give the number of days required from seed to harvest under optimum growing conditions. The cold tolerance of some vegetables is listed below as a guide for early planting.

Hardy Vegetables: This group includes: cabbage plants (which have been well hardened), kale, kohlrabi, brussel sprouts, spinach, turnip, radish, asparagus, rhubarb and onion (from sets). These vegetables are not injured by light frosts and the seed will germinate at a rather low temperature.

Half-Hardy Vegetables: This group includes: lettuce, beet, carrot, chard, parsley, parsnip, heading broccoli, early potatoes, onion (from seed), garden peas, celery plants, and cauliflower plants. The seeds of these vegetables will germinate at rather low temperatures, but the young plants are injured by frost.

Tender Vegetables: This group includes: snap bean, tomato, sweet corn, and sweet potato. These vegetables are injured by the lightest frost and do not thrive at a low temperature even when frost does not occur. They should not be planted until all danger of frost is past.

Very Tender Vegetables: This group includes: eggplant, pepper, cucumber, watermelon, muskmelon, lima bean, squash, and pumpkin. These vegetables do not thrive until the soil has become warm. The seed will rot if the soil is not warm.

To prepare a garden for planting, rototill or spade the soil to a depth of 8 to 12 inches, then break up clods and rake the surface level. Work soil when it is moist but not wet.

Organic compost, manures and other amendments should be mixed into the soil at this time. A pre-plant (starter) fertilizer should also be mixed into the soil prior to planting. Commercial fertilizers can be used alone or in combination with manures and compost to provide adequate soil fertility. If animal manures is used spread it evenly over the soil and thoroughly mix it into the top 6 inches of soil, 4-6 weeks before planting to avoid plant injury. For 100 square feet of area apply 20 pounds of composted poultry manure or 60 pounds of steer/dairy manure. Before planting, periodically water to leach harmful salts out of the surface soil. Mix commercial fertilizer containing nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium into the top six inches of soil just before planting at the rate recommended on the product label.

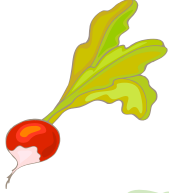
If a soluble chemical fertilizer was applied prior to planting, additional applications of a fertilizer containing only nitrogen are usually made periodically during the growing season to sustain vigorous plant growth. Apply nitrogen when seedlings are 3-4 inches tall, or about a month after setting out transplants. For 100 feet of row, evenly scatter 1 pound of ammonium sulfate (21% N) a few inches from the plants on each side of the row. Then water well with a sprinkler to dissolve and carry the fertilizer into the soil.

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Most vegetables fall into two groups:

COOL SEASON CROPS

Food value is generally higher per pound than in warm season crops



We eat a vegetative part of the plant:

- Root – carrot, parsnip, beet, radish, turnip
- Stem – Kohlrabi, white potato
- Leaf – spinach, lettuce, celery, asparagus, cabbage, onion
- Immature flower parts – cauliflower, sprouting broccoli, globe artichoke

Planting time should allow the crop to mature during the cool season
Root depth is shallow to medium

Storage is at a cooler temperature and for a longer period than for warm season crops
Store at 32°-42° F, except white potatoes (50°- 60° F)

WARM SEASON CROPS

Food value is generally lower per pound than in cool season crops



We eat the fruit of the plant:

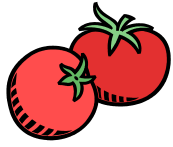
- Mature fruit – tomato, watermelon, cantaloupe, winter squash
- Immature fruit – summer squash, cucumber, snap and lima beans, sweet corn

Planting and harvesting time should be in the warm season.

