



Year Round Gardening: Monthly Planting and Garden Activities

This monthly planting guide has been developed specifically for school gardens in the Willamette Valley of Oregon. Each month includes planting recommendations, garden tasks, and educational activities that can help educators to utilize on site garden space for educational success throughout the school year.

CROP: the type plant you will be growing. Crop varieties vary greatly and different varieties may be better or worse for certain seasons or locations. Using local seed varieties generally produces better yields in the garden as the seeds will have a genetic predisposition more conducive to your climate.

SOIL TEMPERATURE: is generally taken about 3" beneath the surface of the soil. The temperature is important for germination so planting in the correct range can help to produce better germination and better crop yields.

PLANTING DATE: is a rough estimate of when one can generally plant a certain crop in the Willamette Valley. *(For the best results it is advised to plant based on soil temperature.)*

SPACING: is important to plant health. Certain plants can grow very tightly together while others do not grow or produce well when confined. Different varieties of crops can have different spacing requirements so check your seeds/starts to determine the best amount of space to leave.

DEPTH: is how far beneath the soil you want to plant your seed for proper germination. Usually with students the rule of planting a seed 3x's deeper than its longest end is sufficient.

METHOD: is the recommendation of whether to use seeds or starts. Some crops, such as carrots, will not produce if transplanted so they always need to be planted as seeds. Other crops should be transplanted during some months to get an early start on the season.

TIME SEED TO HARVEST: is the general amount of time (in weeks) that it will take a crop to fully mature from a seed. This time scale can also aide greatly in garden planning. Check individual crop varieties as the plant maturation can vary greatly between different varieties.

GARDEN TASKS: are provided as a quick recommendation of what you can be doing in the garden each month.

ACTIVITIES: can be used monthly for creating educational opportunities with students that utilize your garden space.

www.schoolgardenproject.org



Year Round Gardening: Monthly Planting and Garden Activities

MONTH	CROP	SOIL TEMP.	APPOX. PLANT DATE	SPACING	DEPTH	METHOD	TIME SEED TO HARVEST	NOTES
SEPTEMBER	Arugula	40-75	1st	4"	¼" - ½"	Either	4-8 weeks	For fall harvest
	Broccoli	55-75	1st	15"	N/A	Transplant	24-32 weeks	For mid-winter harvest
	Cabbage	55-75	1 st	15" – 24"	¼"	Transplant	See Variety	For mid-winter harvest.
	Carrots	55-80	1 st	2"-4"	¼" – ½"	Seed	14-28 weeks	For spring harvest
	Cauliflower	55-75	1st	15" – 20"	¼"	Transplant	28-40 weeks	For spring harvest.
	Cilantro	60-75	1 st	4"	1"	Seed	4-12 weeks	Harvest continually through December
	Chard	55-75	1 st	10" – 12"	¾"	transplant	4-8 weeks	Harvest through April.
	Collards	55-75	15 th	12" - 16"	½" – ¾"	Either	8-12 weeks	Harvest through May
	Garlic	40-65	15 th	4"	1"-2"	Seed Cloves		Harvest in July
	Kale	55-75	15 th	8" – 16"	½"	Either	10-12 weeks	For winter/spring harvest
	Kohlrabi	55-75	1 st	4"	¼" – ½"	transplant	8-12 weeks	Harvest late Fall
	Lettuce	40-75	1 st	8"	¼" – ½"	Either	6-8 weeks	For fall harvest. Leaf lettuce recommended for grazing
	Onions	55-75	1 st	3" – 5"	½"	Starts	180+ days	Harvest May-June
Radishes	45-80	1 st	1" – 2"	½"	Seed	4 weeks	For fall harvest. Plant every 2 weeks for continual harvest	

SEPTEMBER GARDEN TASKS :

- Make room for winter crops by harvesting summer crops
- Plant overwintering crops: kale, kohlrabi, purple sprouting broccoli, bright lights Swiss Chard, etc.
- Plant beets radish & lettuce

SEPTEMBER ACTIVITIES:

- Introduce students to the garden by having a scavenger hunt or by doing an art project where they draw what they see
- Look at different Plant Parts and their function. Use this time to try the different things growing in your garden
- Create time to establish the garden as something the students are a part of by planting seeds or starts at the beginning of the year

SGP Curriculum Links: "Scavenger Hunt" (R1F1), "Garden Sketch" (R2F1), "Garden Sensory Tour" (R3F1), "Plant Parts and Function" (R1F2)



