

## Grow your own

# Fall & Winter Harvest

With a little extra planning and care, you can enjoy fresh vegetables from your garden most of the year! Many cool-season crops produce well in the fall and into winter in mild-winter areas of Southwest BC.

With some protection, cool-weather crops can be harvested throughout the winter. In addition, some fall-planted crops (for example, certain cultivars of broccoli, carrots, and onions) will grow slowly through the winter and be ready to harvest early in the spring. Choose vegetable cultivars that are well-suited to fall and winter harvest.

Plant these vegetables in mid-to late summer after harvesting spring crops and as garden space becomes available. To be successful, plan ahead, choose cultivars that are well suited to fall and winter production, and give proper care to your plants.

*Fall and winter weather varies greatly from year to year. A crop that struggles one year due to an unusually early freeze or an abnormally cold winter may thrive in a milder year. Be willing to experiment, and don't give up if your results some years are less than ideal.*

### CHOOSING A LOCATION

The first key to a successful fall or winter garden is choosing the best location:

- Choose an area that gets as much sun as possible during the short days of autumn and winter, such as a south-facing slope.
- Avoid planting in a spot that is prone to early frost (for example, at the bottom of a hill) or exposed to the wind.
- A location with good drainage is essential. Raised beds are best. If your soil doesn't drain well, amend it with organic matter such as compost.
- If possible, place your garden where it is easily accessible. It's no fun to slog through winter's mud and cold rain to harvest your crops!
- To reduce insect and disease problems, practice crop rotation. Avoid planting crops where a related vegetable was growing previously. For example, put broccoli in a spot vacated by peas, not by cabbage.

### WHEN TO PLANT FOR A FALL & WINTER HARVEST

For fall & winter harvest, crops are usually planted between Mid June and early September depending on the crop being grown. The crops need enough time to mature before cold weather and short days curtail growth; but, if you plant too early, the young plants might wilt in the heat or mature too soon. Some of the most rewarding crops grow fairly quickly and can be harvested 3 to 6 weeks after planting!

The best choices for fall and winter crops are usually the faster maturing cultivars. The seeds of many fall crops can be sown directly in the garden after the soil is prepared for seeding, but you can get a head start of as much as 2 or 3 weeks by planting vegetable transplants that you've started earlier in trays or pots or purchased at the garden centre. To continue harvesting through winter, some crops require protection after the first frost has occurred, and others should do nicely without protection in an average south-coast winter.



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Everything to Make Your Garden Work!

## WHEN TO PLANT FOR AN EARLY SPRING HARVEST OF OVER- WINTERED VEGGIES

Crops that go through the winter in mild areas of Southwest BC must be well established, but not mature, unless you simply are storing them in the ground over winter. (i.e., root vegetables such as carrots and leeks). Most winter crops are started between June and early August, with a few that may need to be started even earlier

### PLANTING TIPS

Before planting, prepare the soil by restoring nutrients removed by spring and summer crops. A light layer of compost or aged manure, or a small application of a complete chemical or organic fertilizer, boosts soil nutrients in preparation for another crop.

Winter protection can be provided in the form of a cold frame, cloche or greenhouse plastic stretched over a frame for support.

Each crop has their own specific timing and needs. Refer to plant labels and seed packages for detailed information on each crop.

### Veggies to Grow for Fall Harvest

- Arugula
- Beets
- Cabbage (must be started in late spring)
- Cilantro
- Lettuce
- Mescluns
- Pac Choi
- Parsley
- Radish
- Scallions
- Sorrel (Must be started in late spring)
- Spinach
- Swiss Chard
- Turnips

### Veggies to Grow for Late Fall & Winter Harvest

- Broadbeans
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage
- Chervil
- Radicchio & Endive
- Cilantro
- Corn Salad
- Kale
- Kohlrabi
- Leeks (must be started in early spring)
- Mescluns (with some protection)
- Mustards
- Pac Choi
- Parsley
- Parsnips (must be started in late spring)
- Radish
- Rutabaga (start in early summer)
- Sorrel (start in late spring)
- Spinach
- Swiss Chard
- Turnips

### Crops to Grow to Over-Winter for Late Winter or Early Spring Harvest

- Sprouting Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Garlic
- Kale
- Kohlrabi
- Leeks
- Radish

