



Vegetable Growing Basics: Vegetables One by One Document

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VEGETABLES ONE BY ONE

Cool Weather Leafy Vegetables

Leaf Lettuce	(page 5)
Head Lettuce	(page 6)
Spinach	(page 7)
Swiss Chard	(page 8)

Cool Weather Cabbage Family (Brassica)

Broccoli	(page 9)
Brussels Sprouts	(page 10)
Cauliflower	(page 11)
Kale	(page 12)
Collards	(page 13)
Cabbage	(page 14)
Kohlrabi	(page 15)

Cool Weather Roots

Carrots	(page 16)
Radishes	(page 17)
Beets	(page 18)
Onions	(page 19)
Potatoes	(page 20)

Cool Weather Legume

Peas	(page 21)
------	-----------

Cool Weather Herbs

Cilantro	(page 22)
----------	-----------

Warm Weather Herbs

Basil	(page 23)
-------	-----------

Warm Weather Tomato Family (Nightshades)

Tomatoes	(page 24)
Peppers Sweet Bell	(page 26)
Peppers Hot or Chile	(page 27)
Eggplant	(page 28)

Warm Weather Vines

Summer Squash	(page 29)
Winter Squash	(page 30)
Pumpkins	(page 31)
Cucumbers	(page 32)

Warm Weather Legumes

Pole Beans	(page 33)
Bush Beans	(page 34)

COOL SEASON CROPS

These are vegetables that can be planted when there is still a danger of frost because they can survive in the cold. Look at the page for each vegetable to know when you can start planting.

Plant seeds into the ground according to the directions on the seed package.

You can get seedlings and plant them. Plant them at the same time as “When to plant seeds outdoors” listed in the tables in this document.

Some of these vegetables may stop growing when it gets above 85 degrees F (29.4 degrees C). Then you can pull them out and replant them again in August. See the chart for the vegetable you are growing. If the vegetable looks healthy, even when it gets very hot, just let it keep growing. There is no need to pull it out.

In the fall, these vegetables can tolerate some frost and you can continue to harvest after a frost.

WARM SEASON CROPS

These are vegetables planted when there is no longer a danger of frost, usually after May 15. These seeds or seedlings cannot survive if there is a frost when they are just starting out. Some of them can survive a frost in the fall and you can still harvest the vegetables after a frost. See the page for each vegetable.

Plant seedlings into the ground according to the directions on the tag.

If you want to grow these from seed, you must start the seed indoors. Look at the page for each vegetable to know when you need to start the seeds. You need lots of light to grow seeds indoors. This usually means that you need grow lights. If you are a beginner gardener, you might wait until you have more experience before you start planting seeds indoors. Since the usual recommendation is to start planting seeds indoors in February or March, it may be too late to start seeds indoors this year.

CONTAINER GARDENING

You can grow any vegetable in a container if you really want to. Consider the height of the vegetable when you choose the size of the container.

Look at the number in the “number of plants in 1 square foot” section for each vegetable.

A 1-foot diameter round pot has less than one square foot (0.09 square meters) in it. It has about 0.8 square foot (0.07 square meters). So you would need to grow less than what is in that column. If the number is one, you should have a pot bigger than 1 foot diameter.

We think you will have the most success growing these vegetables in containers:

Leaf lettuce
Head lettuce
Spinach
Swiss chard

Kale
Collards
Cabbage

Radishes
Carrots
Beets

Tomatoes
Peppers

Summer squash
Cucumbers

Bush beans

Containers are wonderful for herb gardening. Try any herb you want – have some fun.

COOL WEATHER LEAFY VEGETABLES

COMMON NAME Leaf Lettuce

When to plant outdoors	When to plant again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings in a row. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about 0.09 square meters)
Start April 15 Can plant every week until June 1	Start August 1 Can plant every week until August 15	12 in to 18 in 30.4 cm to 45.7 cm Can broadcast seed (see "care" below)	6 seeds per 1 foot row	6 in 15.2 cm	16

What part you eat: Leaf

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend planting seeds in the ground. You can transplant seedlings.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. If you squeeze it and it forms a lump in your hand, you need to wait for the soil to dry out more.

You can plant in rows or you can broadcast the seed. Broadcast means that you use your trowel or hoe to dig up a shallow square or circle. Toss the seeds, a few at a time, into the area you dug up. Be sure the seed is spread all around. Then cover the seeds with soil to the recommended depth, usually $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. If you broadcast, the seeds will grow up all over. You need to thin them to 4 inches to 6 inches apart (10.1 cm to 15.2 cm). You get more lettuce in a smaller area this way. Cut with a scissors or knife and eat what you thin. Do not pull out the roots when thinning because you can disturb the roots of the lettuce you are leaving to grow.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

Lettuce has small roots so check the soil **often** to see if it is dry and you need to water.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

As greens look ready, take a taste. Pick if they taste good to you. Use a scissors or knife to cut off leaves. Begin cutting the outside leaves first. The plant grows more leaves so you can harvest from the same plant many times. If you wait too long to harvest, the leaves will get bitter and the lettuce will bolt, which means it produces flowers. If the plant bolts, pull it out. It will be too bitter to eat. Lettuce does not keep growing when it gets above 85 degrees F (29.4 degrees C). When it gets hot and the lettuce does not look good anymore, pull out the whole plant.

