



Fall Vegetables



Are you thinking about a fall or winter vegetable garden? Here are some things that can be planted now or in the near future:

Peas can be planted from September to January by directly seeding them where you want them to grow. Peas do best when grown during cool-weather periods and are easy to grow because they will germinate at soil temperatures of 45 degrees. Most peas will tolerate mild frosts. Direct seeding is the preferred method for peas. Peas should be sown so they are planted 1"-2" deep, in double rows spaced 3"-6" apart, and 2 feet between the next double row.

Spinach can be directly seeded from Sept.-Jan. Spinach matures quickly and is a hardy cool-season vegetable crop. The ideal temperature for growth is 40-75 degrees and is most rapid at 60-65 degrees. Spinach can tolerate temperatures of 15-20 degrees without injury. However, freezing temperatures can harm small seedlings and mature plants. Intermediate-size plants can handle subfreezing temperatures for weeks. Scatter 6-8 seeds in spots where plants are wanted, to make up for possible losses to insects. Push each seed ½"-3/4" into the soil, fill holes, and lightly pat soil. You can cover with a thin layer of mulch to help keep soil moist. Soil should be kept moist during the germination period. Thin seedlings to 3"- 6" apart.

Lettuce can be started from seed, and then plants may be transplanted outdoors from November to March. Head lettuce and loose-leafed lettuce are hardy, cool-season vegetables. They are best grown when temperatures are at 73 degrees during the day and 45 degrees at night. The growing season can be extended by using a floating row cover, which offers a few degrees of frost protection and provides a warmer growing environment. At temperatures near freezing, young plants are not damaged, but growth is slow. For germination, temperatures should range from 68-77 degrees.

Garlic is generally best planted in the fall (Oct.-Dec.) for largest size bulbs at harvest. Later planting is acceptable, but bulb size may be smaller. In cold-winter areas, mulches around the plants will protect them from severe cold. Most garlic is grown from the separated cloves of the garlic rather than from seed. Plant the bulblets directly in the garden. Do not remove the papery covering, and do not break apart the mother bulb until the plant is ready to plant. Plant 2" deep, 4" apart, and 12" between rows. Onions and garlic are ready to harvest when the tops bend to the ground and become dry. They take about 120 days or more to mature.

Onions can be grown from seed, sets, or transplants, but produce better from seed or transplants. Sets seem to put more energy into producing seed stock rather than bulbs. Plant directly into garden (green onion in Aug.-Dec. and bulb onions Nov.-Mar), ¼" deep and keep soil moist. Plant more seeds than necessary and thin plants, using small plants as scallions or transplant them. Space plants 4-5" apart cover the base with just enough soil to anchor them.