Year Round Gardening: Monthly Planting and Garden Activities

MONTH	CROP	SOIL TEMP.	APPOX. PLANT DATE	SPACING	DEPTH	METHOD	TIME SEED TO HARVEST	NOTES
OCTOBER	Australian Field Peas	45-75		Broadcast seed		seed		Fixes Nitrogen
	Arugula	40-75	1st	4"	¼ " - ½ "	Either	4-8 weeks	Use cloche. For fall harvest
	Barley – Cover Crop	55-75	1st	Broadcast seed		seed		Helps control weeds.
	Broccoli (purple sprouting)	55-75	1st	15"	N/A	Transplant	24-32 weeks	Use Cloche. For spring harvest
	Chard	55-75	1 st	10" – 12"	¾ "	transplant	4-8 weeks	Harvest through April.
	Cilantro	60-75	1 st	4"	1"	Seed	4-12 weeks	Harvest continually through December
	Crimson Clover – Cover Crop	60-75	1 st	Broadcast seed		Seed		Fixes Nitrogen
	Fava Beans (belle) Cover Crop	45-75	1 st	2" – 3"	¾ "	seed		Fixes Nitrogen
	Garlic	40-65	15 th	4"	1"-2"	Seed Cloves		Harvest in July
	Lettuce	40-75	1 st	8"	¼ " – ½ "	Either	6-8 weeks	Use Cloche. For fall harvest.
	Onions	55-75	1 st	3" – 5"	½ "	Starts	180+ days	Harvest May-June
	Winter Wheat- Cover Crop	40-75	1 st	Broadcast seed		seeds		Helps control weeds.
Winter Peas- Cover Crop	45-75	1 st	Broadcast seed		seeds		Fixes Nitrogen	

OCTOBER GARDEN TASKS :

- Pull out summer crops as they finish up. Plant Cover Crops (earlier is better)
- Save seeds from the garden for next year.

OCTOBER ACTIVITIES:

- Focus on seeds. Talk about seed dispersal and save seeds from the garden.
- Look at underground plant parts and discuss the difference between annuals and perennials and their differing survival methods

SGP Curriculum Link: "Seed Dispersal" (R1F3), "Seed Saving" (R1F4), "Annuals and Perennials (R2F3), "Underground Plant Parts" (R3F2)



Year Round Gardening: Monthly Planting and Garden Activities

MONTH	CROP	SOIL TEMP.	APPOX. PLANT DATE	SPACING	DEPTH	METHOD	TIME SEED TO HARVEST	NOTES
NOVEMBER	Australian Field Peas	45-74	1 st	Broadcast seed	½"-1"	seed		Fixes Nitrogen
	Barley – Cover Crop	40-75	1 st	Broadcast seed	½"	seed		Helps control weeds.
	Chard	55-75	1 st	10" – 12"	¾ "	transplant	4-8 weeks	Use cloche.
	Crimson Clover – Cover Crop	45-75	1 st	Broadcast seed	¼" - ½"	Seed		Fixes Nitrogen
	Fava Beans (belle) Cover Crop	45-75	1 st	2" – 3"	¾ "	seed		Fixes Nitrogen
	Kale	55-75	1 st	8" – 16"	½"	transplant	10-12 weeks	Use Cloche. For winter/spring harvest
	Lettuce	40-75	1 st	8"	¼ " – ½ "	transplant	6-8 weeks	Use Cloche. For fall harvest.
	Winter Wheat- Cover Crop	40-75	1 st	Broadcast seed	½"	seeds		Helps control weeds.
	Winter Peas- Cover Crop	45-75	1 st	Broadcast seed	½" -1"	seeds		Fixes Nitrogen

NOVEMBER GARDEN TASKS:

- Finish adding compost/leaves to all beds in the garden for the winter
- Turn the compost and add a Nitrogen source
- Turn off watering systems before the first frost. Put away hoses and wrap irrigation lines if necessary.

NOVEMBER ACTIVITIES:

- Focus on Soil: Composition, Building, and Erosion
- Work with the compost to learn about decomposers in the garden
- Have a harvest day with students and make a dish to share
- Look at soil Nutrients, use test kits to learn more about your own garden soil and what it may need for the spring

SGP Curriculum Link: Soil Composition (R1F5), "Soil Building and Compost" (R2F5), "Soil Nutrients and Erosion" (R3F5)



Year Round Gardening: Monthly Planting and Garden Activities

DECEMBER- JANUARY GARDEN TASKS :

- Winter is a great time to have students design and construct any cloches that may cover entire beds
- Make sure that your beds (especially ground beds) are properly protected from any erosion with leaves, mulch or other organic materials
- Utilize this time to do any major cleanup projects around the garden area. Haul away any debris that is too large/woody for the compost, build paths, turn the compost pile to keep it warm and generally make the garden space tidy before it is under heavy use again in the spring.