COOL WEATHER LEAFY VEGETABLES

COMMON NAME Head Lettuce (examples are Bibb, iceberg, and Romaine)

When to plant outdoors	When to plant again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings in a row. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about 0.09 square meters)
Start April 15 Can plant every week until June 1	No – not enough time for whole head to develop	18 in to 24 in 45.7 cm to 60.8 cm	4 seeds per 1 foot row	8 in to 12 in 20.2 cm to 30.4 cm	2

What part you eat: Leaf

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend planting seeds in the ground. You can transplant seedlings.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. If you squeeze it and it forms a lump in your hand, you need to wait for the soil to dry out more.

Plant head lettuce in a row. Plant seeds according to seed package directions.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

Lettuce has small roots so check the soil **often** to see if it is dry and you need to water.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

Wait until you see the whole head is ready. If you harvest the head when it is little, you get more heads.

You can harvest the leaves before they form a head if you really want to.

COOL WEATHER LEAFY VEGETABLES

COMMON NAME Spinach

When to plant outdoors	When to plant again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
April 15 to June 1 There are some warm weather kinds of spinach now. Check the package for planting time.	August 1 to August 15	12 in to 18 in 30.4 cm to 45.7 cm Can broadcast seed	10 seeds per 1 foot row	3 in to 4 in 7.6 cm to 10.1 cm	9

What part you eat: Leaf and stems if they are thin

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend planting seeds in the ground. You can transplant seedlings.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. If you squeeze it and it forms a lump in your hand, you need to wait for the soil to dry out more.

You can plant in rows or you can broadcast the seed. Broadcast means that you use your trowel or hoe to dig up a shallow square or circle. Toss the seeds, a few at a time, into the area you dug up. Be sure the seed is spread all around. Then cover the seeds with soil to the recommended depth, usually $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. If you broadcast, the seeds will grow up all over. You need to thin them to 3 to 4 inches (7.6 cm to 10.1 cm) apart. You get more spinach in a smaller area this way. Cut with a scissors or knife and eat what you thin. Do not pull the roots out because you can disturb the roots of the spinach you are leaving to grow.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

As greens look ready, take a taste. Pick if it tastes good to you. You can start to harvest when the leaves are 3 or 4 inches high. (7.6 cm to 10.2 cm) Cut the stem with a scissors or knife at the bottom of the stem. More spinach will grow back so you can harvest from the same plant many times.

If you wait too long, the leaves will get bitter.

Around the beginning of July, the spinach will start to form seed stalks and just not look good anymore. When this happens, pull out the whole plant.

COOL WEATHER LEAFY VEGETABLES

COMMON NAME Swiss Chard

When to plant outdoors	When to plant again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
May 1	There is no need to plant again. What you plant on May 1 will continue to live for the whole growing season and keep replenishing.	18 in to 24 in 45.7 cm to 60.8 cm	6 seeds per 1 foot row	4 in to 9 in 7.6 cm to 22.8 cm	2

What part you eat: Leaf and stem

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

You can plant either seeds or seedlings.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. If you squeeze it and it forms a lump in your hand, you need to wait for the soil to dry out more.

Plant according to the directions on the seed package or the tag in the pot the seedling is in.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

Harvest the older outside leaves first. The smaller the leaf, the sweeter it will be. More Swiss chard will grow back so you can harvest from the same plant many times. You can continue to harvest after there has been a frost.

COOL WEATHER CABBAGE FAMILY (BRASSICA)

COMMON NAME Broccoli

When to plant outdoors	When to plant again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
Start April 15 to June 1	There is no need to plant again. What you plant on May 1 will live for the whole growing season	24 in to 30 in 60.8 cm to 76.2 cm		12 to 24 in 30.4 60.8 cm	1

What part you eat: Flower bud. You can eat the stem and leaves. You can eat the bud either raw or cooked. The stems and leaves will probably taste better if you cook them.

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We highly recommend planting seedlings. You could grow your own seedlings by planting seeds indoors between March 1st and March 15th.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. If you squeeze it and it forms a lump in your hand, you need to wait for the soil to dry out more.

Plant according to the directions on the tag in the pot the seedling is in.

Broccoli needs lots of nutrients from the soil so, when you plant your seedlings, put compost on the ground where you are planting. If you use seeds, put compost on the ground after the plant is a few inches high.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

When you plant broccoli seedlings, put a collar around each one, so cut worms won't slice it off.

If you plant seeds, you do not need to put a collar around the plant when it comes up because it will be past the time for cut worms.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

You will see a large head of broccoli on the main stem. Pick the whole head. Use a knife. Watch the broccoli carefully so it does not bolt, which means it grows stems and yellow flowers. Pick before that happens.

After the main stem is picked, many small broccoli buds will grow along the sides of the stems. You can harvest these as they look ready. You can harvest these buds after a freeze in the fall.

COOL WEATHER CABBAGE FAMILY (BRASSICA)

COMMON NAME Brussels Sprouts

When to plant outdoors	When to plant again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
Start April 15 to June 1	There is no need to plant again. What you plant on May 1 will live for the whole growing season	24 in to 30 in 60.8 cm to 76.2 cm		24 in 60.8 cm	1

What part you eat: Flower buds You can eat the bud either raw or cooked. The stems and leaves will probably taste better if you cook them.

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We highly recommend planting seedlings. You could grow your own seedlings by planting seeds indoors between March 1st and March 15th.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. If you squeeze it and it forms a lump in your hand, you need to wait for the soil to dry out more.

Plant according to the directions on the tag in the pot the seedling is in.

