

Seed Starting Calendar

Heirloom Varieties for the Home Gardener

Based on average last spring frost — adjust earlier for warm zones, later for cold

Find your zone: planthardiness.ars.usda.gov • Dates assume Zone 5–7 averages. Move everything earlier or later by ~1 week per zone difference.



Start
Indoors



Direct
Sow



Transplant
Out

July
17

February — Start Indoors (8–10 wks before frost)

SEED	TRANSPLANT	NOTES
Jalapeño Peppers	After last frost	Slow starter — keep warm (78–85°F)
California Wonder Peppers	After last frost	Same heat requirements as jalapeño
Roma Tomatoes	6 wks before last frost	Pinch suckers after first fruit set
Utah Celery	After last frost	Long season — start early, transplant at 4–6"
Long Island Brussels Sprouts	4 wks before last frost	Best in cool fall weather



Tip: Peppers need heat mats. Tomatoes don't. Put peppers on the mat, tomatoes on the shelf above.

July
17

March — Start Indoors (6–8 wks before frost)

SEED	TRANSPLANT	NOTES
Roma Tomatoes	6 wks before last frost	Last call for tomato starts
Large Leaf Basil	After last frost	Wait until soil warms — basil hates cold
Butter Crunch Lettuce	4 wks before last frost	Or direct sow now in mild climates
Crimson Sweet Watermelon	2 wks after last frost	Use peat pots — transplant carefully
Pickling Cucumbers	2 wks after last frost	Last indoor start — otherwise direct sow
Dark Green Zucchini	2 wks after last frost	Big seeds, easy to start. 1–2 per cell

July
17

April — Indoors + Direct Sow (Last Frost Approaching)



START INDOORS (2-4 WKS BEFORE FROST)

SEED	NOTES
Zucchini, Cucumbers	Last indoor call — otherwise direct sow
Red Russian Kale	Or direct sow in Zone 6+
Parsley	Slow starter — good to get a head start
Coriander (Cilantro)	Start fresh — cilantro bolts fast in heat



DIRECT SOW (AFTER LAST FROST)

SEED	NOTES
Provider Green Bush Beans	Soil 60°F+. Direct sow only — hates root disturbance
Sugar Beets / Bulls Blood Beets	Sow 1" deep, thin to 3" apart
Snowball Turnips	Fast grower — ready in 50-60 days
Scarlett Nantes Carrots	Sow ¼" deep in loose soil
Sugar Lace Snap Peas	Can sow 2-4 wks before frost in Zone 5+
Yellow Dent Corn	Plant in blocks for wind pollination

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Seed Starting Calendar

Page 2 of 3 — Spring & Summer Planting

July
17

May — Direct Sow + Transplant (Last Frost Passed)



TRANSPLANT OUT

SEED

NOTES

Roma Tomatoes

Harden off 1 week before planting out

Jalapeño & California Wonder Peppers

Wait until nights stay above 60°F

Utah Celery

Transplant when 4–6" tall, harden off first

Brussels Sprouts, Kale, Basil

After all frost danger has passed



DIRECT SOW

SEED

NOTES

White Bunching Onion

Sow now, harvest fall or overwinter

Catnip

Self-seeds aggressively. One plant is enough.

Luffa Sponge Gourd

Needs trellis and long season. Zone 4+ only.

Jack-o-Lantern Pumpkin

Large seeds. Space 6' apart.

Crimson Sweet Watermelon

Direct sow if not transplanted earlier

July
17

June — Succession Planting (Continuous Harvest)

DIRECT SOW FOR FALL HARVEST

SEED	NOTES
Provider Green Bush Beans	Plant every 2 wks through August for continuous harvest
Sugar Beets / Bulls Blood Beets	Second planting — fall beets are sweeter
Scarlett Nantes Carrots	August–September harvest
Snowball Turnips	Fast second crop — ready in 50–60 days
Coriander (Cilantro)	Spring plants bolted — this is your summer crop
Parsley	Slow but worth it for fall/winter use
Butter Crunch Lettuce	Shade-tolerant — good summer plant
Red Russian Kale	Second planting for fall/winter harvest



Succession planting: Sow beans every 2 weeks from June through early August. Each planting matures ~50 days later, giving you a steady harvest all summer into fall.

July
17

July–August — Fall Garden Planning

SEED	WHEN	NOTES
Red Russian Kale	Early Aug	Overwinters in Zone 5+. Sweetens after frost
Butter Crunch Lettuce	Early Aug	Fall crop tastes better than summer
Sugar Beets / Bulls Blood Beets	Early Aug	Harvest before hard freeze
Snowball Turnips	Mid Aug	Fast — ready before freeze
Scarlett Nantes Carrots	Mid Aug	Leave in ground — they store in the soil
White Bunching Onion	Mid Aug	Overwinters, harvest early spring

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Seed Starting Calendar

Page 3 of 3 — Trees & Quick Reference

Tree Seeds — Year-Round Planning

SEED	PLANT WHEN	NOTES
Japanese Maple	Spring or Fall	Fall preferred. Needs summer shade when young.
Red Cedar	Fall	Plant bare-root in dormant season.
Southern Yew	Spring	Slow grower. Excellent hedge or specimen plant.
Chinese Elm	Spring	Hardy, drought-tolerant once established.

 **Important:** Plant tree seeds where they'll stay permanently. Most don't transplant well once roots establish. Dig deep, water well the first year, and mulch.

Quick Reference — At a Glance

Start Indoors

Roma Tomatoes
Jalapeño Peppers
California Wonder Peppers
Large Leaf Basil
Utah Celery
Long Island Brussels Sprouts
Butter Crunch Lettuce (optional)
Dark Green Zucchini (optional)
Pickling Cucumbers (optional)

Direct Sow

Sugar Beets
Bulls Blood Beets
Snowball Turnips
Scarlett Nantes Carrots
Provider Green Bush Beans
Sugar Lace Snap Peas
Yellow Dent Corn
White Bunching Onion
Catnip, Coriander, Parsley
Red Russian Kale
Pickling Cucumbers
Dark Green Zucchini
Jack-o-Lantern Pumpkin
Crimson Sweet Watermelon
Luffa Sponge Gourd



Key Growing Tips

SEED

CRITICAL TIP

Beans, Peas

Never transplant — sow directly. They hate root disturbance.

Corn

Plant in blocks (3+ rows), not single rows, for wind pollination.

Peppers

Need 78–85°F to germinate. Heat mat is worth every penny.

Carrots, Beets

Thin seedlings aggressively — crowding = tiny harvest.

Cucumbers, Squash

Direct sow is easiest. If transplanting, use peat pots.

Cilantro

Will bolt in heat. Succession sow every 3 weeks for continuous harvest.

Kale

Fall-harvested kale is sweeter. Frost improves the flavor.

Brussels Sprouts

Long season crop (90–100 days). Start early, harvest late.

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