

Spring is Just Around the Corner!

Prepping Your Vegetable Garden

Now is the time collect your seeds, start your seedlings indoors and plan this year's garden.

*"Why try to explain miracles to your kids
when you can just have them plant a garden."*
Robert Brault

Depending on where you live will determine your timeline on these tasks. However there are some basics to vegetable gardening and edible landscaping guidelines to get you started – novice or expert. Topics covered:

- Understand the Terms
 - Types of Seeds/Plants
 - Garden Methods/Styles
 - Compost, Mulch, Fertilizers & the Soil
- Space Requirements
- Hardiness Zone Maps
- Plant Variety Selection
- Prepping the Soil
- Planting
- Pests and Diseases
- Care and Feeding
- Harvesting & Preserving
- Cover Crops & Winterizing
- Resources

"Gardening is civil and social, but it wants the vigor and freedom of the forest and the outlaw."

Henry David Thoreau

First, let's be sure we are all on the same page where some terms are concerned.

Types of Seeds/Plants

Open Pollinated Seeds/Plants: These plants will produce a replica of itself from its seeds. These are ideal for seed saving.

Heritage or Heirloom Seeds/Plants: These are specific plants, generally found in a specific area, that are open pollinated, so they do create a replica of the parent plant if you save their seeds. Note: These plants are specific

to their originating area. So if this plant was found in say the Northeast and then planted in the Midwest, it may NOT do well.

ALL heritage or heirloom seeds/plants ARE open pollinated. However NOT ALL open pollinated plants/seeds are heritage or heirloom.



Hybrid Seeds/Plants: These are artificial plants where if you use their seeds for next season, you will NOT get a replica of the parent plant; rather you will get some ancestor of either the male or female plant used to create the hybrid.

Note: A hybrid can still be organic, since organic is mainly meaning no artificial pesticides, fertilizers or processing was used to grow and harvest the plant.

GMO Seeds/Plants: These plants are created via scientific genetic modification via splicing genes. Most are hybrids and or sterile. Even if these plants are open pollinated, it is illegal to save their seeds since the company that created them in their laboratories OWN the seed – at least here in the U.S. that is the case. Many European countries are fighting this particular issue with GMO seeds and plants.

Since I am a Prepper, as far as I am concerned, *only Open Pollinated seeds and plants should be considered and I avoid GMO.* I want to be able to save seeds from my harvest to use in the next harvest or to add to my homemade survival seed jar.

"In all things of nature there is something of the marvelous."
Aristotle

Garden Methods/Styles

There are two basic approaches to planning the layout of an inground vegetable garden:

Row Cropping: This is self explanatory. Row cropping works best for large gardens and it makes it easier to use mechanical equipment such as tillers to battle weeds.



The downside of row cropping is that you don't get as many vegetables in a small space, as much of the soil is used for footpaths rather than vegetable plants. Row cropping isn't as visually interesting, either.

Allow at least 18 inches between your rows so you have plenty of room to work between them. And as you sketch out your plan, place taller vegetables at the north side of the garden. This includes naturally tall plants like; tomatoes, plants that can be grown on vertical supports (including snap peas, cucumbers and pole beans).



Modern-day wattle garden in Upper Nutria Village, Zuni Pueblo, showing a pump for water.

Intensive Cropping: There are quite a few gardening styles that fall into this category, with the obvious distinction being that plants are not in rows. Because of this grouping of 'like minded' plants are placed next to each other. This is also known as companion planting.



These plants assist their neighboring plants will nutrients, as well as helping to fight pests and diseases. The concept of grouping plants in non-uniform rows also helps to reduce weeds.

Remember that certain plants don't grow well together and some help each other. You can have the following plants in the same garden, but not next to each other. Avoid these combinations:

Plant	Don't Plan with
Potato	Tomato or squash
Broccoli	Tomato
Beans	Onion
Carrot	Dill
Cucumber	Potato or sage

On the other hand, companion planting can help protect against pests and disease. Try planting some of these plants together:

- Beans, carrot, celery, corn, eggplant, peas, potato, broccoli, cauliflower, radish, beet, strawberry, cucumber
- Carrot, beet, garlic, scallion
- Cucumber, corn, beans, sunflower, radish, dill, nasturtium
- Lettuce, cabbage, Brussels Sprout, cauliflower, lettuce, radish, spinach, Swiss chard, turnip, beet, carrot, cucumber, onion, strawberry
- Squash, zucchini, cantaloupe, cucumber, corn, marigold, oregano, nasturtium
- Tomato, eggplant, okra, pepper, asparagus, beans, carrot, cucumber, onion, basil, marigold

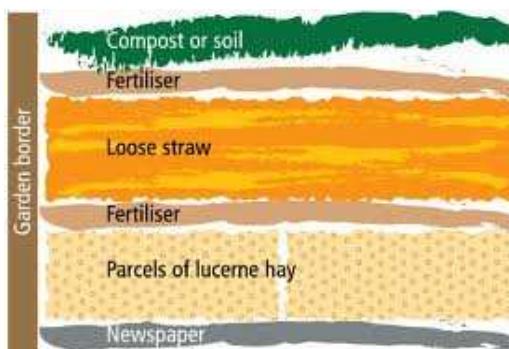
The best all around guide to companion planting a book called **Carrots Love Tomatoes** by Louise Riotte.



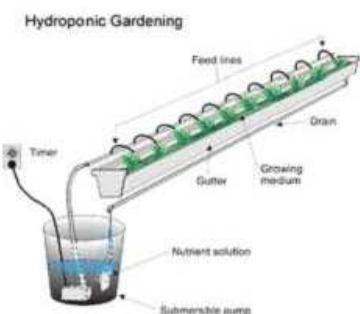
Raised bed gardens work best in low wind and high humidity areas. These types of garden beds can be as fancy and expensive as one can afford to basic, simple and cheap. Raised beds can be made by creating low mounds of soil or by building a large frame out of wood. They help you improve the quality of the soil, avoid compacting of the soil and promote better drainage. You should design your raised beds so that you can reach all your crops without having to stand inside the bed.



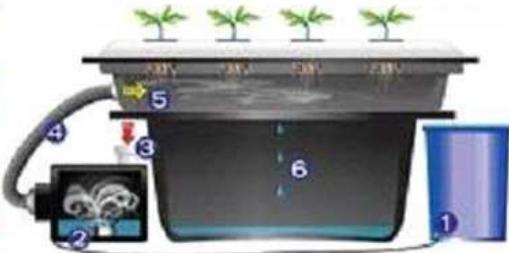
A quick, easy, no dig way to build raised beds on existing lawn is by lining the bottom of frames with several layers of newspaper, then filling with soil. Some raised beds have been made from straw bale with mulch, compost or peat moss added to the top.



If you are planning an organic garden, then some kind of intensive or companion planting is best and it will take less space, work, time, energy and monies if you use square foot, waffle or bunch style gardening.



There are also Hydroponic Gardens. These are plants growing in a nutrient rich water solution rather than soil. Purchasing kits is generally expensive so search for some DIY sites and forget the "flash" and "hype" to save monies. The chemical nutrients can be organic or natural or synthetic; try sticking to the natural organic products for healthier to humans plants and lower expenses.



Hydroponic gardens can be in bins, vertical or horizontal. I know of one person in Tennessee that has a vertical living wall of herbs and spices in her kitchen.



If you are planning a Container Garden, companion planting will still work for you. Just be sure to put at least two companion plants together in the same pot in order to reap the benefits.



Just putting 'friendly' and 'helpful' plants next to each other, but in separate pots, will NOT cut the cake! Note: Do NOT use potting soil, instead you want good nutrient rich garden soil.



Be sure the container or planter is large enough to accommodate the companion plants, with good drainage.



For medicinal container gardens, group plants based on their uses: colds, aches, upset stomach and the like. Get artistic with your kitchen herb containers and salad fixings. Just about anything can be a plant container, so use your imagination.

*"To forget how to dig the earth and to tend the soil
is to forget ourselves."*
Mahatma Gandhi

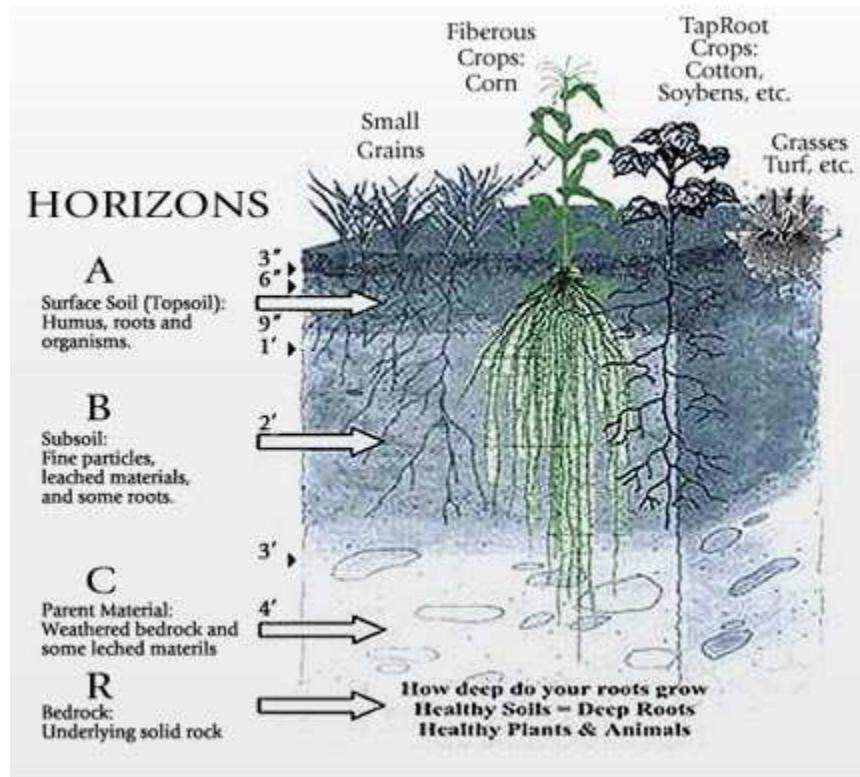
Compost, Mulch, Fertilizers & the Soil



Prepping Your Vegetable Garden - Continued

Soil is a natural body comprised of solids (minerals and organic matter), liquid and gases that occurs on the land surface.

