



Vegetable Garden: Basics and Plant Selections

Site/Location

Full sun equals 6 to 8 hours of sun per day. Close enough that you will want to go to it. Water/hose will reach it. Start small, 10' by 10' will provide vegetables while still being manageable to weed, water, plant and harvest.

What to grow

Vegetables that you like and will eat and that are suited to the location. The recommended plants are suggestions only. Visit our fact sheet [Seed Companies](#) for more ideas.

Soil

A [soil test](#) from the UConn Soil and Nutrient Analysis Laboratory is recommended. Add amendments as recommended. Compost or aged manure worked well into soil. Plotting area, single rows, wide rows or blocks. They all work. Tall crops on the north. Track shadows so all plants get sun.

Timing

Plants that reach harvest in under 120 days are considered short season crops and those that take longer are long season crops. Subtract the days to harvest (on seed packets) from the first fall frost date to find the last planting date.

- Last spring frost date in CT is May 15th.
- First fall frost date in CT is Sept. 15th.

Cool Season Crops

Seed packet will say "Plant as early as soil can be worked". A good test to tell if the soil is workable is to make a ball of soil in your hand and poke it with a finger, if it falls apart like chocolate cake crumbs, it is ready. If the soil is too wet, the ball stays together leaving only an indent from finger. Working the soil when it is too wet will ruin the structure of the soil and cause compaction. Cool season crops such as cabbage, cauliflower, kale, lettuce, peas, & spinach may be planted when the soil is between 40-45°F. Beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, Swiss chard, onions, and turnips will want it to be at least 50°F.

Warm Season Crops

Seed or transplant info will say "Plant after all danger of frost has past". This varies from year to year. May 15th is only an average. Watch daily weather reports for frost warnings and dropping overnight temperatures. Warm season crops will be killed by freezing temperatures and frost. Planting warm season crop transplants in cold soil will stunt

the roots. Warm season seeds placed in cold soil will not germinate until a higher soil temp is reached. Warm season crops such as beans, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, herbs, melons, okra, peppers, and tomatoes require soil temperatures in the 65-75°F range.

Water

Vegetables need one to two inches of water per week by rain or hose. Feel the soil down where the roots are located. If it is dry, water it. Soaker or trickle hoses are best. They provide a slow, deep watering. Shallow watering keeps the roots up near the surface where it is hotter and dries out quicker. Deep roots make better plants. Keep foliage dry; apply water in the morning, never in the evening. Wet foliage invites fungal disease.

Feed

Fertilize when transplanting or when seeds grow into plants with two sets of leaves. Use manure or packaged vegetable fertilizers with balance nutrients such as 10-10-10. Side dress when plants begin to flower and set fruit by again applying fertilizer lightly a few inches away from plants. Follow label directions. Do not over-fertilize as this can harm plants and add to polluted waterways.

Weeds

Get weeds out. They compete with and steal nutrients and water away from vegetable plants. Hand pull weeds while still small. Cultivate weekly or more often, by hoeing or scratching the surface to one inch deep of garden soil discouraging weed growth around vegetable plants. Apply mulch around plants, but not touching plants, to block light to weed seeds in soil. This stops their germination. Straw, grass clippings, chopped leaves and pine needles are all good mulches.

Insects

If you find an insect in the garden, identify it. It may be a good guy providing pollination or predation on the bad guys. Look it up in a book or contact the UConn Home and Garden Education Center for correct ID. You can call or email us ladybug@uconn.edu.

Harvest

Pick produce when ripe. Not picking tells the plant its job in life is done. It has produced a fruit containing a seed and then it will die. Leaf crops will send up a seed stalk. Continuing to remove fruits and leaves will keep the plant trying to make more seed, therefore providing more produce.

Plant Selections

Resistant varieties codes: AL-Alternaria DM-Downy Mildew F-Fusarium Wilt M-Mosaic Virus N-Nematodes
PM-Powdery Mildew V-Verticillium Wilt

Plant	Variety	Cool/Warm Weather	Short/Long Season (Days to Harvest)	Least/Most Space Required	Light/Heavy Feeder	Early Frost Resistance
Artichoke	Globe	Warm	Long (100-150)	Most	Heavy	
Artichoke	Jerusalem	Cool	Long (130)	Most	Heavy	
Arugula		Cool	Short (40)	Least	Light	

<u>Asparagus</u>	Jersey Giant (F), Viking KB3	Cool	Short	Most	Light	
<u>Beans</u>	Bush Green: Provider, Grenoble, Derby (M,PM), Strike (M)	Warm	Short (45-70)	Moderate	Light	
	Bush Yellow: Gold Mine, Indy Gold, Sunburst	Warm	Short (45-70)	Moderate	Light	
	Pole: Fortex, Kentucky	Warm	Short (50-70)	Least	Light	