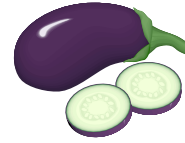
Root depth is medium to deep

Storage is at a warmer temperature and shorter period than for cool season crops
Store tomatoes, garlic, onions and unripe melons at room temperature away from direct sunlight
Store peppers, cucumbers, ripe melons, snap beans, summer squash at 45°-55°

Note: Two exceptions to the above classifications are peas (a fruit, yet a cool season crop) and sweet potatoes (a root and warm season crop)



RECOMMENDED PLANTING DATES



Coastal Region (1&2) Warm Season

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| Beans, Snap | Mid Mar - Aug |
| Beans, Lima | Mid Apr - Jul |
| Cantaloupe | Apr - Jun |
| Corn, Sweet | Mid Mar - Jul |
| Cucumbers | Mid Mar - Jul |
| Eggplant (plants) | Apr - Jun |
| Melons (Casaba, etc) | Apr - Jun |
| Okra | Apr - Jun |
| Pepper (plants) | Apr - Jul |
| Squash, summer | Mid Mar - Aug |
| Squash, winter | Apr - Jun |
| Sweet Potato (plants) | Apr - Jun |
| Tomato (plants) | Mar - Jul |
| Watermelons | Apr - Jun |

Inland Region (3&4) Warm Season

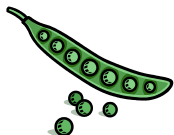
| | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| Beans, Snap | Apr - Mid Aug |
| Beans, Lima | Mid Apr - Jul |
| Cantaloupe | Apr - Jun |
| Corn, Sweet | Apr - Jul |
| Cucumbers | Apr - Jul |
| Eggplant (plants) | Apr - Jun |
| Melons (Casaba, etc) | Apr - Jun |
| Okra | Apr - Jun |
| Pepper (plants) | Apr - Jun |
| Squash, summer | Apr - Jul |
| Squash, winter | Apr - Jun |
| Sweet Potato (plants) | May - Jun |
| Tomato (plants) | Apr - Jun |
| Watermelons | Apr - Jun |

Cool Season

| | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Beets | Sept - May |
| Broccoli (plants) | Sept - Feb |
| Broccoli (seeds) | Aug - Dec |
| Cabbage (plants) | Sept - Feb |
| Cabbage (seeds) | Aug - Dec |
| Carrots | Sept - Apr |
| Cauliflower (plants) | Sept - Feb |
| Cauliflower (seeds) | Aug - Dec |
| Chard | Sept - Jun |
| Endive | Sept - May |
| Kale | Sept - Apr |
| Kohlrabi | Sept - Mar |
| Head Lettuce | Sept - Mar |
| Leaf Lettuce | Sept - Apr |
| Onion (bulb) | |
| Short Day | Oct - Dec |
| Medium Day | Jan - Feb |
| Onion (green) | Sept - May |
| Peas | Sept - Mar |
| Potatoes (Irish) | Feb - Mar |
| | Mid Aug - Sept |
| Radish | Sept - May |
| Spinach | Sept - Apr |
| Turnips | Sept - May |

Cool Season

| | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Beets | Sept - Mid Apr |
| Broccoli (plants) | Sept - Feb |
| Broccoli (seeds) | Aug - Oct |
| Cabbage (plants) | Sept - Feb |
| Cabbage (seeds) | Aug - Oct |
| Carrots | Sept - Mar |
| Cauliflower (plants) | Sept - Feb |
| Cauliflower (seeds) | Aug - Oct |
| Chard | Sept - Apr |
| Endive | Sept - Apr |
| Kale | Sept - Apr |
| Kohlrabi | Sept - Mar |
| Head Lettuce | Sept - Feb |
| Leaf Lettuce | Sept - Mar |
| Onion (bulb) | |
| Short Day | Mid Oct - Dec |
| Medium Day | Jan - Feb |
| Onions (green) | Sept - Apr |
| Peas | Jan - Mar |
| Potatoes (Irish) | Mid Feb - Apr |
| | Mid Aug - Sept |
| Radish | Sept - Mar |
| Spinach | Sept - Mar |
| Turnips | Mid Sept - Apr |



SAN DIEGO COUNTY COASTAL AND INLAND

BIOCLIMATE REGION



Coastal Region Subdivisions

1 – Maritime Zone

Inland Zones

2 – Hill & Mesa District

3 - Valley & Canyon District

4 – High Elevation Zone

Approximate Area = Sea Level to 2000' Elevation Contour

Bioclimates are complexities of weather that differ from each other in some characteristic of importance to plants and animals.

Subdivisions of California's bioclimates are named for the geographic areas with which they are most closely associated. These names are used to designate the agricultural areas of the state.