The upper limit or layer of soil is the boundary between soil and air, shallow water, live plants, or plant materials that have not begun to decompose. Areas are not considered to have soil if the surface is permanently covered by water too deep (typically more than 2.5 meters) for the growth of rooted plants or is solid rock.



The lower boundary or layer that separates soil from the nonsoil underneath is most difficult to define. I did find the following from a Taxonomy Dictionary: Soil consists of horizons near the Earth's surface that, in contrast to the underlying parent material, have been altered by the interactions of climate, relief, and living organisms over time. Commonly, soil grades at its lower boundary to hard rock or to earthy materials virtually devoid of animals, roots, or other marks of biological activity. For purposes of classification, the lower boundary of soil is arbitrarily set at 200 cm.

In short soil is the top layer of the earth's surface, consisting of rock and mineral particles mixed with organic matter.



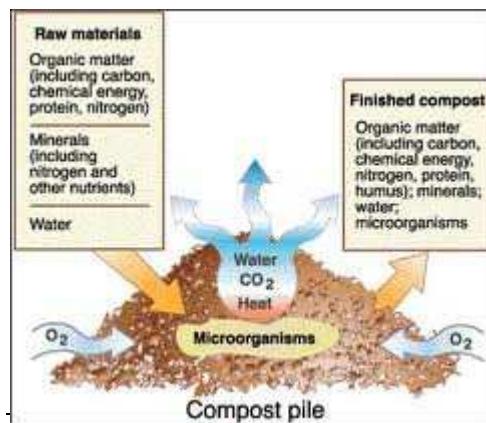
Compost is organic matter that has been decomposed and recycled, with or without human help. Compost is used as a fertilizer and soil amendment. The decomposition process is aided by shredding the plant matter, adding water and ensuring proper aeration by regularly turning the mixture. Worms and fungi further break up the material. Aerobic bacteria manage the chemical process by converting the inputs into heat, carbon dioxide and ammonium. The ammonium is further converted by bacteria into plant-nourishing nitrites and nitrates through the process of nitrification.



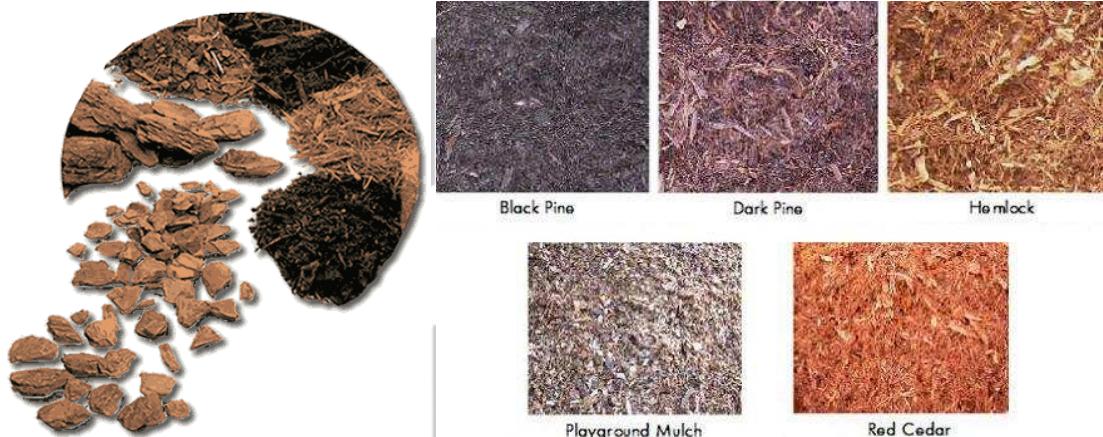
With the addition of vital humus or humic acids it acts as a natural pesticide for soil. Organic ingredients intended for composting can alternatively be used to generate biogas through anaerobic digestion.

Anaerobic digestion is fast overtaking composting in some parts of the world including central Europe as a primary means of downcycling waste organic matter.

Prepping Your Vegetable Garden - Continued



Mulch is a protective covering, usually of organic matter such as leaves, straw, or peat, placed over soil or around plants to retain moisture, prevent the evaporation of moisture and reduce erosion as well as preventing the freezing of roots and the growth of weeds.



In agriculture and gardening, mulch is a protective cover placed over the soil to retain moisture, provide nutrients and suppress weed growth and seed germination. Mulching in gardens and landscaping mimics the leaf cover that is found on forest floors.



Materials used as mulches vary and depend on a number of factors. Use takes into consideration availability, cost, appearance, the effect it has on the soil — including chemical reactions and pH, durability, combustibility, rate of decomposition. Depending on how “clean” the mulch is (some can contain weed seeds or plant pathogens) it helps reduce weeds.

Turn This ...

Into This !



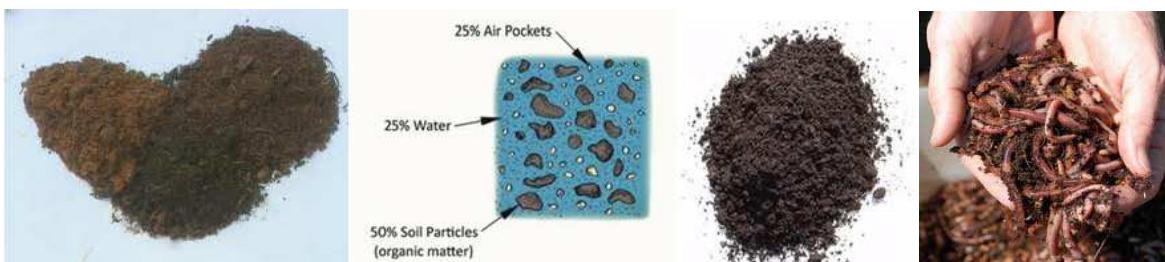
A variety of materials are used as mulch:

- Organic residues: grass clippings, leaves, hay, straw, kitchen scraps comfrey, shredded bark, whole bark nuggets, sawdust, shells, woodchips, shredded newspaper, cardboard, wool, but also animal manure, etc. Many of these materials also act as a direct composting system, such as the mulched clippings of a mulching lawn mower, or other organics applied as sheet composting.
- Rock and gravel can also be used as a mulch. In cooler climates the heat retained by rocks may extend the growing season.
- Rubber mulch: made from recycled tire rubber.
- Plastic mulch: crops grow through slits or holes in thin plastic sheeting. This method is predominant in large-scale vegetable growing, with millions of acres cultivated under plastic mulch worldwide each year (disposal of plastic mulch is cited as an environmental problem).
- Some Mulch is more of a Compost: This should be fully composted material to avoid possible phytotoxicity problems and the weed seed must have been eliminated, otherwise the mulch will actually produce weed cover.



"Gardening is a way of showing that you believe in tomorrow."
Unknown

Bottom Line: You want a soil mixture that is rich in nutrients, retains moisture, is not compacted and drains well when over watered (by human or natural means). No matter if you place your garden in pots or in the ground, most gardeners recommend organic compost, purchased or homemade. One 'recipe' is manure mixed with compost. A simple mixture of equal parts peat moss, manure, straw and your existing soil can be used in planters or tilled into the existing soil will do wonders.



Fertilizer (or fertiliser) is any organic or inorganic material of natural or synthetic origin (other than liming materials) that is added to a soil to supply one or more plant nutrients essential to the growth of plants.



Tennessee Valley Authority: "Results of Fertilizer" demonstration 1942
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fertilizer>

Inorganic fertilizer use has also significantly supported global population growth — it has been estimated that almost half the people on the Earth are currently fed as a result of synthetic nitrogen fertilizer use. If you have allergies to synthetics (as I do), this can pose a major problem. Synthetics tend to be expensive on the small orders and cheaper in bulk orders, hence its wide use in agribusiness.

Fertilizers typically provide, in varying proportions:

- six macronutrients: nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), potassium (K), calcium (Ca), magnesium (Mg), and sulfur (S);
- seven micronutrients: boron (B), chlorine (Cl), copper (Cu), iron (Fe), manganese (Mn), molybdenum (Mo), and zinc (Zn).

Only three other macronutrients are required by all plants: carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen. These nutrients are supplied by water and carbon dioxide.

Naturally occurring organic fertilizers include manure, slurry, worm castings, peat, seaweed, humic acid, and guano. Sewage sludge use in organic agricultural operations in the U.S. has been extremely limited and rare due to USDA prohibition of the practice (due to toxic metal accumulation, among other factors).

Processed organic fertilizers include compost, bloodmeal, bone meal, humic acid, amino acids and seaweed extracts. Other examples are natural enzyme-digested proteins, fish meal, and feather meal. Decomposing crop residue (green manure) from prior years is another source of fertility.