Brussels sprouts need lots of nutrients from the soil so, when you plant your seedlings, put compost on the ground where you are planting.

Does this vegetable need support?

If the stem cannot stand straight, you can put a stake next to it and tie the stem to the stake. You do not need to do this.

How do I care for this vegetable?

In the third week of August, remove the tip of the plant. Then the plant puts its energy into the buds it has already grown and makes them better.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

When the sprouts feel firm, you can pick them off the stem. Pick the bottom ones first since they are the first to form. The plant will not grow more buds where you have harvested them but will grow buds higher up on the stem. You can also harvest the entire stem at once. If you wait to harvest until after a freeze, the Brussels sprouts are very sweet and good. Some people always wait until after a freeze to harvest Brussels sprouts.

COOL WEATHER CABBAGE FAMILY (BRASSICA)

COMMON NAME Cauliflower

When to plant outdoors	When to plant again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
April 1 to May 1	There is no need to plant again. What you plant on May 1 will live for the whole growing season	24 in to 30 in 60.8 cm to 76.2 cm		18 in 45.7 cm	1

What part you eat: Flower bud

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We highly recommend planting seedlings. You could grow your own seedlings by planting seeds indoors between March 1st and March 15th.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. If you squeeze it and it forms a lump in your hand, you need to wait for the soil to dry out more.

Plant according to the directions on the tag in the pot the seedling is in.

Cauliflower needs lots of nutrients from the soil so, when you plant your seedlings, put compost on the ground where you are planting. If you use seeds, put compost on the ground after the plant is a few inches high.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

Some kinds of cauliflower are self-blanching. This means that they keep the head of cauliflower white. The leaves automatically fold around the head and protect it.

If you do not get a self-blanching variety, you can help the plant grow a nice white head of cauliflower. When the head (curd) is about two inches across, pull leaves over the head. Tie the leaves with a string so they stay over the head. If you do not do this, you can still eat the cauliflower but the head will not be white.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

Cut off the head with a knife when it looks big enough for you to eat.

A cauliflower can bolt, which means the buds open and make flowers. If this happens, it will not taste as good but you can still eat it.

COOL WEATHER CABBAGE FAMILY (BRASSICA)

COMMON NAME Kale

When to plant outdoors	When to plant again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
Start April 15	There is no need to plant again. What you plant on April 15 will live for the whole growing season	18 in to 24 in 45.7 cm to 60.8 cm	3 seeds per 1 foot row	18 in 45.7 cm	1

What part you eat: Leaf and stem

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

You can plant either seeds or seedlings.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. If you squeeze it and it forms a lump in your hand, you need to wait for the soil to dry out more.

Plant according to the directions on the seed package or the tag in the pot the seedling is in.

Kale likes a well-drained soil high in organic matter.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

Harvest lower or outer leaves first. Cut leaves with a scissors or knife. Cut all the way to the main stem. More kale will grow back, so you can harvest from the same plant many times. You can harvest for a long time after it freezes. Sometimes the kale plant survives the winter and will grow again in the spring. If this happens, the stem can get woody so you might want to cut it down and plant new kale after a few years.

COOL WEATHER CABBAGE FAMILY (BRASSICA)
COMMON NAME Collards

When to plant outdoors	When to plant again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
April 15	There is no need to plant again. What you plant on April 15 will live for the whole growing season	24 in to 36 in 60.8 cm to 91.4 cm	3 seeds per 1 foot row	6 in to 12 in 15.2 cm to 30.4 cm	2

What part you eat: Leaf and stem

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

You can plant either seeds or seedlings.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. It should not form a lump when you squeeze it in your hand. Plant according to the directions on the seed package or the tag in the pot the seedling is in.

Collards need lots of nutrients from the soil so, when you plant your seedlings, put compost on the ground where you are planting. If you use seeds, put compost on the ground after the plant is a few inches high.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

Cut leaves with a scissors or knife. Cut all the way to the stem. More collards will grow back, so you can harvest from the same plant many times.

COOL WEATHER CABBAGE FAMILY (BRASSICA)

COMMON NAME Cabbage

When to plant seeds outdoors	When to plant seeds again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
April 1 to May 1	There is no need to plant again. What you plant on May 1 will live for the whole growing season	24 in to 30 in 60.8 cm to 76.2 cm		9 to 12 in 22.8 to 30.4 cm	1

What part you eat: Leaves that form a head

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend seedlings.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. It should not form a lump when you squeeze it in your hand. Plant according to the directions on the seed package or the tag in the pot the seedling is in. Cabbage needs lots of nutrients from the soil so, when you plant your seedlings, put compost on the ground where you are planting. If you use seeds, put compost on the ground after the plant is a few inches high.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

When the head of cabbage looks good to you, cut it off with a knife about 2 in or 3 in (5 cm to 7.6 cm) from the ground, leaving the stem. Harvest before the head splits. The plant will often grow little heads again, which you can harvest. It might not have time to make a head, but you can harvest the leaves that it does grow.

COOL WEATHER CABBAGE FAMILY (BRASSICA)
COMMON NAME Kohlrabi

When to plant seeds outdoors	When to plant seeds again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
Start April 15 until June 15	August 1 until August 15	18 in to 24 in 45.7 cm to 60.8 cm	4 seeds per 1 foot row	4 in to 8 in 10.1 cm to 20.2 cm	4

What part you eat: Stern. The stern is an edible large stem that you can see where the stem meets the soil. You can eat the leaves and stems too, especially when they are young.