DECEMBER- JANUARY ACTIVITIES:

- Sprouting experiments indoors are a great way to keep students connected with gardening during the winter months. Try various types of seeds and make predictions as to which ones will grow fastest, biggest, germinate first etc.
- Around the last week of January you can begin starting certain crops indoors to be planted under a cloche in February.
- Begin testing soil temperature as a group- make predictions and create a chart that explains the temperature changes (soil should be tested about 3" beneath the surface). Try different areas of your garden and have students hypothesize why some areas may be warmer/cooler than others.
- Create spring planting calendars or garden maps
- Go on walks through the garden or around the school and have students make observations about the effects of changing weather on the landscape. Have students do a journaling exercise focusing on adjectives to describe their observations.



Year Round Gardening: Monthly Planting and Garden Activities

MONTH	CROP	SOIL TEMP.	APPOX. PLANT DATE	SPACING	DEPTH	METHOD	TIME SEED TO HARVEST	NOTES
FEBRUARY	Beets	50-75	15 th	4" – 6"	½ " - 1"	Seed	8-12 weeks	Start in cloche
	Carrots	55-80	1 st	2"-4"	¼ " – ½ "	Seed	10 weeks	Start in cloche. Thin carrots in mid-April
	Lettuce	40-75	15 th	8"	¼ " – ½ "	Either	6-8 weeks	Start in cloche. Leaf lettuce recommended for grazing
	Mustard Greens	55-75	15 th	8" - 12"	½ "	Either	4-12 weeks	Start in cloche. Harvest continually April- June
	Peas	45-75	15 th	1"	1 " - 1 ½ "	seed	8-10 weeks	Straight seeds. Provide trellis
	Radishes	45-80	1 st	1" – 2"	½ "	Seed	4 weeks	Start in cloche. Plant every 2 weeks for continual harvest

FEBRUARY GARDEN TASKS :

- If using a cloche, you can begin planting beets, carrots, lettuce, radish and mustard greens
- Prune Fruit Trees and Shrubs mid-month
- Turn and begin screening compost for spring use

GARDEN ACTIVITIES:

- Build Cloches, cold frames and greenhouses with students and start seeds
- Construct trellises for peas as a group. Try a few methods
- Begin plant needs experiments with light and temperature

SGP Curriculum Links: "Plant needs and Photosynthesis" (R1S1)



Year Round Gardening: Monthly Planting and Garden Activities

MONTH	CROP	SOIL TEMP.	APPOX. PLANT DATE	SPACING	DEPTH	METHOD	TIME SEED TO HARVEST	NOTES
MARCH	Arugula	40-75	15 th	4"	¼" - ½"	Either	4 weeks	Plant continuously through April. Harvest through June
	Broccoli	55-75	15 th	15"	N/A	Transplant	14 weeks	
	Carrots	55-80	1 st	2"-4"	¼" - ½"	Seed	10 weeks	Thin carrots in mid-April
	Cilantro	60-75	1 st	4"	1"	Seed	4-12 weeks	Plant/Harvest continually April-June
	Collards	55-75	15 th	12" - 16"	½" - ¾"	Either	8-12 weeks	Plant March - July
	Kale	55-75	15 th	8" - 16"	½"	Either	10-12 weeks	For spring/summer harvest
	Leeks	55-75	15 th	6"	¼"	Either	10-12 weeks	Transplants recommended for school gardens
	Lettuce	40-75	15 th	8"	¼" - ½"	Either	6-8 weeks	Leaf lettuce recommended for grazing
	Mustard Greens	55-75	15 th	8" - 12"	½"	Either	4-12 weeks	Harvest continually April-June
	Parsley	55-75	1 st	4"	1"	Either	4-12 weeks	Harvest continually April-June
	Radishes	45-80	1 st	1" - 2"	½"	Seed	4 weeks	Plant every 2 weeks for continual harvest
Spinach	40-75	1 st	3" - 6"	½"	Either	4- 12 weeks	Plant continually April-June	

MARCH GARDEN TASKS :

- Turn in cover-crops before they start to flower
- Uncover beds and add compost as you start to plant. Begin weeding heavily in garden.
- Check soil drainage. Sometimes it is a good idea to cover beds with a cloche to dry them out enough for planting
- Mid- month start tomatoes, peppers, onions and basil indoors for transplanting in late May.
- Can start another round of radishes and peas for later harvest.

