



MASTER GARDENER
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

CMG GardenNotes #721

Sample Planting Guide for Raised-Bed Garden

The following table is a guide for planting a family vegetable garden in a block-style layout. It is based on a raised bed system with boxes four feet wide and rows typically running across the bed (four feet long).

Planting times are based on May 10 and October 10 average frost dates, typical of Colorado's Front Range. In other areas, adjust the planting dates using local average frost dates.

Estimated planting for fresh use and projected yields are estimates on what a family of four may consume in fresh use during the harvest period. Actual plantings should be adjusted to the family's likes for various vegetables and desire for canning, freezing, and storage.

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Cool Season Planting Groups	Crops	Block Style Spacing	Estimated Planting for Fresh Use and Projected Yield	Planting Time	Harvest Period
Cole Crops	Broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower	3 plants across a 4-foot wide block (row) with 18 inches between rows	1-2, 4-foot rows each <u>per planting</u> 1 head per plant = 3 heads per 4-foot row	Spring planting for summer harvest: 1. Early April – Broccoli and cabbage from transplants 2. Early May – Broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower from transplants	Spring plantings/summer harvest in June to early July (1-3 weeks per plantings, depending on temperatures) In warm weather crops come on rapidly with reduced quality (sweetness). Check every couple of days for harvestable stage, and store crops in fridge. Crops over-mature rapidly in warm temperatures.
			2-3+ 4-foot rows each. 1 head per plant = 3 heads per 4-foot row	Summer planted for fall harvest: Broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower by direct seed, mid-July for fall harvest	Summer planting/fall harvest – 4-8+ weeks with excellent quality due to cool fall temperatures. Harvest crops as needed. They tolerate a mild frost into the mid to low 20s and can be stored in fridge or pit for winter use.
Leafy Vegetables & Salad Crops (Kitchen garden)	Lettuce (leaf and soft head types)	Thin to 7-9 inches, with rows 7-9 inches apart	1-3, 4-foot rows, with assorted varieties <u>per planting</u> ~ 6 heads per 4-foot row ~ 3 lbs. per 4-foot row	1. Early April	May-June
				2. Early May	June-July (depending on temperatures)
				3. Late July	Early September+
				4. Mid August	Late September+
	Spinach	Thin to 4-6 inches, with 6 inches between rows	1-3, 4-foot rows <u>per planting</u> ~8 bunch per 4-foot row ~2 lbs. per 4-foot row	1. Early April	May-June
				2. Early May	June-July (depending on temperature)
				3. Late July	Early September+
				4. Mid August	Late September+
	Chard	Thin to 7-9 inches, with 7-9 inches between rows	1-2, 4-foot rows ~ 4 lbs. per 4-foot row	Late April to early May	Harvest by cutting off leaves, plants grow back, for summer long harvest
	Kohlrabi (a cole crop)	Thin to 7-9 inches, with 7-9 inches between rows	1-2, 4-foot rows <u>per planting</u> ~ 6 heads per 4-foot row	1. Early April	June
				2. Early May	Mid June to early July (depending on temperatures)
				3. Mid to late July	September+

Cool Season Planting Groups	Crops	Block Style Spacing	Estimated Planting for Fresh Use and Projected Yield	Planting Time	Harvest Period
Onion Family (Kitchen garden)	Dry onions	4-6 inches, with 4-6 inches between rows	2-5, 4-foot rows ~ 10 bulbs per 4-foot row ~ 3 lbs. per 4-foot row	Early April to early May Onions are sensitive to photoperiod, the early the planting the larger the bulbs.	Mid summer through fall
	Green onions	2-3inches, with 2-3inches between rows	1-2, 4-foot rows ~ 4 bunches per 4-foot row	Early April to early May	Early summer through fall
	Leeks (soup onion)	4-6 inches, with 4-6 inches between rows	1-2, 4-foot rows ~ 10 bulbs per 4-foot row	Early April to early May	Fall into winter (for winter harvest leave in garden and mulch to protect from extreme cold, dig as needed.)
Peas	Peas	Thin to 3-4 inches, with 8 inches plus between rows Note: Peas are easier to pick in a single or double row rather than in the block-style plantings	20' double row ~ 12 lbs per 20' double row	1. Early April to early May, as soon as soil temperature reaches 40°F. Peas are sensitive to photoperiod, early plantings give higher yields.	June
			20' double row ~ 6 lbs. per 20' double row	2. Mid July	September Note: fall plantings are prone to powdery mildew and have lower yields, making them questionable.
Potatoes	Potatoes	3-4 plants across a 4-foot wide bed, with 15 inches between rows	A 16-foot by 4-foot bed of potatoes would produce around 72 pounds.	Early May	July+ Mulch with straw

