

Fall Vegetables

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Incorporate two inches of compost and 20 cups of slow-release or winterizer lawn fertilizer into every 100 square feet of raised bed garden, pre-irrigate the soil and plant most of your fall vegetable garden by the end of the month.

Broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, Swiss chard, Chinese cabbage, collards, mustard and kale can all be planted with transplants. Use seeds for carrots, beets, radish, turnips, lettuce and rutabagas.

It works well to space 3 of the broccoli and the other transplants listed in an eight feet row with 2 feet between each row.

Lettuce can be planted in rows one foot apart. Leaf lettuce works best in our climate and the seed must be placed on the surface of a prepared bed. If you cover the seed it will not germinate. The same seeding scheme works well for carrots.

Plant radishes, turnips, and beets in rows spaced 1 foot apart but the seed can be covered with soil as per the instructions on the seed package. Allow 18 inches between the rows of rutabagas. They are a lot like turnips but grow larger over a longer season.

Onions, spinach, English peas, and potatoes are special cases.

Onions do best when the recommended yellow, red and white selection transplants appear on the market in December and January. Most of the varieties offered are very mild although you can usually find a red Cajun or similar selection with some tang. The 10-15 yellow onion is the most popular. Onion transplants are planted 3 inches apart. The middle transplant is then used as a green onion so that the onions end up 6 inches apart several months before they are ready harvest in May. Six inches of space allows development of a full size bulb.

Spinach is very sensitive to warm spells so the transplants are usually not planted until November. Plant English peas at the same time. I use tall sturdy tomato cages as trellis for the peas.

On or about February 1 seed potatoes can be planted in trenches in the garden for a June harvest. For more information, seek out my articles on growing potatoes from the archived articles in plantanswers.com.

Broccoli planted in September will produce heads for harvesting in November. Cauliflower will mature shortly after the broccoli and Brussels sprouts will be ready to harvest in late winter.

Three key issues are important to successfully producing broccoli and the other greens.

- Number one is to keep them well supplied with a high nitrogen fertilizer such as 18-6-12. Sidedress every 3 weeks with one-half cup of fertilizer spread along each 8 ft. of row.
- The second issue is to protect the plants from cabbage loopers. The third issue is to protect the plants in your fall garden from cut worms. To control cabbage loopers have a fresh

container of a But product such as Thuricide, Dipel, or Bio-Worm Killer ready to apply at the first sign of feeding on the foliage. It is a certainty that cabbage loopers will attack your cole crop vegetables!

- The third issue is to protect the plants in your fall garden from cut worms. Cut worms are less certain but they can be very destructive to newly planted transplants or seedlings. I apply a carbaryl (Sevin) treatment to the soil surface in the row because cut worms are so prevalent in my garden.

There are some vegetables that are especially attractive as well as productive in the garden. Bright Lights Swiss Chard has brightly colored stems (red, orange, yellow, and white). In addition to being a showy addition to the vegetable garden, Bright Lights is a mild tasting green that produces over a long season. I like it mixed with kale which I find a bit strong when served alone.

Carrots, onions, spinach and chard all look attractive and do well in containers but leaf lettuce is especially attractive. Mix four or five of the different colored and textured varieties together for a showy container and salad ingredients that can be harvested leaf by leaf over a long season.