Above all chemical or non-organic fertilizers should be your *last option*, since they can burn the crops and be harmful to your health.

*"The foolish man seeks happiness in the distance,
the wise grows it under his feet."*
James Oppenheim

Ok, we have covered the terms that are going to be used, so let's go on to the basics of planning your garden.

Space Requirements

Once you have decided on what variety of seeds/plants you wish to grow and what basic method or style of gardening you are going to utilize, it is time to determine just how much space you need or have, to fulfill your garden wish. Remember just as different plants have different likes and dislikes, they also have different space requirements too.

Use your space wisely by growing the same type of vegetable at different times. If you plant small numbers of the same fast-growing vegetable throughout the planting season, you'll be able to harvest your crop at different times and it won't compete for space and sun. This way you will enjoy your harvest throughout the growing season. If you plant all crops at once, they will all be ready around the same time.

Using vine crops like pole beans and snap peas, will make use of vertical space in the garden and boost yield per square foot. I know of people who are quite successful in trellising cucumbers, squash and zucchini too.

If you must plant your garden on a hill, cut your furrows on a contour with the land, so that the water won't run quickly down the hill, taking with it the valuable topsoil, and the nutrients needed for your plants.

Perennial vegetables such as rhubarb and asparagus should be planted off to the side where they won't interfere with future plowing. Early producing crops (radishes, lettuce, spinach, carrots, beets, onions, etc.) should be grouped together with extra space for successive plantings. After they are finished for the season, this will allow you to easily rework the area for later season crops.

Planting depths and spacing are critical, so don't crowd too many plants into the allotted space or you may end up with spindly plants and no food. Be sure to place a tag or marker on each row or area so that you will know what to expect will sprout there and when! Water your garden thoroughly the day before you intend to plant.

As an example, let's use the "3 Sisters" of companion planting:

Prepping Your Vegetable Garden - Continued



Normally Corn would be planted about 3" apart and 1" deep, with the rows about 24" apart. This is to facilitate pollination. For companion planting you would 3-4 seeds across the north side of the waffle or square foot, 1" deep.

Pole Beans need to be about 3 feet apart, 1½-2" deep, with rows about 48" apart. Pole beans need to climb something and in companion planting this will be the corn stalk. So we will plant 3 seeds about 3" from the corn.

Squash on the other hand is usually planted with 3-4 seeds per seed mound, with the mounds and rows about 3 feet apart and $\frac{1}{2}$ -1" deep. These plants are viney and like to spread out. With companion planting this will be 1-2 seeds per mound, $\frac{1}{2}$ -1" inches deep and about 4-5" from the beans; Kinda staggered.

In waffle or square foot intensive companion planting the rows become blocks of square feet, with 12-18" between each row of "waffles". In this example the corn ripens in 2-3 months and provides the pole beans (which mature in 50-60 days) with something to climb; while the squash matures in 4-5 months and protects the ground around the corn and beans from excessive moisture evaporation. These plants 'crowd' out many weeds, while the insects that tend to plague each veggie either hate each other or they don't like the close neighbor plant. The '3 Sisters' also use and replace complementing nutrients into the soil.

Keep in mind that you don't need a large space to begin a vegetable garden. If you choose to grow in containers, you don't even need a yard as a deck or balcony may provide plenty of space. In fact, a well-tended 10x10-foot garden will usually produce more than a weed-filled or disease-ridden 25x50-foot bed.

"Mud is the most poetical thing in the world."
R. H. Blyth

No matter how big or small or what style your vegetable garden is going to be, there are three basic requirements for success:

1. Full sun. Most vegetables need at least 6-8 hours of direct sun. If they don't get enough light, they won't bear as much and they'll be more susceptible to attack from insects or diseases.

Note: If you don't have a spot in full sun, you can still grow many leafy vegetables such as lettuce and spinach. And if you're in a hot-summer climate, cool-season varieties such as peas may do better in part shade.

2. Plenty of water. Because most vegetables aren't very drought tolerant, you'll need to give them a drink during dry spells. The closer your garden is to a source of water, the easier it will be for you.

3. Good soil. As with any kind of garden, success usually starts with the soil. Most vegetables do best in moist, well-drained soil that's rich in organic matter (such as compost or peat moss).

Many gardeners like to have their vegetable gardens close to the house. This makes it easier to harvest fresh produce while you're cooking. It can also be handy to keep a few favorite potted vegetables next to your grill.

"I prefer to plant, to sow, and to be free."
Voltaire



You can grow vegetables in your yard, a community garden, containers or planters on your porch, terrace or balcony, straw bales or even in window planters. To get a good harvest, your crops need to be in a sunny and open location.



Your garden may end up 'distributed' throughout your yard in order to have the room and the correct environment for the items you wish to grow. If this is your situation, be sure to check out the *Edible Landscaping* resources in the Resources section of this document, so you can have beauty and aesthetics in your yard as well as a food garden.

"Garden making, like gardening itself, concerns the relationship of the human being to his natural surroundings."

Russell Page

Hardiness Zone Maps & Extension Services

To figure out what plants grow best in your area and for your growth zones you can get all kinds of free information from a *University Extension Service* near you. Another good place to start looking at what is available in your area is the *USDA Cooperative Extension System Offices* at <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/Extension/> or you can also talk to neighbors who have a garden or visit a plant nursery nearby.

For Hardiness, Growth, Heat, Freeze/Frost and even Moon Phase Gardening zones use one of the following:

U.S. Freeze/Frost NOAA Maps	http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/climate/freeze/frost/frostfree_maps.html
U.S. Frost Chart for United States	http://www.jerrysplantsonline.com/frost_chart_for_usa.htm
U.S. Gardening Frost Date and Zone Charts	http://www.almanac.com/content/frost-chart-united-states#chart
U.S. Hardiness Zone Finder by Zip USDA (interactive)	http://www.garden.org/zipzone/#zone_info
U.S. Hardiness Zones	http://www.thegardenhelper.com/hardiness.htm
U.S. Hardiness Zones USDA	http://www.usna.usda.gov/Hardzone/ushzmap.html
U.S. Hardiness Zones USDA Indicator Plant Examples Alphabetical by Plant	http://www.usna.usda.gov/Hardzone/hrdzon5.html
U.S. Hardiness Zones USDA Indicator Plant Examples by Zone	http://www.usna.usda.gov/Hardzone/hrdzon4.html
U.S. Heat Zones	http://www.backyardgardener.com/zone/index.html#heat
U.S. Moon Phase Planting Zones	http://www.moongrow.com/moon_phase_gardening/moon_phase_planting_zones.html
U.S. Plant Heat Zone by American Horticultural Society (PDF)	http://www.ahs.org/pdfs/05_heat_map.pdf
U.S. Planting Schedules (the best time to plant a specific crop per planting zone)	http://www.thevegetablegarden.info/planting-schedules
U.S. Planting Zones	http://www.thevegetablegarden.info/planting-zones
U.S. Sunset Magazine climate zones (Sunset Magazine took more conditions into consideration when creating their zones than the USDA)	http://www.sunset.com/garden/climate-zones/climate-zones-intro-us-map-00400000036421/
U.S. Sunset Magazine Plant Finder (Find the right plants for your zone)	http://plantfinder.sunset.com/sunset/plant-home.jsp

Prepping Your Vegetable Garden - Continued

United States, Canada & North America USDA Hardiness Zone Map	http://www.arborday.org/webtools/hortzones/ziplookup.cfm ?RegID=473
USDA and Canadian Hardiness Zones	http://www.backyardgardener.com/zone/index.html#usda
North America USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map	http://www.usna.usda.gov/Hardzone/ushzmap.html
Canada Plant Hardiness Zone Map	http://atlas.gc.ca/site/english/maps/environment/forest/forestcanada/planthard
Australia Plant Hardiness Zones	http://www.anbg.gov.au/hort.research/zones.html
Australian Government Climate map	http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/tempmaps/low/12mthmin.shtml
China Hardiness Zone Map	http://www.backyardgardener.com/zone/china.html
Europe Climate Zone Map	http://www.backyardgardener.com/zone/europezone.html
Europe Hardiness Zone Map	http://www.gardenweb.com/zones/europe/
Europe Hardiness Zone map (Shows East of Moscow)	http://www.backyardgardener.com/zone/europe1zone.html
South America Hardiness Zone Map	http://www.backyardgardener.com/zone/sazone.html

*"Fix'd like a plant on his peculiar spot,
To draw nutrition, propagate, and rot."
Alexander Pope, 1688-1744*



Plant Variety Selection

When selecting varieties, pay close attention to the description on the tag, seed envelope or in the catalog, as each variety will be a little different. Some produce smaller plants that are ideal for small gardens or containers, while others offer great disease resistance, improved yields, better heat- or cold-tolerance, drought tolerance or other features. I must stress again, please stick to open pollinated, non-GMO varieties.



Even if you don't save your own seeds, these are most likely healthier for you. The GMO seed labs do NOT allow outside, independent studies on their products, so claims to being more nutritional or whatever for you is contested as having no proof. Until these companies are willing to allow anyone to test their claims, I personally will avoid them at all costs. (Not to mention that these GMO companies 'trap' farmers into contracts that are almost impossible to ever get out of and their rather greedy copyright or patent claims and thievery.)



Some seeds/plants, particularly of the 'heritage' variety, are often suited to specific areas of a state or region of the country and will need additional care if grown outside of its natural environment.



Seed catalogs are one of the best sources for vegetables. Your local organic nursery is another excellent choice.