	Blue, Scarlet Runner					
	Lima: Eastland (DM), Fordhook 242	Warm	Moderate (60-80)	Least	Light	
	Broad or Fava: Broad Improved, Windsor	Cool	Moderate (75-85)	Least	Light	
	Soybean: Beer Friend, Envy	Warm	Short (45-65)	Moderate	Light	
<u>Beets</u>	Red: Bull's Blood, Detroit Dark, Red Ace	Cool	Short (50-60)	Least	Heavy	X
	Golden: Burpee's Golden, Golden Beet	Cool	Short (50-60)	Least	Heavy	X
	Greens: Lutz Green Leaf	Cool	Short (40-50)	Least	Heavy	X
<u>Broccoli</u>	Arcadia (DM), Goliath, Marathon (DM), Parkman	Cool	Moderate (65-70)	Moderate	Heavy	X
<u>Brussel's Sprouts</u>	Jade Cross, Oliver	Cool	Long (90-180)	Moderate	Heavy	X

<u>Cabbage</u>	Early Season: Charmant (F), Tendersweet (F), Winner	Cool	Moderate (50-70)	Most	Heavy	X
	Midseason: Blue Dynasty (F), Blue Lagoon (F)	Cool	Moderate (70-85)	Most	Heavy	X
	Late Season: Blue Thunder (F), Roulette, Danish Ballhead	Cool	Long (100-110)	Most	Heavy	X
	Red: Red Dynasty, Red Express	Cool	Moderate (75-90)	Most	Heavy	X
	Savoy: Alcosa (F), Savoy Blue	Cool	Moderate (80-85)	Most	Heavy	X

	Chinese: Blues, Jade Pagoda, Minuet	Cool	Moderate (80)	Most	Heavy	X
	Bok Choy (Pak Choi): Joi Choi, Mei Qing	Cool	Short (30- 50)	Least	Heavy	X
Carrots	Bolero (A,PM), Nelson, Sugarsnax 54 (AL)	Cool	Short (50- 75)	Least	Light	X
<u>Cauliflower</u>	Freemont, Snow Crown, Graffiti (purple)	Cool	Moderate (48-95)	Most	Heavy	X
Celery	Utah 52-70, Ventura	Cool	Long (80-120)	Least	Heavy	X
Corn, Sweet	Argent, Delectable, Fleet, Lancelot, Precious Gem	Warm	Long (60-100)	Most	Heavy	
Collards	Champion, Flash, Top Bunch	Cool	Moderate (60-85)	Moderate	Heavy	X

Cucumber	Pickling: Alibi, Calypso (PM), Cross Country, H-19 Little Leaf	Warm	Short (50-70)	Moderate if trellised	Heavy	
	Slicing: Dasher II (PM), Diva, General Lee, Marketmore 76 (PM)	Warm	Short (50-70)	Moderate if trellised	Heavy	
Dill	Banquet, Fernleaf	Warm	Moderate Foliage (70) Seeds (90)	Least	Light	
Eggplant	Black Bell, Fairy Tale, Orient Express, Vittoria	Warm	Long (70-85 from transplant)	Moderate	Heavy	
Endive	Bianca Riccia, Lorca, Salad King	Cool	Long (85-100)	Least	Light	
Escarole	Full Heart, Nataly	Cool	Long (85-100)	Least	Light	

Garlic	German Extra Hardy, Russian Red	Cool	Short (40)	Least	Light	X
Kale	Blue Ridge, Red Russian, Toscano, Winterbor	Cool	Short (50-55)	Moderate	Light	X
Kohlrabi	Early White Vienna, Gigante, Winner	Cool	Short (42-70)	Moderate	Light	X
Leek	Lincoln, King Richard	Cool	Long (100-120)	Least	Light	
Lettuce	Butterhead	Cool	Short (60-70)	Least	Light	
	Leaf	Cool	Short (50-60)	Least	Light	
	Romaine	Cool	Short (65-70)	Least	Light	

Melon	Canteloupe: Burpee Hybrid, Harper Hybrid (AL, F,M)	Warm	Moderate (85)	Most	Heavy (High N before flowering, lower after)	
	Honeydew: Jenny Lind, Morning Ice (F,PM), Passport	Warm	Moderate (75-80)	Most	Heavy (High N before flowering, low after)	
Mustard	Watermelon: Sweet Favorite, Moon & Stars	Warm	Long (95)	Most	Heavy	
	Giant Red, Green Wave, Osaka Purple	Cool	Short Greens (30-40) Seeds (8095)	Least	Light	
Onions	Yellow: Candy, Copra, Frontier	Cool	Long (100-175)	Least	Light	
	Red: Bennie's Red, Mars	Cool	Long (100-175)	Least	Light	
	Green: Scallion	Cool	Short (20- 30)	Least	Light	

Okra	Cajun Delight, Clemson Spineless	Warm	Short (50- 60)	Moderate	Heavy	
<u>Parsley</u>	Dark Green Italian, Titan, Forest Green	Warm	Moderate (70-90)	Least	Light	
Parsnip	Andover, Lancer	Cool	Long (100-120)	Least	Light	X
<u>Peas</u>	Early: Coral, Dakota, Spring	Cool	Short (60)	Least	Light	
	Late:Lincoln, Mr. Blg, Tall Telephone	Cool	Moderate (65-75)	Least	Light	

