Vegetable Variety Planting Guide

Note: detailed growing guides for each vegetable can be found at: www.gardening.cornell.edu/vegetablegrowingguides

Bed #1
Vegetable: Lettuce
Eco Gardening Technique: Top dress with compost

Establishment:
Start first round of seeds indoors around March 16. Or direct sow as soon as you can work the soil. Heads can be cut as baby greens or allowed to mature (about 30 days) and then a new round of seeds can be planted. Plant each variety in a single row about 12” apart in the bed.

Maintenance:
With each round of planting, apply fresh and finished compost as a top dressing to each row. Vermicompost is also a good option.

Bed #2
Vegetables: Tomatoes & Basil
Eco Gardening Technique: Companion Planting (Basil/Borage)

Establishment:
Start seeds indoors around March 15th for all three plants. Each plant should be given about 1 square foot of space in the garden.

Maintenance:
Tomatoes should be well trellised and pruned to encourage good fruit set. Borage flowers are edible and are a pluck-and-come-again harvest, like the basil.

Much of literature on companion planting is a pseudo-science and will be discussed in signage.
Bed #3
Vegetable: Peppers
Eco Gardening Technique: Shredded Leaf Mulch

Establishment:
Start seeds indoors around March 15th for all three plants. Each plant should be given about 1 square foot of space in the garden.

Maintenance:
Peppers like the heat and it is encouraged to place rocks or other heat traps in the garden beds. Dry leaves can be shredded in a chipper/shredder, with a lawn mower with bag, or by placing in a garbage can and shredding with a weed whacker. Shredded leaves decompose better and down mat down with moisture as much. Mulch should be 4 – 6” thick ideally.

Bed #4
Vegetable: Carrots
Eco Gardening Technique: Straw Mulch

Establishment:
Direct sow as soon as you can work the soil. Plant each variety in a single row about 12” apart in the bed, ½ inch deep, ½ apart.

Maintenance:
Thinning will be necessary as carrots grow up to favor better producers. Straw mulch should be clean and dry, about 2 – 4” thick on the best. Move aside from planting area and keep mulch VERY thin until the tops have become well established.
Bed #5
**Plants:** Dill, Asters, Yarrow, Coneflower  
**Eco Gardening Technique:** Beneficial Insect Attractors

**Establishment:**
All of these plants can be grown from seed sown into the garden, or best from transplants that are commonly available. Layout is less formal in this garden bed. We encourage adding other habitat to support beneficials in the garden including rock piles, brush and stick piles, a bird perch, etc.

The important idea here is that some of the garden space supports the overall garden health, but providing food for the insects, butterflies, spiders, etc.

**Maintenance:** Keep it neat!

Bed #6
**Vegetable:** Beets  
**Eco Gardening Technique:** Stacking Crops

**Establishment:**
Direct sow as soon as you can work the soil. Plant each variety in a single row about 12” apart in the bed, 3/4 inch deep, 1” apart.

**Maintenance:**
Thinning will be necessary as beets grow up to favor better producers. In this bed we encourage experimentation to plant another, shorter rotation crop such as mixed greens or beans, in between the rows of beets. This helps keep the soil biology active and provides a yield from the space while waiting for root crops to mature.
Bed #7
**Vegetable:** Pole Beans  
**Eco Gardening Technique:** Cover Crop Mix

**Establishment:**
Direct sow when soil is workable and danger of frost has passed. Plant 1” inch deep in a mound of 6 – 8 seeds at the base of each pole. Train vines as they grow to climb up trellis.

**Maintenance:**
After vines are 12” tall, broadcast a 50/50 mix of annual rye and buckwheat underneath the beans, to keep ground covered and attract beneficials. After the season ends this also supports maintaining a healthy soil structure. Be sure so trim buckwheat after flowering but before seed matures.

Bed #8
**Vegetable:** Kale, Collards, and Chives  
**Eco Gardening Technique:** Sheet Mulch

**Establishment:**
Start indoors. To sheet mulch, lay down a layer of cardboard or newspaper, soak thoroughly, and then add 8 – 12” of straw mulch on top. To transplant, cut a hole in the cardboard and slip transplant in, planting with a compost soil mix.

**Maintenance:**
A low maintenance crop, most of the work will be carefully harvesting top shoots as they mature to encourage continuous growth. The chives can also be harvested multiple times – the smells alluims give off helps deter common brassica pests.
Bed #9  
**Vegetable:** Peas  
**Eco Gardening Technique:** Single Cover Crop

**Establishment:**  
Sow in soil as soon as its workable, seeds are hardy to cold temps but need warm soil to germinate. Plant 1” deep and 2 inches apart. Install a vertical trellis over each row for support.

**Maintenance:**  
After plants get 12” tall and soil has warmed significantly, sow a cover crop of red or white clover underneath the pea crop. Early cool season crops can also be sown, such as radish or spinach, for an edible groundcover!

*Note: Detailed growing guides for each vegetable can be found at:*  
www.gardening.cornell.edu/vegetablegrowingguides