If this is your first garden, once you narrow your choices to types of vegetables, pick two or three varieties to each veggie you wish to grow that seem promising. That way if one variety doesn't perform well, you'll have other plants to make up for it. Next year, grow the best performer again and choose another to try.

*"The best stock a man can invest in, is the stock of a farm;
the best shares are plow shares;*

*and the best banks are the fertile banks of a rural stream;
the more these are broken the better dividends they pay."*

Henry Ward Beecher

Preparing the Soil

Check drainage by soaking the soil with a hose, waiting a day, then digging up a handful of soil. Squeeze the soil hard. If water streams out, you'll probably want to add compost or organic matter to improve the drainage. Next, open your hand.



If the soil hasn't formed a ball, or if the ball falls apart at the slightest touch, the soil is probably too sandy so you need to add organic matter to improve it.



If the ball holds together even if you poke it fairly hard, you have too much clay in your soil. Add organic matter to the soil until you get a better consistency.



But if the ball breaks into crumbs when you poke it, kinda like a chocolate cake, your soil is ready to plant.

"The soil is the gift of God to the living."
Thomas Jefferson

If your soil doesn't drain well, your best bet will probably be to install raised beds.



Before planting or seeding, loosen it up a bit. You can either use a tiller or dig by hand with a hoe, garden spade or the like.



Once the soil has been loosened, spread out soil amendments (such as compost, peat moss, manure and straw) and work them into the soil. Avoid stepping on freshly tilled soil as much as possible to avoid compacting it.

When you're done digging, smooth the surface with a rake and water thoroughly. Allow the bed to rest for several days before you plant.

"The earth neither grows old or wears out if it is dunged."
Columella, circa 45 A.D.

Planting



Many vegetables can be started early indoors or purchased already started from a garden center. The benefit of purchasing seedlings is that you can have a crop ready to harvest several weeks earlier than if you were to plant seeds in the ground (unless you started indoors). Starting vegetables indoors is not difficult, but it does require some space, time and attention.



If you decide to start your plants indoors, in a greenhouse or cold frame or on your windowsill it is a good idea to use 'seedling pots' that are made out of manure or peat moss so that the plant in its starter pot can be transplanted outdoors all at once, without removing it from the pot. This avoids potential shock to the plant and root damage.

Tip: I have used the empty rolls from toilet paper and paper towels or a folded/rolled 'pot' made out of old newspaper for my seedling pots for many veggies; including tomato, carrot, radish, green bean, cilantro, basil, bay and more. I also put these bio-degradable 'pot' on a tray made out of a 'flat' box (like a canned goods or water bottle flat), lined with plastic or the cheap evaporative cooler water tray liner.

*“God Almighty first planted a garden.
And indeed it is the purest of human pleasures.”*

Francis Bacon



If you purchased bedding plants, or started your seeds indoors in pots, dig a small hole which is slightly wider and deeper than the root ball of the new plant. Water the plant thoroughly prior to planting it out in the garden to lessen the shock of transplant. Gently tap the pot to loosen the roots and remove the new plant. If the root ball is tangled and compacted, use your finger tips to gently loosen the outer roots. Set the plant into the hole slightly deeper than it was growing in the pot, and firm the soil in around it, making certain that there is good soil/root contact.



When starting from seed, you will want to plant extra seeds in each area, seedling pot or row to allow for failed germination and for thinning.

Cover the seeds with fine soil (no clods or rocks). Firm the soil over the seeds to insure good moisture contact and to help retain the moisture in the soil.

Water thoroughly, using a gentle spray so that you don't disturb or uncover the seeds. Seeds need moisture to germinate, so it is important to keep the soil moist until the seedlings are up.

When the seedlings have emerged and developed their second or third set of true leaves, thin them as needed so that you keep the strongest plants, leaving the remaining ones spaced as directed on the seed package.

It is best to thin while the seedlings are still small, so that you aren't disturbing the roots of the plants which will remain.

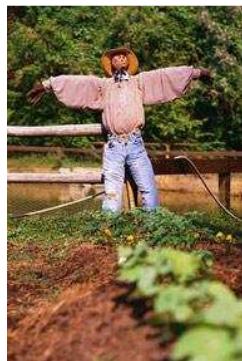
It's a good idea use a *Planting Calendar* of some kind and to make a planting chart that takes into account the seasons and life cycles of the plants. Think about the weather and be prepared for possible problems, such as a dip in temperatures. Knowing when and how to water and fertilize your garden will make it more productive.

Rotate your crops to grow fruits and vegetables more than once a year, conserve nutrients and avoid diseases in the soil.

"All through the long winter, I dream of my garden. On the first day of spring, I dig my fingers deep into the soft earth. I can feel its energy, and my spirits soar."

Helen Hayes

Stopping Pests and Diseases



Pests and disease are ongoing problems for most gardeners, vegetable or flower. Although specific problems may require special solutions, there are some general principles you can follow.



Deer and rabbits: Use fences to deter rabbits. Make sure the bottom of the fence extends about 6 inches under the soil to stop rabbits from digging underneath it. The fence needs to stand at least 8 feet above the ground to prevent deer from jumping over it. Or as one homesteading Montana friend told me: Two twine fences with three strands each; spaced 3 feet apart (alternate strands); with strips of pie tins or aluminum foil on them; about 6 feet tall seems to fool the deer into thinking the fence is 'solid' and un-scalable.



Spring insects: Row covers, which are lightweight sheets of translucent plastic, protect young crops against many common insects. Row covers are also helpful to prevent damage from light frosts. Companion planting and marigolds also help a lot.



Fungal diseases: Reduce fungal diseases by watering the soil, not the leaves of plants. If you use a sprinkler, do it early in the day so the leaves will dry by nightfall. Crop rotation and companion planting help here too.

- If a plant falls prey to a disease, remove it promptly and throw it in the trash; don't add sick plants to your compost pile.
- Grow varieties that are listed as disease resistant. Garden catalogs and websites should tell you which varieties offer the most protection.
- Make it a habit to change the location of your plants each year. In other words, if you grew tomatoes in the northwest corner of your garden this year, put them in the northeast corner next year. This reduces the chances that pests will gain a permanent foothold in your garden.



Summer insects: Pick larger insects and caterpillars by hand. Once you get over the "yuck!" factor, this is a safe and effective way to deal with limited infestations.

Make and use a homemade insecticidal spray out of vinegar and or soap to control harmful bugs. And again, companion planting helps a lot.



*"The farther we get away from the land,
the greater our insecurity."*
Henry Ford

Care and Feeding

You can't take care of your garden if you don't take care of yourself. Sooo -



Wear long pants, sunglasses and a hat. Use sunblock, especially between 10 am and 4 pm and bug repellent if necessary. Protect your hands with gloves and your feet with socks and shoes.

On hot days, try to garden early in the morning or late in the afternoon. Drink lots of water, but avoid alcohol and sugary drinks. Take breaks in shady areas. Children under 4, the elderly and those who are not in good health should not be exposed to high temperatures for extended periods of time.



If you live in an arid area, such as the Southwest, you may also want to have some shade cloth over some of your plants. I learned this lesson the hard way the first year I gardened after moving to the Southwest from the Northeast. My melons were 'popping' and cracking open from the sun!

Most vegetables like a steady supply of moisture, but not so much that they are standing in water.

About an inch of water per week is usually sufficient, so how often you water will depend on Mother Nature. Otherwise, water when the top inch of soil is dry. For in-ground crops, that may mean watering once or twice a week; raised beds drain faster and may require watering every other day.

- Always try to water the plant base and not from the top. This not guarantees that water gets to the root where it is needed; it helps reduce or eliminate many plant diseases too.
- During dry periods, vegetable gardens need extra watering. Most vegetables benefit from an inch or more water each week, especially when they are fruiting.
- Mulching between the rows will help to control weeds, conserve moisture in the soil, and provide you with pathways to access your plants. Black plastic may be used, or you can utilize grass clippings, straw, wood chips, or garden debris.
- Throughout the growing season be vigilante against insect pests. Discovering a bug problem early will make it much easier to take appropriate action and eliminate the pests. Do not use pesticides once the plants have fruited unless it becomes an absolute necessity, and be sure to follow the manufacturers recommendations.
- Weeds rob your vegetables of water, light and root space. Keep them pulled out regularly (try to get the entire root) and the job isn't too bad. If they are allowed to go to seed, you may be dealing with thousands of weeds instead of a few.
- Once you have harvested your crop, put the spent plant and other vegetable matter into your compost pile so that it can be recycled into your garden again, next spring.

"Man - despite his artistic pretensions, his sophistication, and his many accomplishments - owes his existence to a six inch layer of topsoil and the fact that it rains."

Unknown



Crop Rotation in Containers

Experienced food gardeners know that crop rotation—varying the crops you grow in a given area—is essential to managing pests and diseases. Why?

- Pests don't adapt to finding their host crops in the same location each year, which helps limit infestations.
- Lingering pathogens have nowhere to grow since their preferred plant host is no longer present.
- Soil management is enhanced since nutrients in the soil are depleted at different rates.