Cool Season Planting Group	Crops	Block Style Spacing	Estimated Planting for Fresh Use and Projected Yield	Planting Time	Harvest Period
Root Crops	Carrots	Thin to 2-3 inches, with rows 3 inches between rows	6-18+, 4-foot rows ~ 4 lbs. per 4-foot row	Early May	July through fall; can be left in the garden and mulched for winter harvest.
	Beets	Thin to 4-6 inches, with 4-6 inches between rows	1-2, 4-foot rows <u>per planting</u> ~ 4 lbs. per 4-foot row	1. Early May	June-July – Thin for beet greens. Harvest roots while young (small) for best quality
				2. Mid July	September-October – Thin for beet greens. Harvest roots while young (small) for best quality
	Parsnips	Thin to 5-6 inches, with 5-6 inches between rows	2-6, 4-foot rows ~ 4 lbs. per 4-foot row	Early May	For late fall to winter harvest, after soils cool, mulch for harvest through the winter.
	Radish	Thin to 2-3 inches, with 2-3 inches between rows	1-2, 4-foot rows <u>per planting</u> ~ 4 bunches per 4-foot row	1. Early April	Early May
				2. Early May	Early June
				3. Early August	Early September
				4. Late August	Late September
	Turnips	Thin to 4-6 inches with 4-6 inches between rows	1-2, 4-foot- rows <u>per planting</u> ~ 4 lbs. per 4-foot row	1. Early May	June-July -- Thin for greens. Harvest roots while young (small) for best quality
				2. Mid July	September-October – Thin for greens. Harvest roots while young (small) for best quality

Warm Season Planting Group	Crops	Block Style Spacing	Estimated Planting for Fresh Use and Projected Yield	Planting Time	Harvest Period
Beans	Pole beans	Thin to 4 inches in a single row	10-20' row ~ 10 lbs. per 10 foot row	Mid May	July till frost, with adequate water
	Bush beans	Thin to 4 inches , in double row. Beans are easier to pick in a single or double row rather than block-style planting.	10-20' row ~ 10 lbs. per /10 foot double row	Mid May	July till frost, with adequate water
Corn		For pollination, corn must be planted in block with 4+ rows wide. In a block-style garden, plant 4 rows with 2 rows each going the length of the box, in 2 boxes side by side. Space plant 9 inches in the row.	A block of 4, 6-foot rows will give ~60 ears	1. Mid May 2. Mid June	Late July to October – Harvest period on any variety is only 10 to 20 days. For continual harvest of fresh corn plant varieties with 20+ days difference till harvest OR make second planting 20-30 after the first.
Eggplant		3 plants across a 4 foot row, with rows 18-24 inches apart	1, 4-foot rows ~ 12 fruit per 4-foot row (4 fruit per plant)	Late May, temperatures consistently above 60 °F	August till frost (A Wall-Of-Water can be used for earlier production.)
Peppers		3 plants across a 4-foot row, with rows 18 inches apart	1-4, 4-foot rows, depending on family use Yields vary with variety ~ 18 bell peppers/4-foot row (6 fruit per plant)	Late May, temperatures consistently above 60 °F	August till frost (A Wall-Of-Water can be used for earlier production.)
Tomatoes		Trellis in single row, plants spaced 24 inches apart.	3-6 plants, depending on family use ~ 26 lbs. (½ bushel) per plant	Late May, temperatures consistently above 60 °F	August till frost (A Wall-Of-Water can be used for earlier production.)

Warm Season Group	Crops	Block Style Spacing	Estimated Planting for Fresh Use and Projected Yield	Planting Time	Harvest Period
Vine Crops	Cucumbers	Trellis in single row, plants spaced at 6 inches.	2-4 plants, depending on family use ~ 1 lb. per plant	Mid May for direct seeding OR late May for transplants	Mid July till frost For maximum yields, do not let fruit get large on the vine.
	Zucchini and other summer squash	Single row down center of 4-foot box; two plants take 4-foot by 8-foot	2 plants	Mid May for direct seeding or late May for transplants	Mid July till frost (A Wall-Of-Water can be used for earlier production)
	Cantaloupes, Watermelon, Pumpkins, and Winter Squash	1-3 plants per type, as desired by family 2-6 fruit per plant	Single row down center of 4 inches wide box with 2-3' between plants. Makes a great ground cover for garden areas. ~ 3-4 fruit per plant	Late May, temperatures consistently above 60°F	September-October