	Snap: Cascadia, Sugar Ann, Sugarsnap	Cool	Moderate (60-75)	Least	Light	
	Snow Pea: Little Sweetie, Oregon Giant	Cool	Moderate (60-80)	Least	Light	
Peppers	Sweet Bell: New Ace, Red Knight, King of the North	Warm	Moderate (60-95)	Moderate	Light, avoid high N	
	Sweet Long: Big Bertha, Giant Marconi, Lipstick	Warm	Moderate (75-90)	Moderate	Light, avoid high N	
	Hot Long: Anaheim, Long Red Slim, Super Chili, Thai Hot	Warm	Moderate (65-90)	Moderate	Light, avoid high N	
	Hot Round	Warm	Moderate (65-90)	Moderate	Light, avoid high N	
Pumpkin	Large: Howden, Connecticut Field	Warm	Long (90-120)	Most	Heavy	
	Small: Baby Bear, Wee-Be-Little	Warm	Long (95-100)	Most	Heavy	
	Novelty: Prizewinner, Atlantic Giant, Jarrahdale	Warm	Long (110)	Most	Heavy	

Radish	Cherriette, Easter Egg, Everest	Cool	Short (25-70)	Least	Light	X
Rutabaga	Laurentian, Joan, Purple Top	Cool	Long (90-110)	Most	Light	X
Rhubarb	McDonald Strain, Victoria	Cool	Moderate When stalks are 12-18"	Moderate	Light	
Spinach	Spring: Bloomsdale, Longstanding, Tye	Cool	Short (40-50)	Least	Light	X

	Fall: Giant Winter, Melody, Olympus	Cool	Short (40-50)	Least	Light	X
Squash	Summer, Yellow: Early Profilic Straightneck, Sunray (PM), Goldrush	Warm	Moderate (60)	Most	Moderate	
	Summer, Green: Ambassador (PM), Coccozelle, Spineless Beauty, Eight Ball, Raven	Warm	Moderate (60)	Most	Moderate	
	Bush, Scallop: Peter Pan, Sunburst, Sunny Delight	Warm	Moderate (50-70)	Most	Moderate	
	Winter: Betternut (PM), Bon Bon, Waltham Butternut, Sunshine, Table Queen, Cream of the Crop, New England Blue Hubbard	Warm	Long (60-100)	Most	Heavy	
Swiss Chard	Bright Knights, Fordhook Giant, Rhubarb Chard	Cool	Short (55-65)	Least	Light	X
Tomato	Early: Early Girl, Pilgrim (F,V), Early Cascade, 4th of July	Warm	Moderate (65-70)	Moderate	Moderate	
	Midseason: Jet Star (F,V), Ultraboy (F,N,V), Celebrity (F,M,V), Mountain Magic (AL) Mountain Pride (F, V) Mountain Supreme (AL)	Warm	Moderate (70-80)	Moderate	Moderate	

	Late: Supersonic (F,V), Better Boy (F,V), Super Beefsteak (F,N,V), Burpee's Super Stake Hybrid (F,N,V)	Warm	Moderate (80-90)	Moderate	Moderate	
	Orange: Sweet Tangerine, Orange Blossom	Warm	Moderate (70-80)	Moderate	Moderate	
	Yellow: Golden Delight, Taxi, Yellow Stuffer	Warm	Moderate (70-80)	Moderate	Moderate	
	Paste: Roma (F,V), Amish Paste Plum Dandy (AL)	Warm	Moderate (75-80)	Moderate	Moderate	
	Salad: Bellstar, Juliet	Warm	Moderate (75-80)	Moderate	Moderate	
	Cherry: Pixie (F,V), Sweet 100, Sun Gold	Warm	Moderate (70)	Moderate	Moderate	
Turnip	Pear: Red, Yellow	Warm	Moderate (85)	Moderate	Moderate	
	Plum: Red, Yellow	Warm	Moderate (75-80)	Moderate	Moderate	
	Purple Top, White Globe, White Lady, Tokyo Cross	Cool	Moderate (50-60)	Least	Light	

Revised by the UConn Home and Garden Education Center 2017

The information in this material is for educational purposes. The recommendations contained are based on the best available knowledge at the time of printing. Any reference to commercial products, trade or brand names is for information only, and no endorsement or approval is intended. The Cooperative Extension system does not guarantee or warrant the standard of any product referenced or imply approval of the product to the exclusion of others which also may be available. All agrochemicals/pesticides listed are registered for suggested uses in accordance with federal and Connecticut state laws and regulations as of the date of printing. If the information does not agree with current labeling, follow the label instructions. The label is the law. Warning! Agrochemicals/pesticides are dangerous. Read and follow all instructions and safety precautions on labels. Carefully handle and store agrochemicals/pesticides in originally labeled containers immediately in a safe manner and place. Contact the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection for current regulations. The user of this information assumes all risks for personal injury or property damage. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Gregory J. Weidemann, Director, Cooperative Extension System, The University of Connecticut, Storrs. The Connecticut Cooperative Extension System offers its programs to persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability and is an equal opportunity employer.