As you dream of next year's crops it's easy to factor this into your plans. Here's a systematic approach to Container Crop Rotation:

- Most of the vegetables we grow belong to one of six plant families: onion, pea, cabbage, beet, carrot or nightshade (includes tomatoes, potatoes and peppers). It's best to avoid planting crops from the same family in the same soil year after year. The Maritime Northwest Garden Guide is an excellent local resource for seed selection and crop rotation and is available from the Seattle Tilth website.
- Treat each container as an individual bed and have some fun mapping out a sample plan that includes two different plantings each year—one in spring and one in summer/fall. In spring you might plant lettuce in one pot and peas in another. In the summer kale can follow the lettuce and chard can follow the peas. Write down what you plant and when, so you can track your choices and learn from your experiences. Start simply next spring and build on your success. You will begin to discover rotations that work well for you based on what you like to eat!

Weeds compete with your vegetables for water and nutrients, so it's important to keep them to a minimum. Use a hoe or hand fork to lightly stir (cultivate) the top inch of soil regularly to discourage weed seedlings. A mulch of clean straw, compost, plastic or newspaper can keep weeds at bay around larger plants like tomatoes.



"Treat the earth well: it was not given to you by your parents, it was loaned to you by your children. We do not inherit the Earth from our Ancestors, we borrow it from our Children."

Ancient Indian Proverb

Harvesting & Preserving



Many vegetables can be harvested at several stages. Leaf lettuce, for example, can be picked as young as you like; snip some leaves and it will continue to grow and produce. Summer squash (zucchini) and cucumber can be harvested when the fruit is just a few inches long, or it can be allowed to grow to full size.

The general rule: If it looks good enough to eat, it probably is.

If you planned your garden well, incorporating multiple crops and crop rotation throughout the season you can harvest items almost every 6-8 weeks.



To preserve your harvest take advantage of root cellars, canning, dehydrating and freezing.

"Earth is here so kind, that just tickle her with a hoe and she laughs with a harvest."

*Douglas William Jerrold,
about Australia, A Land of Plenty*

Cover Crops & Winterizing



Fall is a time to prepare ahead of time for the following spring. Here are some things to do before winter hits so that when spring does arrive you are ready for a jump start to your vegetable garden.

- Sharpen and oil tools (at least once a year).
- Clean and store summer lawn and garden tools.
- Drain and store garden hoses. Install insulating covers on exterior spigots. In hard-freeze areas, have sprinkler systems blown free of water.
- Clear or bleed your irrigation system. Drain any hoses by stretching them out on a downward slope while you stand at the top and slowly draw the hose towards your, winding for storage as you do.
- For automatic sprinklers or pipe irrigation systems, drain the pipes and pumps. Once complete shut off the water to your system.
- Use Leaf cleanup litter in your own compost pile or at a town recycling center. If you are using the leaves on your own compost pile, either grind them up or run them over with a lawn mower to speed decomposition.
- Cut back perennials as they fade. While you are at it, scratch some super phosphate fertilizer into the soil around them.
- In perennial beds, weed and give everything a good layer of mulch. After the ground has frozen, mulch around the crowns of your plants to reduce the chance of frost heaving.
- If you are planning on making new garden beds, or expanding current ones, do it now and save yourself some work during the hectic spring gardening season.
- Prune any trees or shrubs except for ornamental plants (Holly being the only exception).
- Mulch around roses, strawberries, tender perennials, tree bases and the like.
- Bring in any pots that can't take a freeze -- terra cotta, ceramic, and many plastic pots.
- Bring in any potted plants that can't take a freeze or winterize with a makeshift cold frame or hoop house. Use PVC or sturdy field fence to cover and then anchor clear plastic over the frame. Before bringing houseplants indoors, inspect the plant and soil for pests.
- Wash all pots with a solution of one-part chlorine bleach to nine-parts water, then rinse thoroughly with water before storing.
- Divide over-crowded perennials and move shrubs
- Clean up disease or insect ridden vegetables as soon as they quit producing. Pull out the plants, collect all plant debris and send everything to a municipal composting facility or burn. Removing infected plant material from the garden in fall decreases the chance of disease and insect problems next year.

- Be sure to remove old plants, as well as any foliage that has fallen on the soil. Do a final weeding, and mulch the bed with straw, grass clippings, or chopped leaves. These mulches can be turned into the soil next spring to help fertilize next year's crops.
- Continue to harvest herbs, vegetables and fruits. Preserve whatever you can't eat by freezing, canning or drying. Donate any excess to food pantries.
- Plant seed of cool season vegetables, like leaf lettuce, swiss chard, spinach, radish, Chinese mustards and mustard greens, for harvesting later this fall. Choose cultivars with less than 50 days from planting to harvest. You can extend the growing season further by using floating row cover for freeze protection of leafy vegetables and cole crops. Garlic and shallots should be planted in autumn about 6 to 8 weeks before the ground freezes. Cloves and bulbs develop roots and shoots below the soil surface in fall. In spring, growth begins as soon as the ground defrosts.
- Test your garden soil if it hasn't been done in the past five years. Contact your local state extension service, most will analyze your soil test and get the results back to you in about two weeks and should give you the soil type, pH, phosphorus, and potassium and fertilizer recommendations.
- Add leaves, compost and other additives, recommended by your soil test results, to your garden. Fall tilling or digging gets your garden ready for an earlier spring start; and may expose harmful insects to cold temperatures which kill them.
- Write down gardening successes, problems and ideas. Make a note of disease and insect problems. Did new varieties live up to their hype? Record outstanding, as well as, poor performers.
- Plant your Green Manure or Cover Crops

"No occupation is so delightful to me as the culture of the earth, and no culture comparable to that of the garden."

Thomas Jefferson, Garden Book, 1811

If you are not overwintering crops:

- Remove dead plant material from your containers. Pests and diseases can overwinter too!
- Protect the soil from winter rains. Raindrops compact the soil and the water leaches out valuable nutrients. Apply a deep and fluffy mulch on the soil surface. Commercial or homemade compost is a great choice for feeding the soil. Fall leaves are too as they contain trace minerals and are free! Grass clippings, non-diseased plant trimmings, straw, burlap or even wood chips also can be effective.
- Plant a cover crop to protect and feed the soil! Cover crops aren't just for the farm—you can reap many benefits from these useful plants in containers as well. Seed the cover crop in the fall and chop it into the soil in spring. Some—like crimson clover and fava beans—will provide much needed nitrogen next season. Grains such as winter wheat and oats are extremely cold tolerant and provide a grass-like appearance all winter long. Choices for cover crops can be found in many vegetable seed catalogs and in Seattle Tilth's Maritime Northwest Garden Guide.
- Purchasing new potting soil each season can be costly, is not very resource-efficient, and is unnecessary! In the first year of use, a good quality potting soil will be fertile enough to grow most crops without additional fertilizer. Each spring after that, you will want to replenish the organic matter that is used up each year by

Prepping Your Vegetable Garden - Continued

adding 2 to 3 inches of finished compost to your containers, mixing it thoroughly into the soil. For added fertility and increased biological activity add a handful of worm castings, organic fertilizer, or replace regular compost with fully composted animal manure such as dairy or chicken manure.



Even though a portion of your garden, acreage or containers lie idle for a time, the soil can be built up by growing cover crops. Fall is the time to start thinking about cover crops for the vegetable garden.

Every year home vegetable gardeners add compost, manures, or other organic materials to their gardens as a source of organic matter. The organic matter is utilized by earthworms, bacteria, fungi, nematodes and other forms of life in the soil to make healthy fertile soil. Cover is another source of organic matter for home vegetable gardens.



A *Cover Crop or Green Manure* is a crop planted to benefit the soil and any part of it is not harvestable. The cover crop can improve the fertility of the soil by fixing some of the nutrients important in plant growth such as nitrogen and some cover crop can scavenge nutrients left in the soil after harvesting the crop.



Cover crops are fast growing green plants that can be chopped up and spaded, plowed, or tilled into the soil, adding green organic matter that then composts into humus.

Plants of the Legume family also add nitrogen to the soil. Some cover crops can be spaded into your garden and with others it is better to cut off the green tops, add them to the compost pile and spade only the roots left behind into the soil.

Cover crops have several other advantages in that they help reduce soil erosion, rebuild soil texture and water retention, aid in loosening the soil, add organic matter, suppress weeds and some cover crops, like peas, clover and vetch actually add fertilizer in the form of nitrogen.



Other cover crops can be used to attract beneficial insects that control insect pests and these are referred to as trap crops. Many beneficial insect adults tend to feed on pollen hence the cover crops tend to be more attractive at flowering stage. Cover crops can also be planted to protect plants grown in sandy soils from sand blasting.



Annual Ryegrass

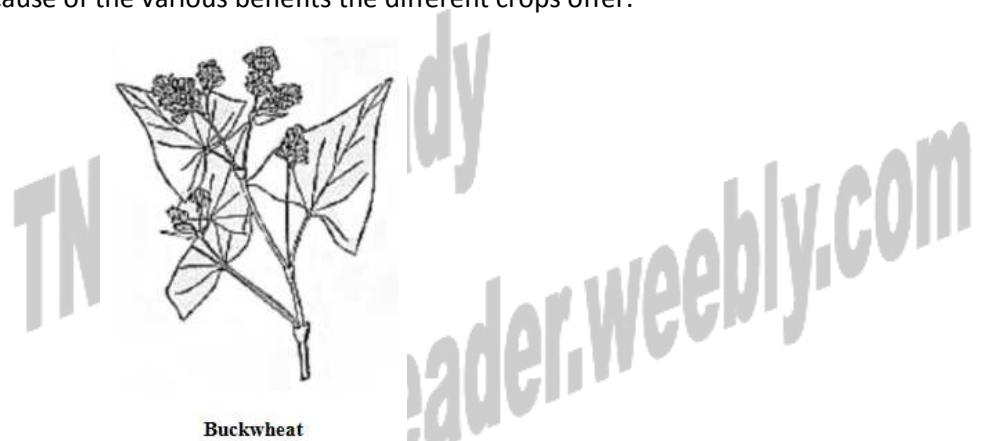
A cover crop can be seeded as soon as any vegetable crop has reached maturity and has been harvested. In fact, cover crops should be sown while the weather is still warm enough for the seeds to germinate. Here in the northwest the cut-off date for seeding is usually set at about October 15th to November 1st. After that time the seed is apt to just sit dormant and not germinate until the next spring, at a time when you really don't want these cover crops growing in your garden.