MARCH ACTIVITIES:

- Start seed indoors and outdoors make hypothesis regarding growth time and measure plants weekly and make a growth chart
- Talk about decomposers in the compost pile and their needs. This fits really well with a Habitat lesson

SGP Curriculum Links: "Seed Structure and Function" (R2S1), "Garden Habitat" (R1S2)



Year Round Gardening: Monthly Planting and Garden Activities

MONTH	CROP	SOIL TEMP.	APPOX. PLANT DATE	SPACING	DEPTH	METHOD	TIME SEED TO HARVEST	NOTES
APRIL	Amaranth	55-70	1 st	8" – 12"	¼ "	Seed	27-30 weeks	
	Beets	50-75	15 th	4" – 6"	½ " - 1"	Seed	8-12 weeks	Thin beets to one plant in May
	Cabbage	55-75	1 st	15" – 24"	¼ "	Either	See Variety	Transplants recommended for school gardens
	Cauliflower	55-75	15 th	15" – 20"	¼ "	Either	14-19 weeks	Transplants recommended for school gardens
	Celery	60-70	1 st	6"-8"	1/8"	Transplant	15-20 weeks	
	Chard	55-75	1 st	10" – 12"	¾ "	Either	4-8 weeks	grow & being harvest year-round
	Kohlrabi	55-75	1 st	4"	¼ " – ½ "	Either	8-12 weeks	Starts will mature faster
	Lettuce	40-75	Any	8"	¼ " – ½ "	Either	6-8 weeks	Leaf lettuce recommended for grazing
	Oregano	55-75	15 th	10"-12"	¼" – ½"	Either	8-12 weeks	Continual harvest once established
	Peas	45-75	Any	1"	1 " - 1 ½ "	seed	8-10 weeks	Plant again for June harvest. Provide trellis
Turnips	50-70	15 th	2" – 4"	½ "	seed	4-8 weeks	Sow through August for continual harvest	

APRIL GARDEN TASKS :

- Begin Slug and Snail patrol to prevent them from breeding in the garden
- Seed a second round of carrots and radishes for prolonged harvest
- Turn compost and add coffee grounds or other Nitrogen source

APRIL ACTIVITIES:

- Focus on Worms. Try experiments with worm bins, or digging in a 1'x1' area to estimate the number of worms in your garden
- Discuss Organic Gardening and the Environment. Tie in weeds and vegetative propagation discussions. Look at different methods of invasive plant removal and brainstorm ways of reducing Invasive Species as a class.

SGP Curriculum Links: "Worms" (R1S3), "Weeds and Vegetative Propagation" (R2S4)



Year Round Gardening: Monthly Planting and Garden Activities

MONTH	CROP	SOIL TEMP.	APPOX. PLANT DATE	SPACING	DEPTH	METHOD	TIME SEED TO HARVEST	NOTES
MAY	Beans (Bush)	60-85	15 th	4"	1"	Seed	8 weeks	Harvest to keep beans producing. Self pollinating.
	Beans (Pole)	60-85	15 th	4"	1"	Seed	8 weeks	Provide trellis. Harvest to keep beans producing.
	Corn	65-85	15 th	12"	1" – 2"	Seed	9-13 weeks	Plant in minimum of 4 x 4 sections for wind pollination
	Dill	60-75	1 st	12"	1/16 "	Either	8 weeks	Plan with cucumber harvest for pickling
	Eggplant	75-90	15 th	18" – 24"	½ " – 1"	Transplant	8 – 11 weeks	
	Onions	55-75	1 st	3" – 5"	½"	Either	12-13 weeks	Transplants recommended
	Parsnips	55-75	15 th	3"-4"	½"	Seed	20-22 weeks	Harvest in fall
	Peppers	70-90	15 th	18"	¼"	Either	14-15 weeks	Transplant recommended. Start indoors in march.
	Potatoes	65-85	1 st	9"-12"	2"-3"	Root Cutting	20-24 weeks	Require frequent summer care.
	Squash : Summer	65-85	15 th	6"-24"	1"	Either	7-8 weeks	Prefers direct sow plant pollinator attracting flowers.
	Squash: Winter	65-85	15 th	6" -24"	1"	Either	12-15 weeks	Prefers direct sow plant pollinator attracting flowers.
Tomatoes	70-90	15 th	24" – 36"	¼"	Either	8-15 weeks	Transplant recommended. Start indoors in march.	