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend seeds.

Kohlrabi needs lots of nutrients from the soil so put compost on the ground after the plant is a few inches high.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. It should not form a lump when you squeeze it in your hand. Plant seeds according to the directions on the seed package.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

Kohlrabi needs lots of watering.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

Pick stern when it's about 2 inches across. Some varieties get bigger and still are tender. Read your seed package.

COOL WEATHER ROOTS

COMMON NAME Carrots

When to plant outdoors	When to plant again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
April 15 to June 15	August 15	18 in to 24 in 20.3 cm to 60.8 cm	12 seeds per 1 foot row	2 in to 3 in 5 cm to 7.6 cm	16

What part you eat: Root When you thin the carrots you can eat the leaves.

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend seeds. If you plant a seedling you are likely to get forked roots, which means two carrots in one plant.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. It should not form a lump when you squeeze it in your hand. Before you plant the seeds, work the soil so it is loose. Dig down as far as you think the carrot will grow. This makes it easier for the root to grow. The seeds can take a long time to germinate so do not give up on them.

The seeds are very tiny and can be hard to manage. Be sure to get them spread out over a row. You can plant carrots and radishes in the same row. The radishes will be ready to be dug out carefully and leave room for the carrots to grow. Do not disturb the growing carrots.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

Thin by cutting with a scissors so you do not disturb the roots of the nearby carrots. You can eat the leaves that you cut if you want to.

Be sure to weed carefully until the plants look established. Carrots have small roots and the weeds can out-compete the carrots.

Be sure you water to the depth of 1 inch. Otherwise the roots don't grow down because they are trying to use the water near the top of the soil.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

You can harvest when you see the root looks like a size you can use—about $\frac{3}{4}$ in (1.9 cm). If the carrots are hard to pull out, spade the soil **next to** the carrots to loosen it a little. This will loosen the soil and make it easier to pull the carrot out. You can harvest carrots after a frost. They will be even sweeter.

COOL WEATHER ROOTS
COMMON NAME Radishes

When to plant seeds outdoors	When to plant seeds again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
April 10 to June 1	August 1 to August 15	6 in to 12 in 15.2 cm to 30.4 cm	12 seeds per 1 foot row	1 in to 2 in 2.5 cm to 5 cm	16

What part you eat: Root. You can also eat the leaves.

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend seeds.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Plant seeds where the soil is well-drained.

Make sure the soil is dry enough. It should not form a lump when you squeeze it in your hand.

Radishes really like it cool, so plant as soon as possible. They stop growing when it is over 75 degrees F (23.8 degrees C).

You can plant carrots and radishes in the same row. The radishes will be ready to dig out and will leave room for the carrots to grow.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

Check roots to see if they look ready. It takes just three to five weeks from planting. Do not wait too long because the radishes will taste woody. You can keep harvesting after a frost. Do remove the whole plant by the roots, otherwise it will get very big and crowd out other things in the garden.

COOL WEATHER ROOTS

COMMON NAME Beets

When to plant outdoors	When to plant again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
April 15 to July 1	There is no need to plant again. What you plant by July 1 will live for the whole growing season	12 in to 18 in 30.4 cm to 45.7 cm	12 seeds per 1 foot row	2 in to 4 in 5 cm to 10.1 cm	9

What part you eat: Root. You can also eat the leaves and stems. The stems and leaves will probably taste better if you cook them.

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend seeds. Soak the seeds in water for about an hour before you plant them.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. It should not form a lump when you squeeze it in your hand. Plant seeds according to the directions on the seed package.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

You need to thin the beets. You can wait until the greens look big enough to eat and then thin them—and you will get something to eat too.

The top of the beet root might stick out of the soil a little. This is fine.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

Harvest them when they look like a usable size to you. Do not wait too long or you will lose quality.

If the beets are hard to pull out, spade the soil **next to** the beets. This will loosen the soil and make it easier to pull the beets out.

COOL WEATHER ROOTS

COMMON NAME Onions

When to plant outdoors	When to plant again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
April 15	There is no need to plant again. What you plant on April 15 will live for the whole growing season	12 in to 18 in 30.4 cm to 45.7 cm		2 in to 3 in 5 cm to 7.6 cm	9

What part you eat: Bulb

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend seedlings or sets. Sets are tiny onions grown last year to be starters for this year.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. It should not form a lump when you squeeze it in your hand.

Plant according to the directions on the tag in the pot the seedling is in.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

Be sure you get long day onions. Onions need a lot of sunlight every day. Twelve hours is best. We cannot grow good short day onions, like Vidalia onions, in Minnesota.

Some onions need to be eaten soon after harvesting and some store for a long time. Read the tags on the seedlings or sets carefully so you get the kind you want.

Onions have small roots and so need careful watering. Soak the soil thoroughly when watering, to a depth of at least 1 in (2.5 cm) each week during the growing season. Mulching 3 to 4 inches deep will help retain soil moisture and help suppress weeds. Stop watering when bulbs have reached full size and tops have fallen.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

Harvest onions when about half the tops are falling over and dry. Undercut and lift bulbs with a spading fork. Onions can be left in the ground for several days if the weather will be dry and warm, or brought indoors to cure. Curing means to keep the onions in a warm (75 to 90 degrees F or 23.8 to 32.3 degrees C), well-ventilated area for two to four weeks until the outer bulb scales are dry and the neck is tight. If you do not do this curing, your onions can rot during storage.

