

## **June Vegetable Gardening** (published 6/1/2024)

By Earl Hockin, Master Gardener

During June through July and into early August you can directly seed warm season vegetables. These include bush beans, pole beans, lima beans, southern peas, pumpkin, musk melons, okra, sweet corn, winter squash and watermelons. One good strategy is to direct sow in successions to extend the harvest all season long. Read the seed package to see how long it takes for the seeds to germinate and for harvesting. Then sow seeds for each succession crop so that as one planting has been harvested, the next planting will be ready for harvesting. When sowing seeds, think about how many or how much of the crop your family would eat on average in two weeks of that vegetable. For example, how many carrots or bush beans or how much lettuce will you use.

Note that you may want to avoid planting when the crops are most at risk for insect problems. For example, squash vine borers emerge in late June and early July. They lay their eggs at the base of susceptible plants. The eggs hatch in about a week and the larvae bore into the stems to feed for the next four to six weeks. Thus, if you plant squash like zucchini in early April protected by row cover, you may be able to harvest before the moths emerge. Then if you wait to sow a succession crop until mid-July, you can harvest it in the fall.

For some crops, succession planting is done by planting different varieties. For example, some varieties of tomatoes produce in about 50 days after planting whereas others start producing in 70 days. Sow some dill seeds every 2 weeks for a steady supply. Plant bush beans, beets, green onions, and turnips every 2 weeks. Plant carrots and cucumbers every 2 to 3 weeks and summer squash every 4 weeks. You may want to start Brussel sprouts and collard greens indoors for transplanting into the garden in mid-July.

You can still transplant seedlings of tomatoes, eggplant, and peppers. Planting companion plants with them can help in repelling or reducing insect pests. One excellent companion plant for tomatoes is basil as the scent of it repels tomato hornworms and yellow striped armyworm, thus reducing the number of eggs being laid on the tomato plants. Similarly, nasturtiums help repel squash bugs from zucchini and possibly from winter squash varieties also.

A good source of what to plant each month is the Tennessee Home and Fruit Vegetable Garden calendar from the UT extension department [https://uthort.tennessee.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/228/202pole beans, lima bena4/01/W436-2024.pdf](https://uthort.tennessee.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/228/202pole%20beans,%20limabena4/01/W436-2024.pdf)

### **Additional Resources**

“Warm Season Vegetables,”

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1yNe3Yb9E35tLn8xB7\\_N4cQ8K6BPNKFw](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1yNe3Yb9E35tLn8xB7_N4cQ8K6BPNKFw)

“Tomato Diseases,” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fuB\\_mSNZ6tg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fuB_mSNZ6tg)

“NC State Extension Garden Planting Calendar for Annual Vegetables, Fruits, and Herbs in North Carolina,” [https://www.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/NC-Vegetable-Planting-Table\\_2021-accessible.pdf?fwd=no](https://www.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/NC-Vegetable-Planting-Table_2021-accessible.pdf?fwd=no)

“Virginia’s Home Garden Vegetable Planting Guide: Recommended Planting Dates and Amounts to Plant,” [https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs\\_ext\\_vt\\_edu/426/426-331/SPES-170.pdf](https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/426/426-331/SPES-170.pdf)

### **How do I ask a question?**

If you have a question for the Master Gardeners, submit them to us on our website at [www.netmga.net](http://www.netmga.net). Click the link at the top of the page, “ASK A MASTER GARDENER” to send in your question. Questions that are not answered in this column will receive a response from a Master Gardener to the contact information you provide.

*The Master Gardener Program is offered by the University of Tennessee Extension. The purpose of the Master Gardener program is to train people as horticultural-educated volunteers. These volunteers work in partnership with the local Extension office in their counties to expand educational outreach, providing home gardeners with researched-based information.*