MAY GARDEN TASKS :

- Check your irrigation system, fix any breaks, and set it up early so it is ready to go when the rain stops
- Make a summer maintenance plan and recruit families/individuals to care for the garden over the summer
- Seed/transplant more arugula, beets, broccoli, carrots, cilantro, kale, kohlrabi, lettuce, onions, radish and spinach for summer harvest

MAY ACTIVITIES:

- Study Flowers and Pollination. Plant pollinator attracting flowers in the garden.
- Look at Insects in the garden and decide whether they are beneficial or non-beneficial

SGP Curriculum Links: "Flowers and Pollination" (R1S4), "Insects" (R2S3)



Year Round Gardening: Monthly Planting and Garden Activities

MONTH	CROP	SOIL TEMP.	APPOX. PLANT DATE	SPACING	DEPTH	METHOD	TIME SEED TO HARVEST	NOTES
JUNE	Basil	70-85	1 st	2"-10"	1/8 "	Either	6 weeks	Check variety for spacing, harvest continually to promote growth
	Cucumber	65-90	15 th	1"-2"	1 ½"	Either	6-8 weeks	Trellis
	Gourds	65-80	1 st	5" – 8"	1 ½"-2"	Either	23-30 weeks	Birdhouse gourds for winter projects.
	Kale	55-75	1 st	18"-24"	¼"-1/2"	Either	14 weeks	Can harvest through April
	Lemon Cucumber	65-75	15 th	1"-2"	1 ½"	Either	6-8 weeks	Trellis
	Pumpkin	65-80	1 st	3"-4"	1"	Either	14-18 weeks	Small Jack-be-little produce well for school gardens
	Rutabaga	55-80	15 th	8"	½"	Seed	18-30 weeks	These can be harvested during the following winter months
	Sunflower	60-75	1 st	12"-18"	½"	Seed	8-14 weeks	Plant edible seed producing varieties
Watermelon	70-85	15 th	2"-4"	½"	Either	12- 18 weeks	Requires deep watering through the summer months	

JUNE GARDEN TASKS :

- Make sure you have all of the summer weeks covered by families or volunteers
- Plant annual flowers to attract pollinators to summer crops
- Plant a last round of carrots for fall harvest (They do very well when planted with tomatoes)
- Plant another round of beans for prolonged harvest

JUNE ACTIVITIES:

- Have a harvest celebration in the garden! Invite volunteers and parents to share in a dish made by your students
- Send summer crops home with students, Have them start seeds at school and take them home for caring over the summer

SGP Curriculum Links: "Nutrition in our Bodies" (R2S5), "Diversity and Colors" (R1S5)



Year Round Gardening: Monthly Planting and Garden Activities

MONTH	CROP	SOIL TEMP.	APPOX. PLANT DATE	SPACING	DEPTH	METHOD	TIME SEED TO HARVEST	NOTES
JULY	Arugula	40-75	15th	4"	¼ " - ½ "	seed	4 weeks	For fall Harvest
	Beans	60-85	15 th	4"	1"	Seed	8 weeks	For fall harvest with students. Self pollinating.
	Broccoli	55-75	1st	15"	N/A	Transplant	14 weeks	For late fall harvest
	Cabbage	55-75	1 st	15" – 24"	¼ "	Either	See Variety	For late fall harvest. (Transplants recommended for school gardens)
	Cauliflower	55-75	15 th	15" – 20"	¼ "	Either	14-19 weeks	For late fall harvest. (Transplants recommended for school gardens)
	Celery	60-70	1 st	6"-8"	1/8"	Transplant	15-20 weeks	For winter harvest
	Chard	55-75	1 st	10" – 12"	¾ "	Either	4-8 weeks	For fall harvest. Chard can continue growing & being harvested year-round
	Corn	65-85	1st	12"	1" – 2"	Seed	9-13 weeks	Last chance for fall harvest.
	Dill	60-75	1 st	12"	1/16 "	Either	8 weeks	Plan with cucumber harvest for pickling
	Kale	55-75	15 th	8" – 16"	½ "	Either	10-12 weeks	For fall/winter harvest
	Leeks	55-75	15th	6"	¼ "	Either	10-12 weeks	For winter harvest. Transplants recommended for school gardens
	Mustard Greens	55-75	1st	8" - 12"	½ "	Either	4-12 weeks	For fall harvest
Peas	45-75	15th	1"	1 " - 1 ½ "	seed	8-10 weeks	For fall harvest. Provide trellis	

JULY GARDEN TASKS :

- Plant crops for fall harvest with students
- Check on watering systems
- Weed and do compost care
- Harvest!



Year Round Gardening: Monthly Planting and Garden Activities

MONTH	CROP	SOIL TEMP.	APPOX. PLANT DATE	SPACING	DEPTH	METHOD	TIME SEED TO HARVEST	NOTES
AUGUST	Spinach	40-75	15 th	3" – 6"	½ "	Either	4- 12 weeks	For fall harvest
AUGUST GARDEN TASKS :								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn compost and screen if ready • Begin planning winter garden planting • Plant winter varieties of Brassicas toward beginning of month 								