When dry, onions can be braided or the tops can be cut off. Store onions in a cool, dry area. Do not let them freeze. They will start to sprout if kept above 40 degrees F (4.4 degrees c).

COOL WEATHER ROOTS

COMMON NAME Potatoes

When to plant outdoors		Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
April 15		30 to 36 inches 76 cm to 91.4 cm	1 seed potato	10 to 12 inches 25.4 cm to 30.4 cm	1

What part you eat: Root/tuber

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

There are many ways to plant potatoes. Here is a good method for your first time planting them:

Do NOT plant seeds or seedlings. Go to a garden store or seed distributor and buy certified seed potatoes, also called tubers, that are about 2 or 3 inches (5 cm to 7.6 cm) big. Plant the whole potato. Do NOT use potatoes you bought at the grocery store. These might have pests like wire worm or chemicals or disease on them that will get in your soil.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. It should not form a lump when you squeeze it in your hand.

Plant a potato that has at least one eye or bud. Plant potatoes 10 to 12 inches apart and about 3 to 5 inches (7.6 to 12.7 cm) deep, in rows 30 to 36 inches apart. Cover pieces with 4 inches (10 cm) of soil or compost.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

Make a hill of soil around the potato plant as it grows. Tubers will form on thin stems (stolons) that emerge from the main stem, and these stolons should be kept covered with soil to avoid exposing growing tubers to sunlight. Sunlight can turn tubers green and cause the formation of toxic and bitter-tasting chemicals in tuber skin and flesh. Start making hills when the stems are about a foot tall, and once or twice more during the growing season. At the end of the season, you will have built a hill about 6 to 8 inches tall.

Water the soil well once a week to the depth of one inch or more.

Be careful when you weed. The potatoes are growing right under the ground, and you do not want to damage them by cutting them with a hoe.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

You can harvest small potatoes about 7 to 8 weeks after planting. You can also wait until the leaves have dried or when the tubers have reached a big size. Dig the hills using a spading fork, being careful not to pierce tubers with fork tines. You should not be able to rub off the skin with your thumb. Do not wash the potatoes before storing them because you might injure the skin.

COOL WEATHER LEGUMES

COMMON NAME Peas

When to plant seeds outdoors	When to plant seeds again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
April 15	July 1 to August 1		12 seeds per 1 foot row	1 in to 3 in 2.5 cm to 7.6 cm	8

What part you eat:

Shelling peas, also called garden pea or English pea. You eat the seeds only.

Snow peas and sugar snap peas. You eat both the pods and seeds.

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend seeds. Peas are easy to grow from seeds. Soak the seeds for about an hour before planting.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. It should not form a lump when you squeeze it in your hand.

Plant seeds according to the directions on the seed package.

Does this vegetable need support?

Yes. A trellis is needed.

How do I care for this vegetable?

Peas do not like hot weather (above 85 degrees) and will stop growing, so plant as soon as you can.

Weed carefully when the peas are little or the weeds will take over the peas. Mulch young plants.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

To harvest **shelling peas**, watch peas carefully. Harvest them when the pods have reached the mature length described on the seed package. Put them in cool water right away and then dry them off and put them in the refrigerator. If you cool them with water, they can last in the refrigerator.

To harvest **snow peas**, wait until the pods have reached their mature length as described on the seed package. The peas within the pod should be visible only as small traces; if they are allowed to mature further, the pods may become tough.

To harvest **sugar snap peas**, wait until the pods appear almost filled with peas. The peas will be smaller than the seeds you planted. Check often as the crop matures, and harvest when peas and pods are still sweet, juicy, and tender. You need to pick them right away as the quality declines very fast. Cool quickly as soon as they are picked. Some varieties will need to have the strings removed before cooking.

After harvest, remove your trellis and turn the pea plants into the soil. Wait at least two weeks for the plants to break down, and then seed a second crop for fall harvest

COOL WEATHER HERBS

COMMON NAME Cilantro

When to plant seeds outdoors	When to plant seeds again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (.09 square m)
April 15 plant every week until June	August – keep planting every week	12 in to 18 in 30.4 cm to 45.7	4 seeds per 1 foot row	6 in to 12 in 15.2 cm to 30.4 cm	8

What part you eat: Leaves and stems. If you let the cilantro get flowers, you can eat the seeds, called coriander.

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend seeds but you can plant seedlings.

Plant the seeds so that the cilantro will get some afternoon shade, if at all possible.

How do I plant this herb?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. It should not form a lump when you squeeze it in your hand.

Sow seeds directly into the ground. Keep ground moist until the seeds germinate.

The cilantro will germinate in 5 to 7 days. When the seedling is 6 inches (15.2 cm) tall, thin to spacing above.

Eat the cilantro that you thin!

Does this herb need support?

No

How do I care for this herb?

For plants growing directly in the soil, water deeply every 7 days or more, depending on amount of rainfall.

For plants growing in containers, water them more often.

Cilantro is very sensitive to heat. It “bolts” or goes to seed very quickly with just a little bit of heat. This is normal, you did nothing wrong!

Use some mulch so that the soil will stay moist and cooler. You will also get fewer weeds if you mulch.

When is this herb ready to harvest?

You can harvest leaves as soon as you see them or you can let them grow a bit then harvest. Use a scissors or gently use your fingers to pull the leaves off.

You can also let the plant grow taller and cut off a whole stem. Cilantro grows from the roots and center of the plant. Harvest entire stem to the soil or just above the soil.

