

Starting a Garden Grow Local Colorado

In 1943 Eleanor Roosevelt took the bold initiative to plant a vegetable garden on the White House's South Lawn. She called it a Victory Garden. Due to severe food shortages in Europe, Eleanor knew home gardens were imperative to feeding millions of American troops overseas and preventing shortages at home. During World War II over 20 million Americans answered Eleanor's call to action, producing approximately 40% of our country's produce. Now we have a similar call but this time it is to feed our neighbors in need. With COVID-19's impact on our food system many families in our community are in desperate need of fresh produce.

If you're starting a new garden, your first task is determining which location in your yard gets maximum sunshine. East-west oriented beds provide maximum sun exposure for all plants. A good size plot to start with is twelve feet square. There are two ways to prepare your garden spot. The first is sheet mulching. Overlap large sheets of cardboard on the garden area. On top of that spread 6" of wood chips and/or leaves. Top that off with 3 inches of compost or manure. Add another thick layer of wood chips and another 3 inches of compost or manure. Keep the area watered well for at least two month. It will provide a very rich soil. The second method is to remove grass and weeds and spade the soil down ten to thirteen inches. For a twelve square foot plot add two 40-pound bags of manure or compost and work it into the soil. If you have pets you will want to fence them out of the garden.

In our dry climate irrigation is essential. Consider installing a drip or soaker type system to conserve water and minimize evaporation. A drip line will reduce weeding as it focuses water on your crops, not the entire garden area. Our growing season is about 120 days. Pick crops that only take that amount of time. Wait to plant until late May as our average last frost is May 15th.

By planting a garden you not only save money on fresh, healthy produce but also will be getting good exercise. When your garden starts to produce don't forget to share some of your bounty with a local food pantry or shelter. Happy and healthy gardening!

Barbara Masoner
Grow Local Colorado

Crop	Sow seeds indoors	Transplant seedlings into the garden	Direct sow seeds
<u>Asparagus</u>	n/a	Mar 20 - Apr 4	n/a
<u>Beans</u>	n/a	n/a	May 4 - Jun 1
<u>Beets</u>	n/a	n/a	Mar 9 - Mar 23
<u>Broccoli</u>	Feb 24 - Mar 9	Apr 6 - Apr 20	n/a
<u>Brussel Sprouts</u>	Feb 24 - Mar 9	Apr 6 - Apr 20	n/a
<u>Cabbage</u>	Feb 24 - Mar 9	Apr 6 - Apr 20	n/a
<u>Cantaloupe</u>	n/a	n/a	Apr20–May4
<u>Carrots</u>	n/a	n/a	Mar 23 - Apr 20
<u>Corn</u>	n/a	n/a	May 4 - May 18
<u>Cucumbers</u>	n/a	n/a	May 4 - May 18
<u>Eggplants</u>	Feb 24 - Mar 9	May 4 - May 18	n/a
<u>Gourds, Squash and Pumpkins</u>	n/a	n/a	May 4 - May 18
<u>Kale</u>	Feb 24 - Mar 9	Apr 6 - Apr 20	n/a
<u>Lettuce</u>	Feb 24 - Mar 9	Mar 23 - Apr 20	Mar 23 - Apr 20
<u>Onions</u>	Feb 17 - Feb 24	Mar 5 - Apr 4	n/a
<u>Peas (English)</u>	n/a	n/a	Mar 5 - Apr 4
<u>Peas (Sugar Snap)</u>	n/a	n/a	Mar 5 - Apr 4
<u>Peppers</u>	Feb 24 - Mar 9	May 4 - May 18	n/a
<u>Potatoes</u>	n/a	n/a	Mar 5 - Apr 4
<u>Radishes</u>	n/a	n/a	Mar 20 - May 18
<u>Spinach</u>	Feb 24 - Mar 9	Apr 6 - Apr 20	Mar 20 - Apr 20
<u>Tomatoes</u>	Feb 24 - Mar 9	May 4 - May 18	n/a
<u>Watermelon</u>	n/a	n/a	May 4 - May 18