Prepping Your Vegetable Garden - Continued

There's no special soil preparation for seeding a cover crop. Simply, spade or till the soil after harvest, and sow the cover crop seed. If you have late crops in a part of the garden, then simply sow the cover crop in the space between the rows.



There is a wide variety of seeds that can be grown as cover crops. Among the most popular ones are Rye grain, Crimson Clover (strains), Garden Pea (strains), Vetch; Alfalfa, Oats, Buckwheat etc. These can be planted individually or they are often mixed and planted as a blend because of the various benefits the different crops offer.



For container gardens stick to grasses, small legumes and the like. You can plant these in individual pots, or a more successful way is dump all the soil from your smaller containers into a larger planter and then plant your cover crop.

When it is time to start your container vegetable garden, till and mix in some additional compost and mulch. Then refill your individual containers with this new soil.

*“When the world wearies and society fails to satisfy,
there is always a garden.”*

Minnie Aumonier



If lime needs to be added to the vegetable garden soil, do it before seeding the cover crop, or wait until after the cover crop has been spaded or tilled-in next spring.

Cover crops seeded in the fall will continue to grow all winter, whenever it is warm and then will be ready to be spaded or tilled-in just before planting time late this winter or early spring.

There is a good chance the cover crop will get too tall over winter and it will be necessary to either mow or cut the top with a sickle, before spading. If this happens, leave the cut greens on the soil and simply spade or till them into the soil, because they make the 'green manure'.

Sometimes, if any of the clover or vetch seed does not germinate it will remain over winter and then seed in the spring. This is not desired, so the new seedlings should be cultivated and added to the compost pile before they have a chance to flower and go to seed.



Incidentally, chickweed or most any other weed that grows in the garden over-winter can also be considered a cover crop, when spaded or tilled into the soil. Remember these weeds *must* be tilled or spaded before they flower and go to seed again, or you will fight the germination of the new seed all spring and summer. These nuisance weeds are *not recommended* as cover crops, but since they sometimes appear in the garden why not take advantage of their value as green manure.



In addition to cover crops there are other ways of adding organic matter to the soil, over winter. Animal manures are a great source of organic-humus and nutrients. They are best added to the soil in the fall or early winter, so the nutrients have a chance to breakdown over winter.

"There are no gardening mistakes, only experiments."
Janet Kilburn Phillips

Compost is another great way of adding organic-humus. And, when you have finished harvesting your vegetables, simply spade or till into the soil the portions of the plants that still remain, as they also become organic humus, adding

Prepping Your Vegetable Garden - Continued

nutrients and organic matter. Of course, use good common sense, if a crop has had insect or disease problems it would be best to grub it out, rather than take a chance of spreading the problem in the soil.



Fall is a great time to improve the soil in your vegetable garden and in other parts of the garden too. And, a cover crop is a great way of adding organic-matter, at a time when the garden is inactive.

In the Fall, sow the following cover crops to turn into the soil in Spring: Alfalfa, Austrian Field Pea, White Clover, Alsike Clover, Crimson Clover, Red Clover, Purple Vetch, Hairy Vetch, Woolly Vetch, Common Vetch, Fava Beans, Wheat, Oats, Cereal Rye, Winter Rape, and Lupines.

The following are some Warm Winter Cover Crops: Cowpeas (Southern peas), Hairy Indigo, Bell Beans (a small Fava Bean) Lana Vetch, Winter Peas, Lupines, and Purple Clover.



Peas, beans, soybeans

Try successive plantings of quick growing items like leaf lettuce, beets, spinach and radishes.

Don't be afraid to try planting some crops later than recommended. While it is a bit risky, the rewards are definitely worth the risk.

Harvest over-wintered carrots early in spring before they start to go to seed and the roots get woody.
Self-blanching celery makes an ideal crop in cold frames if planted during July.

The Chinese Cabbages and Mustards also grow especially well in cold frames. They taste great, too.

Parsnips are best when pulled in January or early February after the heaviest frosts have turned them the sweetest.

Try using cheesecloth or clear agricultural cloth over rows of leafy crops. It will keep out pests and may hold in a bit of heat.

Keep a record of what you planted and when, and what succeeded or failed to help you do better in the future. We hope this guide, combined with your own experience, will help you have a bountiful late season garden.

Common Vegetable Garden Cover Crop Types

Variety	Season to Grow	Amount of Seed/1000 Sq. Ft.
Rye	Winter	1 to 2 lbs.
Crimson Clover	Winter	1 lb.
Soybeans	Summer	3 to 5 lbs.
Hairy Vetch	Winter	3/4 to 1 1/2 lbs.
Winter Wheat	Winter	1 to 2 lbs.
Buckwheat	Summer	2 to 3 lbs.
Rape	Winter	2 to 5 oz.
Cowpeas	Summer	3 to 4 lbs.

Cover crops are relatively inexpensive, easy to seed, and provide a great source of 'green manure' for vegetable garden soils. It's the natural way to revitalize the soil and suppress weed growth at the same time!

*"To dig in one's own earth, with one's own spade,
does life hold anything better?"*
Beverly Nichols



There you have it. No matter if you are young or old; apartment dweller or rural; big or small; rich or poor; there is a gardening method that you can use.

So plan your garden, experiment a little and live a lot !

TNT

*"We come from the earth, we return to the earth,
and in between we garden."*
Anonymous

Resources

10 Tips for Storing Open Pollinated / Heirloom Seeds	http://www.stclareseeds.com/gardenfaqs/storing-seed.html
2 Food Storage Calculators (download in excel format to see all tabs)	http://weebly-file/2/2/5/0/22509786/2_food_storage_calculators.xls
5 Secrets to a 'No-work' Garden	http://eartheasy.com/blog/2011/04/5-secrets-to-a-%e2%80%99no-work%e2%80%99-garden/
6 Tips for Building Soil for Your Raised Garden Beds and Planters	http://eartheasy.com/blog/2012/01/6-tips-for-building-soil-for-your-raised-garden-beds-and-planters/
Alternative Pest and Weed Controls brochure (PDF)	http://www.cityofseattle.net/util/groups/public/@spu/@csb/documents/webcontent/spu01_004000.pdf
Alternative Pest and Weed Controls brochure (PDF) (Seattle, WA)	http://www.cityofseattle.net/util/groups/public/@spu/@csb/documents/webcontent/spu01_004000.pdf
American Seed Association - Labeling, Advertising Regulations (PDF)	http://www.amseed.com/pdfs/AdvertisingSeedProducts.pdf
Backyard Composting (PDF)	http://aces.nmsu.edu/pubs/
Basic Sprouting Guide (PDF)	http://doctorprepper.com/downloads/E-Book-Basic-Sprouting-Guide.pdf
Basic Sprouting Guide (PDF)	http://doctorprepper.com/downloads/E-Book-Basic-Sprouting-Guide.pdf
Beginners Book Of Gardening (PDF)	http://www.scribd.com/doc/27469656/Beginners-Book-of-Gardening-Beginnersbookfg030268mbp
Beginners Book Of Gardening (PDF)	http://www.scribd.com/doc/27469656/Beginners-Book-of-Gardening-Beginnersbookfg030268mbp
Canning and How to Use Canned Foods (PDF)	http://books.google.com/books?id=DOoYAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false via archive.org
Canning and How to Use Canned Foods (PDF)	http://books.google.com/books?id=DOoYAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false via archive.org
Canning-Meat-Wild-Game-Poultry-Fish-Safely (PDF)	www.foodsafety.wisc.edu/.../Canning%20Meat,%20Wild%20Game,%20Poultry,%20&%20Fish%20Safely%20(B3345).pdf ; www.foodsafety.wisc.edu/assets/.../Canning_Meat.ppt
Canning-Meat-Wild-Game-Poultry-Fish-Safely (PDF)	Snardfarker from Wisconsin Safe Food Preservation Series; www.foodsafety.wisc.edu/.../Canning%20Meat,%20Wild%20Game,%20Poultry,%20&%20Fish%20Safely%20(B3345).pdf ; www.foodsafety.wisc.edu/assets/.../Canning_Meat.ppt
Carrots Love Tomatoes	By Louise Riotte
Choosing the best cover crops for your organic no-till vegetable	http://newfarm.rodaleinstitute.org/features/0104/no-