You need to watch for the formation of a flower and seed stalk. If the flower stalk grows, the cilantro has bolted and the leaves may taste different. You can still eat them if you like the taste. You can also eat the flowers, add them to salads or let them become seeds.

If it does happen, you can just let the cilantro keep growing though you cannot eat the leaves anymore. The flower and seeds will attract bees, butterflies and birds which is always beneficial for a garden. You can harvest and dry the flower seeds. They are coriander. You can plant the seeds later in the season, use them as coriander in cooking or just let them self-sow in the garden. If they self-sow they may grow in different areas, but are easy to pull out if you do not want them growing there.

After the first freeze in the fall, pull out the whole plant by the roots.

WARM WEATHER HERBS

COMMON NAME Basil

When to plant seeds outdoors	When to plant seeds again	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square m)
Basil needs warmer conditions; plant seeds in May	If your first plants look strong, just let them grow. No need to plant more in August.		3 seeds per 1 foot row	6 in to 12 in 15.2 cm to 30.4 cm	8

What part you eat: Leaves

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend seeds but you can plant seedlings.

How do I plant this herb?

Make sure the soil is dry enough. It should not form a lump when you squeeze it in your hand.

Basil prefers warm soil, so wait to plant till after the last frost or at least until the soil is warm. You may need to protect seedlings in case of a late spring frost. Basil cannot take ANY frost at all; it will turn black and die. Sow seeds directly into the ground. Keep ground moist until the seeds germinate.

The basil will germinate in 5 to 7 days. After there are 2 or 3 pairs of leaves, thin the seedlings so they are 6 to 12 inches (15.2 cm TO 17.8 cm) apart.

There are many different kinds/sizes of basil. They all taste a bit different. Experiment till you find the kind you really like to eat and cook with.

Does this herb need support?

No

How do I care for this herb?

For plants growing directly in the soil, water deeply every 7 days, or more depending on amount of rainfall.

For plants growing in containers, water the plants more often.

Use some mulch so that the soil will stay moist. You will also get fewer weeds if you mulch.

When is this herb ready to harvest?

You can harvest leaves as soon as you see them. Use a scissors or gently use your fingers to pull the leaves off. You can also let the plant grow taller and cut off a whole stem just above two leaves.

Harvest the leaves often, this will make the plant grow more leaves and more stems and get bushier- rather than become tall and spindly.

If the plant starts to flower, simply pinch off the flowering part. Sometimes flowering may change the taste of the leaves. Keep harvesting the leaves if you enjoy the taste, stop if you do not. Growing flowers takes energy away from growing leaves. We grow herbs for the leaves. You can eat the flowers in salad if you want to try this. Once the plant sets flowers and goes to 'seed' it may no longer grow many more leaves. That is just what annuals do. The flowers will attract butterflies and bees, always good for the garden. If the flowers go to seed, they may even attract birds to your garden.

After the plant is killed by the frost, pull the whole plant out by the roots. You can protect the plant from light frosts if you want to keep it growing in the fall.

WARM WEATHER TOMATO FAMILY (NIGHTSHADES)

COMMON NAME Tomatoes

When to plant seeds indoors	When to plant seedling outside	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
April 1 to 15	May 15 to June 1	24 in to 36 in 60.8 cm to 91.4 cm		24 in to 36 in 60.9 cm to 91.4 cm	1

There are many kinds of tomatoes for you to choose.

- There are cherry, grape, pear, plum, and standard round tomatoes.
- There are heirloom tomatoes and hybrid tomatoes.
 - Heirloom tomato means a family has saved the seeds and passed them on through the generations.
- There are determinate and indeterminate tomatoes.
 - Determinate means that the tomato grows to a certain height and all the tomatoes are ready to be harvested at once.
 - Indeterminate means that the tomato keeps growing. The tomatoes are ready to be harvested over a longer period of time.
- There are disease-resistant tomatoes.
 - Tomatoes can get many different diseases. Letters on the tag in the pot tell what diseases the tomato has resistance to. The more letters on the tag, the more diseases the tomato is resistant to.

What part you eat

Fruit. Never eat any other part like the stem or leaf because those are poisonous.

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

Seedlings only. Do not buy tomato seedlings that have small tomatoes on them. The tomatoes already there are the only ones that you can get.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Put first two leaves under the ground. This encourages the tomato to make more roots, which gives the plant strength.

If the seedling is really tall, you can plant the tomato at a slant. This way more of the root is nearer the top where the soil is warmer. The tomato will straighten itself and grow toward the sun.

When you plant tomatoes, put a collar around it, so cut worms won't slice the plant off.

When you plant, put the support on the seedling right away. It might grow fast and make it hard to put support in later.

Does this vegetable need support?

Yes. You can use stakes or cages or trellises. Sometimes you need both a stake and a cage. You can let them grow on the ground, but they get more disease and the fruit can rot faster. We highly recommend using a support.

How do I care for this vegetable?

Water tomato plants in the morning. Put your hose close to the ground when you water. Do not splash dirt up on the leaves. Do not let soil dry out.

As tomatoes grow, stems grow out laterally from the main stem. A new stem, often called a sucker, can grow between the main stem and the lateral stem. If it does, pinch it out or cut it out.

Do not smoke when gardening. Tomatoes can get tobacco mosaic virus. If you do, smoke away from the garden, always wash your hands before touching plants.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

Determinate tomatoes are all ready to harvest in about a two-week period. Indeterminate tomatoes keep making new tomatoes until it freezes.

