

VEGETABLE GARDEN TIPS FROM YOUR FARMERS

Of course, we don't want to give you all of our tips, otherwise you'll never need to buy vegetables from us, but here are some of the most common tips we share while chatting at the market about seedlings or at our seedling sales – neither of which we will be able to do this year!

FROST TOLERANCE

Some plants can handle chilly nights, others can't. Go ahead and plant **Frost Hardy** plants early. But we advise protecting your **Heat Lovers** by bringing them in on chilly nights and waiting to plant them until there are consistently warmer nights. Temperatures below 5 degrees will cause these plants to shut down to protect themselves, so you are no further ahead by planting them. They would be better off in your sunny windowsill!

FROST HARDY CROPS	HEAT LOVING CROPS
- Cabbage	- Cucumber
- Kale	- Eggplant
- Cilantro	- Groundcherry
- Dill	- Basil
- Parsley	- Melons
- Lettuce	- Peppers
- Onions & Green Onion	- Tomatoes
- Peas	- Squash
- Swiss Chard	- Zucchini
- Potatoes	- Tomatillo

HARDENING OFF

When a seedling is started in a greenhouse, it needs to be exposed to direct sunlight and wind in a gradual way. Hardening off is when you bring a plant outside for increasing periods of time over the course of several days, before you transplant. It may seem tedious, but it will help your plant survive this transition! We aim to do the first day of sun exposure towards the end of the day, when the sun's rays are not as strong.

PLANT SPACING

New gardeners are always shocked at how much space a plant needs. A classic mistake is to crowd plants and the consequence is increased competition and poor production. Give your plants the space they need and you'll reap the rewards!

<https://www.apieceofrainbow.com/vegetable-garden-layout-design-ideas/>

PLANT TOMATOES DEEP

Since tomatoes are technically vines, you can bury part of the stem and they will send out lateral roots from the stem. Your seedling has been grown in a tray with 30 other tomato plants so has been reaching for the light. There may be long sections of stem between the leaves. We recommend pinching off the bottom leaf and burying the lower part of the stem. This will stabilize the plant and make it stronger and you won't have to trellis it quite as soon.

SUPPORTING YOUR PLANT

Tomatoes will need a stake, a cage or a string tied to a fixed structure above it. They will otherwise grow along the ground and the fruits will be more susceptible to disease, sitting on the soil.

DETERMINATE vs. INDETERMINATE

Determinate tomato plants grow with more of a bush habit and set their fruits in a more concentrated period of time. Whereas, indeterminate tomato plants grow with a vine habit and set their fruits over a longer period of time. Indeterminate plants have a greater need for trellising.

DAYS TO MATURITY

This refers to the length of time between planting and a ripe harvest. If you don't have as many hours of full sun in your garden, choose a shorter day length variety to ensure that it will still have time to ripen.

PROTECTING YOUR PLANTS (from the elements and from pests)

On the home garden scale, it is wise to protect a newly planted seedling with a cylinder around it (a yogurt container or tin can with the bottom cut out). This will protect it from the wind and from cut-worm.

We use a lot of row cover (a lightweight, synthetic fabric that allows light and water to pass through, but doesn't allow bugs through!) It is very useful for protecting Brassica crops (kale, arugula, radishes, cabbage, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, etc) and potatoes too!