Prepping Your Vegetable Garden - Continued

system: A detailed guide to using 29 species	till/chart.shtml
City Peoples Book of Raising Food	Moseyspeed @ scribd.COM
City Peoples Book of Raising Food (PDF)	http://www.scribd.com/doc/28453515/The-City-Peoples-Book-of-Raising-Food or http://www.scribd.com/doc/23248635/City-Peoples-Book-of-Raising-Food or http://buelahman.files.wordpress.com/2011/01/the-city-peoples-book-of-raising-food.pdf
Coldframe Hardy Veggies (PDF)	kessler_coldframe @ kerrcenter.COM http://www.kerrcenter.com/publications/kessler_coldframe.pdf
Coldframe Hardy Veggies (PDF)	http://www.kerrcenter.com/publications/kessler_coldframe.pdf
Cold-Smoking & Salt-Curing Meat, Fish & Game	By A.D. Livingston
Cold-Smoking & Salt-Curing Meat, Fish & Game	By A.D. Livingston
Companion Planting Basic concepts Resources Waffle Garden (PDF)	http://www.attra.org/attra-pub/PDF/complant.pdf
Companion Planting Basic concepts Resources Waffle Garden ATTRA (PDF)	http://www.attra.org/attra-pub/PDF/complant.pdf
Compost VS Mulch	http://www.whittierfertilizer.com/organic_cover_mulch.html
Container Gardening (PDF)	http://www.aces.edu/pubs/docs/A/ANR-1139/ANR-1139.pdf
Cover Cropping In Home Vegetable Gardens (PDF) (California)	http://ucanr.org/sites/sacmg/files/72066.pdf
Cover Crops	http://www.nevegetable.org/index.php/cultural/covercrops
Cover Crops & Green Manure—the Basics Q & A	http://www.gardensalive.com/article.asp?ai=928
Cover Crops and Green Manure (Vermont)	http://www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry/factsheets/covercrops.html
Cover Crops for Vegetable Gardens (Illinois)	http://urbanext.illinois.edu/gardenerscorner/issue_06/fall_05_09.cfm
Cover Crops for Vegetable Gardens (Illinois)	http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state/newsdetail.cfm?NewslID=15509
Cover Crops for Vegetable Growers: Rye	http://www.hort.cornell.edu/bjorkman/lab/covercrops/rye.php
Cover Crops for Vegetable Growers-Commercial Vegetable Growers (PDF)	http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/library/hort2/mf2343.pdf
Cover Crops for Vegetable Growers-Rye Fact Sheet (PDF)	http://www.hort.cornell.edu/bjorkman/lab/covercrops/pdf/rye.pdf
Cover Crops for Vegetable Rotations Revisited (Delaware)	http://agdev.anr.udel.edu/weeklycropupdate/?p=3501
Desert Gardening Tips from a Crazy Older Lady (Life on a NM 70's Co-op)	http://www.scribd.com/doc/26564941/Desert-Gardening-Tips-from-a-Crazy-Older-Lady-My-Life-on-a-Co-Op
Did You Know – History of Food Preservation	http://www.scribd.com/doc/50950471/Did-You-Know-%E2%80%93-History-of-Food-Preservation-vr2b
Easy steps to planting a vegetable garden	http://www.your-vegetable-gardening-helper.com/planting-a-vegetable-garden.html
Easy steps to planting a vegetable garden Step 1 - Find your garden site	http://www.your-vegetable-gardening-helper.com/garden-site.html

Prepping Your Vegetable Garden - Continued

Easy steps to planting a vegetable garden Step 2 - Plan your vegetable garden layout	http://www.your-vegetable-gardening-helper.com/vegetable-garden-layout.html
Easy steps to planting a vegetable garden Step 3 - Soil preparation	http://www.your-vegetable-gardening-helper.com/soil-preparation.html
Easy steps to planting a vegetable garden Step 4 - Vegetable seeds	http://www.your-vegetable-gardening-helper.com/vegetable-seeds.html
Easy steps to planting a vegetable garden Step 5 - Maintain plant growth	http://www.your-vegetable-gardening-helper.com/plant-growth.html
Easy steps to planting a vegetable garden Step 6 - Vegetable harvest	http://www.your-vegetable-gardening-helper.com/vegetable-harvest.html
Edible Landscaping	http://www.bhg.com/gardening/vegetable/vegetables/edible-landscaping/
Edible Landscaping	http://www.motherearthnews.com/organic-gardening/edible-landscaping-zw0z10zalt.aspx
Edible Landscaping (PDF)	http://extension.oregonstate.edu/mg.metro/sites/default/files/Edible_Landscaping.pdf
Edible Landscaping Basics	http://www.rosalindcreasy.com/edible-landscaping-basics/
Edible Landscaping Primer Edible Trees	http://www.garden.org/ediblelandscaping/?page=edible-trees
Edible Landscaping Primer Growing Berry Shrubs	http://www.garden.org/ediblelandscaping/?page=berry-shrubs
Edible Landscaping Primer Growing Edible Flowers in Your Garden	http://www.garden.org/ediblelandscaping/?page=edible-flowers
Edible Landscaping Primer Herb Gardening Basics 101	http://www.garden.org/ediblelandscaping/?page=herb-gardening
Edible Landscaping Primer Planning Your Landscaping 101	http://www.garden.org/ediblelandscaping/?page=planning1_01
Edible Landscaping Primer Pruning Fruit Trees	http://www.garden.org/ediblelandscaping/?page=pruning-fruit
Edible Landscaping Primer Resource Guide	http://www.garden.org/ediblelandscaping/?page=resources
Edible Landscaping Primer Soil Common Sense	http://www.garden.org/ediblelandscaping/?page=soil-common-sense
Edible Landscaping Primer Using Organic Fertilizers	http://www.garden.org/ediblelandscaping/?page=organic-fertilizers
Edible Landscaping Primer Vegetable Garden Design	http://www.garden.org/ediblelandscaping/?page=veg-garden-design
Fall & Winter Vegetable Planting Guide	http://www.humeseeds.com/falwint.htm

Prepping Your Vegetable Garden - Continued

Fall is the Season for Mulching with Leaves!	http://eartheasy.com/blog/2011/11/fall-is-the-season-for-mulching-with-leaves/
Food Storage Deals To Meals	http://www.dealstomeals.com/
Food Storage Made Easy	http://foodstoragemadeeasy.net/
Food Storage Mistakes - Yikes! (PDF)	http://www.scribd.com/doc/50950637/Food-Storage-Mistakes-%E2%80%93-Yikes
Four Season Growing	http://www.seedsofchange.com/fall_gardening/default.aspx
Four-Season Harvest	By Eliot Coleman
Free Vegetable Garden Plans, Layout, Designs and Planning Worksheets	http://www.vegetable-gardening-online.com/free-vegetable-garden-plans.html
Fruits and Berries for the Home Garden	By Lewis Hill
Gardening & Plant Care : Vegetable Garden Layouts (Video)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dhvbZZKRAA&feature=player_embedded
Gardening with the new USDA Hardiness Zone Map takes recent warming trends into account	http://www.ann Arbor.com/home-garden/hardiness-zone-usda-map-guide/
Get ideas for growing veggies in containers	http://www.bhg.com/gardening/vegetable/vegetables/grow-vegetables-in-containers/
Grow Your Own Loofa (Luffa) for Sponges	http://www.scribd.com/doc/50950714/Grow-Your-Own-Loofa-Luffa-for-Sponges
Growing & Using Herbs Successfully	by Betty E.M.Jacobs
Growing In Straw Bale (PDF)	http://msucares.com/pubs/infosheets/is1678.pdf
Growing Vegetables in Pots and Planters	http://www.gardeners.com/Growing-Vegetables-Pots-Planters/5491,default,pg.html
Heirloom or hybrid? Annual or perennial? Understanding seed packet terms	http://www.ann Arbor.com/home-garden/seeds-heirloom-hybrid-non-gmo-organic-open-pollinated/
Heirlooms and Hybrids - What's Best for the Home Garden (PDF)	http://www.reneesgarden.com/articles/Print/heirlooms.pdf
Herbal Remedy Gardens	By Dorie Byers
Home Vegetable Gardening	http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/ag-06.html
Homegrown Whole Grains	by Sara Pitner
How to Know if Seeds Are Hybrid or Non-Hybrid	http://www.gardenguides.com/90273-seeds-hybrid-non-hybrid.html
How to Landscape with Edible Plants	http://www.plantea.com/edibleland.htm
How To Read a Seed Packet (PDF)	http://www.veggiegardener.com/how-to-read-seed-packet/
Interplanting Vegetables: Root Depth, Plant Height	http://harvesttotable.com/2009/04/interplanting_vegetables_root/
Introducing Square Foot Gardening	http://www.squarefootgardening.org/#!_whatissfg/what_is_sfg
Kitchen Garden Planner	http://www.gardeners.com/on/demandware.store/Sites-Gardeners-Site/default/Link-Page?id=kgp_pp