In July, you can cut off blossoms or some stems, so the tomato puts its energy into the tomatoes it already has on its stems.

After the first freeze, pull out your tomato plant and put it in the trash. Do not compost. If you leave tomatoes in the ground, they may reseed the next spring. It is hard for you to know what kind of tomato you are growing.

When you think it might freeze, pick all tomatoes, even the green ones. You can ripen the tomatoes by putting them in a brown paper bag. Or you can find a recipe for green tomatoes.

WARM WEATHER TOMATO FAMILY (NIGHTSHADES)

COMMON NAME Peppers Sweet Bell

When to plant seeds indoors	When to plant seedlings outside	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
March 15 to April 1	June 1	24 in to 36 in 60.8 cm to 91.4 cm		12 in to 18 in 30.4 cm to 45.7 cm	1 sweet bell

There are many kinds of peppers for you to choose.

- Green, yellow, orange, purple. Red peppers are green peppers that you let stay on the plant until they turn red. This can take a long time and might not have time to happen during the growing season. Yellow, orange, and purple peppers are different varieties. When peppers grow, they all start out green and then turn red, yellow, orange or purple.

What part you eat Fruit. Never eat any other part like the stem or leaf because those are poisonous.

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend seedlings.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Peppers need lots of hot sun, so choose a sunny spot for them.

Plant according to the directions on the tag in the pot the seedling is in.

Put a collar around the plant to prevent cut worms from killing the plant.

Does this vegetable need support?

Usually they do not need a support. If the tag says it will grow over 3 feet tall, you might want to stake them, especially if you are in a windy location.

How do I care for this vegetable?

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

The longer you leave the pepper on the plant, the sweeter it gets. Pepper plants produce a lot of peppers, so keep looking for peppers to harvest. Do not let them rot on the vine.

WARM WEATHER TOMATO FAMILY (NIGHTSHADES)

COMMON NAME Peppers Hot or Chile

When to plant seeds indoors	When to plant seedlings outside	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
March 15 to April 1	June 1	18 inches to 24 inches 45.7 cm to 60.8 cm		Read tags for the variety you have	1 pepper

There are many kinds of peppers for you to choose.

- Varieties that will grow well in Minnesota include: habanero, serrano, guajillo, ancho, mulato

What part you eat Fruit. Never eat any other part like the stem or leaf because those are poisonous.

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend seedlings.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Peppers need lots of hot sun, so choose a sunny spot for them.

Plant according to the directions on the tag in the pot the seedling is in.

Put a collar around the plant to prevent cut worms from killing the plant.

Does this vegetable need support?

Usually they do not need a support. If the tag says it will grow over 3 feet tall, you might want to stake them, especially if you are in a windy location.

How do I care for this vegetable?

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

The longer you leave the pepper on the plant, the sweeter or hotter it gets. Pepper plants produce a lot of peppers, so keep looking for peppers to harvest. Do not let them rot on the vine.

WARM WEATHER TOMATO FAMILY (NIGHTSHADES)

COMMON NAME Eggplant

When to plant seeds indoors	When to plant seedlings outside	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
March 15 to April 1	June 1	24 in to 30 in 60.8 cm to 76.2 cm		12 to 18 in 30.4 cm to 45.7 cm	1

What part you eat: Fruit. Never eat any other part like the stem or leaf because those are poisonous.

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

Plant seedlings. Eggplant can take many days to be ready for harvest. Look at the tag in the pot and choose one with the shortest number of days that you can find.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Plant according to the directions on the tag in the pot the seedling is in. Put a collar around the plant to prevent cut worms from killing the plant.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

Read the tag carefully.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

You cannot tell by the size of the eggplant if it is ready to pick. When it is ready, the eggplant will have glossy tight skin. Press your thumb on the eggplant. If the flesh goes in but bounces back, it is ready to harvest. If there is no "give" to press the flesh down, it is not ready to harvest. If you press down, and the flesh stays down, you have waited too long.

Use a scissors or knife. Always cut so you leave the cap and part of the stem on the eggplant. This prevents disease from getting into the eggplant.

WARM WEATHER VINES

COMMON NAME Summer Squash – zucchini, yellow, yellow crookneck, patty pan

When to plant seeds indoors	When to plant seedlings outside	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
	May 10 to June 1	24 in to 36 in 60.8 cm to 91.4 cm	5 seeds for 1 foot row	24 in to 36 in. 60.8 cm to 91.4 cm	If you are planting in a raised bed, plant squash only if the vine can grow outside the raised bed

What part you eat: Fruit, including the skin and the seeds. You can eat the blossoms too.

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

You can plant seeds or seedlings. If you choose seedlings you can plant them later, nearer June 1, and avoid the squash vine borer, which is often gone by June 1. This is not guaranteed but can help you not get the borer.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Plant only one or two seedlings. These plants grow many, many squash. If you plant seeds, plant about five and thin to have only one or two plants. You can plant in hills. Plant 2 or 3 seeds in a hill and do not thin. Hills should be 3 feet to 6 feet apart.

Does this vegetable need support?

We recommend a trellis. You can let them grow on the ground, but the fruit tends to rot on the ground.

How do I care for this vegetable?

If there are many flowers, you can remove some of them. This makes the plant put its energy into growing the squash it already has.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

Pick the squash when small. Do NOT let them get big. This can happen very fast, so watch carefully. Pick all of them before a frost. If there is threat of a frost, you can cover the plants with a sheet or old blanket overnight. This keeps the warm air in.

