

Vegetables For All Seasons

What Do the Terms “Warm” or “Cool” Season Crops Mean?

“Warm” or “Cold” season crops are common descriptive terms for the types of vegetables and refer to more than the necessary weather conditions for growing them.

Cool Season Crops

A cool season crop is mostly grown for it’s vegetative parts. The roots (carrots), leaves (cabbage), stems, (celery), and immature flowers (broccoli).

The food value of cool season crops is generally higher than that of warm season crops per pound. Their natural planting and harvesting period is in the cool time of the year. However, crops can be grown almost all the year in temperate zones, such as coastal areas. Further inland, as the weather gets warmer beyond their season, they like a little shade until they are ready to harvest, but not recommended to be replanted.

Vegetables for September - March (Cool Season)

Artichokes	Cardoon	Garlic	Potatoes
Asparagus	Carrots (seed)	Kale	Radishes
Beets (seeds)	Cauliflower	Kohlrabi	Rhubarb
Bok choy	Celery	Leeks	Spinach
Broccoli	Chard	Lettuce	Turnips
Brussels Sprouts	Collards	Onions	Asian greens
Cabbage	Fava Beans	Peas	

Warm Season Crops

Setting “fruit” (eggplants, peppers, squash, tomatoes, etc.) is the objective of warm season crops. The crops require soil warmth and short days to germinate, but need long days and higher temperatures to form and ripen fruit.

Early varieties need less total heat than later ones. Late varieties need more heat to mature. The early varieties are good for the home gardener who lives in an area with a short growing season, or for the gardener who wishes to make two plantings.

Vegetables for April - August (Warm Season)

Beans	Melons	Tomatoes
Corn	Peppers	Watermelons
Cucumber	Pumpkins	Strawberries (you can plant all
Eggplant	Squash summer/ winter	year round)

Figuring Out Planting Time

Our area is not subject to prolonged frost or water saturated soil. However, this doesn’t mean that you can plant crops all year round. Warm season crops need warm temperatures, for example. In many cases, you will not speed up your harvest by planting earlier than suggested. Plants grow more slowly in cool weather, so earlier planted vegetables of the same type end up being harvested at the same time as those planted later. For cool season crops planting them early in their season and getting them established will give them optimal growing conditions.