Prepping Your Vegetable Garden - Continued

Labeling Requirements for Chemically Treated Seed USDA (PDF)	http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STE_LPRD3317429
Let it Rot	by Stu Campbell
Monthly Garden Calendar - (01) January (PDF)	http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/sites/default/files/calendar/gcjan.pdf
Monthly Garden Calendar - (02) February (PDF)	http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/sites/default/files/calendar/gcfeb.pdf
Monthly Garden Calendar - (03) March (PDF)	http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/sites/default/files/calendar/gcmar.pdf
Monthly Garden Calendar - (04) April (PDF)	http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/sites/default/files/calendar/gcapr.pdf
Monthly Garden Calendar - (05) May (PDF)	http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/sites/default/files/calendar/gcmay.pdf
Monthly Garden Calendar - (06) June (PDF)	http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/sites/default/files/calendar/gcjun.pdf
Monthly Garden Calendar - (07) July (PDF)	http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/sites/default/files/calendar/gcjul.pdf
Monthly Garden Calendar - (08) August (PDF)	http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/sites/default/files/calendar/gcaug.pdf
Monthly Garden Calendar - (09) September (PDF)	http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/sites/default/files/calendar/gcsep.pdf
Monthly Garden Calendar - (10) October (PDF)	http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/sites/default/files/calendar/gcoct.pdf
Monthly Garden Calendar - (11) November (PDF)	http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/sites/default/files/calendar/gcnov.pdf
Monthly Garden Calendar - (12) December (PDF)	http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/sites/default/files/calendar/gcdec.pdf
Monthly Garden Calendars	http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/calendar
Mulch Basics Q & A	http://www.sunset.com/garden/garden-basics/q-a-mulch-basics-00400000017642/
Plan a No-Dig Vegetable Garden - Your Home Vegetable Garden Layout	http://www.no-dig-vegetablegarden.com/plan-a-vegetable-garden.html
Planning a Vegetable Garden	http://www.garden.org/articles/articles.php?q=show&id=158
Planning a Vegetable Garden	http://www.vegetablegardeningguru.com/getting-started.html
Planning and planting a successful vegetable garden	http://www.helpfulgardener.com/vegetable/2003/vegetable.html
Plant a Fall Cover Crop to Improve Your Garden Soil	http://eartheasy.com/blog/2011/09/plant-a-fall-cover-crop-to-improve-your-garden-soil/
Plant a fall cover crop to improve your garden soil	http://eartheasy.com/blog/2011/09/plant-a-fall-cover-crop-to-improve-your-garden-soil/
Planting a Successful Home Vegetable Garden (Montana) (PDF)	http://www.mtmastergardener.org/documents/veg_garden.pdf
Preparing a Vegetable Garden for Winter	http://www.howstuffworks.com/preparing-a-vegetable-garden-for-winter.htm
Preserving Food Without Freezing or Canning	By the Gardners and Farmers of Terre Vivante
Preserving Food Without Freezing or Canning	By the Gardners and Farmers of Terre Vivante
Protect and Improve Your Soil with Cover Crops (PDF)	http://www.growit.umd.edu/GE006_CoverCrop2.pdf

Prepping Your Vegetable Garden - Continued

Raised Beds: Preparing your Garden Beds for Spring	http://eartheasy.com/blog/2011/03/raised-beds-preparing-your-garden-beds-for-spring/
Raising Vegetables in Mini Gardens (Alaska) (PDF)	http://www.uaf.edu/files/ces/publications-db/catalog/anr/HGA-00136.pdf
Reduced Tillage and Cover Cropping Systems for Organic Vegetable Production (PDF)	http://www.vabf.org/docman/information-sheets/reduced-tillage-and-cover-cropping-systems-for-organic-vegetable-production/view
Root Cellaring Natural Cold Storage of Fruits & Vegetables	By Mike and Nancy Bubel
Root Cellaring Natural Cold Storage of Fruits & Vegetables	By Mike and Nancy Bubel
Saving Seeds The Gardener's Guide to Growing and Storing Vegetable and Flower Seeds	By Marc Rogers
Secrets of Plant Propagation Starting Your Own Flowers, Vegetables, Fruits, Berries, Shrubs, Trees, and Houseplants	By Lewis Hill
Seed Cover Crops to Revitalize Vegetable Garden Soil Over Winter	http://www.humeseeds.com/covcrop.htm
Seed Sowing and Saving	By Carole B. Turner
Seed Sowing and Saving	By Carole B. Turner
Self-Reliance Recession Proof Your Pantry	By Backwoods Home
Shelf Life Information on Lots of Things (download in excel format to see all tabs)	http://www.scribd.com/doc/42690147/Shelf-Life-Information-on-Lots-of-Things
Springtime and Gardening – Terms and Concerns	http://www.scribd.com/doc/50951055/Springtime-and-Gardening-%E2%80%93-Terms-and-Concerns
Springtime and Gardening – Terms and Concerns (PDF)	http://www.scribd.com/doc/50951055/Springtime-and-Gardening-%E2%80%93-Terms-and-Concerns
Straw Bale Method No Dig Garden (PDF)	http://www.aboutthegarden.com.au/pdf/FS05%20NDG%20-%20Straw%20Bale%20Meth.pdf
Straw Bale Method No Dig Garden (PDF)	http://www.aboutthegarden.com.au/pdf/FS05%20NDG%20-%20Straw%20Bale%20Meth.pdf
Straw Bale, Growing In (PDF)	http://msucares.com/pubs/infosheets/is1678.pdf
Succession Crops Planning	http://harvesttotable.com/2009/06/succession_planting_planning/
Succession Planting	http://harvesttotable.com/2009/06/succession_planting/
Survival Seed Packages VS Saving Your Own Seeds	http://www.scribd.com/doc/52053117/Survival-Seed-Packages-vs-Saving-Your-Own-Seeds
Survival Seed Packages VS Saving Your Own Seeds (PDF)	http://www.scribd.com/doc/52053117/Survival-Seed-Packages-vs-Saving-Your-Own-Seeds
The Backyard Homestead	Edited by Carleen Madigan
The Basic Essentials of – Edible Wild Plants and Useful Herbs	By Jim Meuninck
The Beginner's Guide to Preserving Food at Home Enjoy Local Produce Year-Round	by Janet Chadwick
The Big Book of Preserving the Harvest	By Carol W. Costenbader
The Complete Book of Pickling	by Jennifer MacKenzie
The Complete Book of Small-Batch Preserving	by Margaret Howard
The Dehydrator Bible	by Jennifer MacKenzie, Jay Nutt, & Don Mercer
The Lazy Gardener	by Mara Grey

Prepping Your Vegetable Garden - Continued

The Lazy Gardener and Self-reliance (PDF)	http://www.scribd.com/doc/26565627/The-Lazy-Gardener-and-Self-Reliance
The Medicine Wheel Garden	By E. Barrie Kavasch
The Practical Guide to Container Gardening	by Susan Berry and Steve Bradley
Tips for the Lazy Gardener	by Linda Tilgner
Tips to Grow a Vegetable Garden	http://www.thebeehive.org/special-features/10-tips-grow-vegetable-garden?gclid=CPz2wYCb9q0CFSleTAod03X_uQ
Twelve Lessons on Water Conservation from Traditional Farmers Desert Waffle Garden	www.doc-cafes.com
Understanding Seed Packet Terms	http://20minutegarden.com/2012/01/25/understanding-seed-packet-terms/
USDA New 2012 Plant Hardiness Zone Map Interactive by zip code	http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/PHZMWeb/
USDA New 2012 Plant Hardiness Zone Maps for Download	http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/PHZMWeb/Downloads.aspx
USDA Unveils New 2012 Plant Hardiness Zone Map	http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/pr/2012/120125.htm
Use cover crops to protect and improve gardens, flower beds	http://www.swcoloradohome.com/articles/gardening/green/thumb25.asp
Using composts to improve turf ecology	http://eartheasy.com/blog/2009/01/using-composts-to-improve-turf-ecology/
Utilizing Cover Crops in Vegetable Production Systems Fact Sheet (PDF) (Ohio)	http://ohioline.osu.edu/sag-fact/pdf/SAG709UtilizingCoverCrops.pdf
Vegetable Garden 12-Month To-Do Calendar	http://harvesttotable.com/2010/01/vegetable_garden_calendar/
Vegetable Garden Basics	http://www.thegardenhelper.com/vegetables.html
Vegetable Garden Layout	http://www.humeseeds.com/vegplan.htm
Vegetable Garden Planner — Design Your Best Garden Ever	http://www.motherearthnews.com/garden-planner/vegetable-garden-planner.aspx
Vegetable garden planning - in easy steps	http://www.squidoo.com/vegetable-garden-planning
Vegetable Garden Planning for Beginners	http://www.almanac.com/content/vegetable-garden-planning-beginners
Vegetable Garden Plans	http://www.your-vegetable-gardening-helper.com/vegetable-garden-plans.html
Vegetable garden seed ordering tips	http://eartheasy.com/blog/2011/01/vegetable-garden-seed-ordering-tips/
Vegetable Gardening	http://www.bhg.com/
Vegetable Gardening at Home	http://www.vegetable-gardening-online.com/index.html
Vegetable Gardening in the Fall for Winter in the Hotter Regions (Arizona)	http://ag.arizona.edu/pubs/garden/mg/vegetable/fall.html

Prepping Your Vegetable Garden - Continued

Vegetable Planting Chart Planting Depth and Spacing	http://www.veseys.com/us/en/images/articles/plantingchart/veseysplantingchart.pdf?veseys=pm1gdpqooce12d103fml4nfv3
Vegetable Planting Chart Planting Depth and Spacing (PDF)	http://www.fedcoseeds.com/forms/veggie_chart.pdf
Vegetable Planting Guide Dates, Spacing, Depth	http://www.thegardenhelper.com/vegtips.html
Vegetable Planting Guide Planting Depth and Spacing	http://www.thegardenhelper.com/vegtips.html
Vegetable Planting Guide Planting Depth and Spacing, Transplanting (Colorado) (PDF)	http://cmg.colostate.edu/gardennotes/720.pdf
Why use cover crops in vegetable rotations	http://www.hort.cornell.edu/bjorkman/lab/covercrops/
Winter Cover Crops for Your Vegetable Garden	http://www.growveg.com/growblogpost.aspx?id=208
Winter Rye: A Reliable Cover Crop (Vermont)	http://www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry/factsheets/winterrye.html

"I am led to reflect how much more delightful to an undebauched mind, is the task of making improvements on the earth, than all the vain glory which can be acquired from ravaging it, by the most uninterrupted career of conquests."

George Washington