WARM WEATHER VINES

COMMON NAME Winter Squash – acorn, butternut, Hubbard

When to plant seeds indoors	When to plant seedlings outside	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
	May 10 to June 1	72 in to 96 in 182 cm to 244 cm	3 seeds per hill	If planted in row, 24 in to 36 in (60.8 cm to 91.4 cm) between plants, if planted in hills, 60 in to 72 in (152 cm to 183 cm) between hills of three	If you are planting in a raised bed, plant squash only if the vine can grow outside the raised bed

What part you eat: Fruit but not the skins. You can eat the seeds if you roast them.

How to plant

You can plant winter squash in rows or you can plant in a hill. Make a hill about 6 in or 8 in (15.2 cm to 20.3 cm) high with soil and compost. You can plant five seeds in each hill and then thin so there is only one plant in the hill.

Should I plant seeds or seedlings? We recommend seeds.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Plant seeds according to the directions on the seed package.

Does this vegetable need support? No

How do I care for this vegetable?

You might need to put straw or cardboard under the squash. Otherwise it might rot just sitting on the ground.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

Wait until the skin is hard. Press your fingernail on the skin. If it goes in easily, the squash is not ready. If you cannot get your fingernail in, it is ready to harvest.

Leave stem on the squash so disease cannot get into the squash. Keep at room temperature for 10 to 20 days. Then store squash in a cooler place in your house. They can stay good for up to six months. Acorn squash only stays good about three months.

WARM WEATHER VINES
COMMON NAME Pumpkin

When to plant seeds indoors	When to plant seeds outside	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
	May 10 to June 1	72 in to 96 in 182 cm to 244 cm	2 seeds per 1 foot row 3 seeds per hill	If planted in row, 24 in to 36 in (60.8 cm to 91.4 cm) between plants, if planted in hills, 60 in to 72 in (152 cm to 183 cm) between hills of three	Use only if squash can grow outside the box.

Two kinds of pumpkins:

Field – You cannot eat these. They are grown to carve. The seed package may say jack-o-lanterns.

Sugar pumpkins – These are grown to eat. You can also carve these.

What part you eat Fruit. You can roast the seeds.

Should I plant seeds or seedlings? We recommend seeds.

How do I plant this vegetable?

You can plant pumpkins in rows or you can plant in a hill. Make a hill about 6 in or 8 in (15.2 cm to 20.3 cm) high with soil and compost. You can plant six seeds in each hill and then thin so there are three plants in the hill.

Does this vegetable need support? No

How do I care for this vegetable?

Leave only two blossoms on the plant. Pull off the other blossoms. Otherwise you will get lots of small pumpkins. Pumpkins need consistent watering to 1-inch deep.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

Wait until the skin is hard. Press your fingernail on the skin. If it goes in easily, the pumpkin is not ready. If you cannot get your fingernail in, it is ready to harvest.

Leave the stem on the pumpkin so disease cannot get into the pumpkin.

WARM WEATHER VINES
COMMON NAME Cucumbers

When to plant seeds indoors	When to plant seeds outside	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
	May 1 to June 15	36 in to 48 in 91.4 cm to 122 cm	4 seeds per 1 foot row	6 in 15.2 cm	2

There are two kinds of cucumbers:

- Eating
- Pickling

What part you eat: Fruit

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend seeds.

How to plant

You get a lot of cucumbers from one plant, so do not plant too many.

Does this vegetable need support?

We recommend a support trellis. However, you can grow them on the ground.

How do I care for this vegetable?

You will notice that cucumbers have both a male flower and a female flower. Only the female flower turns into a cucumber.

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

Watch the plant. Harvest before the cucumbers get too big and full of seeds.

WARM WEATHER LEGUMES

COMMON NAME Pole beans

When to plant seeds indoors	When to plant seeds outside	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
	May 15 to June 1	36 in 91.4 cm	12 seeds per 1 foot row	2 in to 6 in 5 cm to 15.2 cm	4

Pole beans keep growing. You get two to three times as many beans than if you grow bush beans.

What part you eat: Seed and seed pod

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend seeds.

How do I plant this vegetable?

Plant seeds according to the directions on the seed package.

Does this vegetable need support?

Yes. Trellis.

How do I care for this vegetable?

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

Start picking as soon as you can. Then you will get more beans.

Look carefully for the beans. Since they are green, they can be hard to find in all the green leaves.

Do not harvest if the plant is wet. You can get rust spots on the leaves.

WARM WEATHER LEGUMES
COMMON NAME Bush beans

When to plant seeds indoors	When to plant seeds outside	Space between rows	Number of seeds needed for a one foot row	Space between seedlings. Thin to this number if you planted seeds.	Number of plants in 1-square foot section (about .09 square meters)
	May 15 to June 1	18 in to 24 in 45.7 cm to 60.8 cm	12 seeds per 1 foot row	2 in to 4 in 5 cm to 10.1 in	4

Bush beans are shorter and fuller than pole beans. You do not get as many beans.

What part you eat: Seed and seed pod

Should I plant seeds or seedlings?

We recommend seeds.

How do I plant this vegetable?

All the beans will be ready at one time over about three weeks, so plant over a few weeks if you want to spread out your harvest.

Does this vegetable need support?

No

How do I care for this vegetable?

When is this vegetable ready to harvest?

These all are ready to harvest in a three-week period.