

April 15

***FROST-FREE!**

- Veggies: Direct seed more carrots and spinach, endive, scallions, turnips, beets, Swiss chard, potatoes.
- Flowers: sunflowers, poppies, summer bulbs (lilies, glads; canna, daylily, alliums, dahlia).
- Harden off celery, cucumbers, eggplant, peppers, melons, pumpkins, tomatoes, & winter squash so they will be ready to transplant when the soil is warmer. Do not be in a hurry to plant your warm-soil seedlings. Seeds are more sensitive to soil temperature than air, and soil can be colder in April than it is in early November. Planting too early, even if there is no frost, only stunts young plants' growth.
- Transplant all hardened-off hardy seedlings. Plant spring bulbs.
- **Watch the weather!** We sometimes a late freeze can undo all your work. Row cover may look messy, but it is worth keeping it over your tender plants. It will warm the soil faster, keep out hungry birds, & foil the neighbour's cat who may dig up nicely-tilled soil as a WC.

May Weeks 1 -2 *1-3 weeks after last frost

- Veggies: Plant warm season crops like beans, cucumbers, pumpkin, squash, tomatoes. Transplant last of seedlings & direct seed herbs.
- Flowers: transplant last of slow seedlings.

Prepare row cover for carrots and brassica crops and cover mid-May against carrot rust fly and cabbage fly larvae.

- **Watch the weather!** If it is a cool May, do not be afraid to pot-up your hot weather plants, like peppers, melons, and tomatoes one more time, and harden off at the end of May, then transplant. You'll have beautiful strong plants that will set more fruit, set it earlier, and give you a tastier crop right on time.



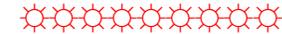
Master Gardeners
Association of BC

Thanks to Harrowsmith Country Life, West Coast Seeds, & Agriculture Canada for ideas, climate data & some text.

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Spring Planting Calendar

A week by Week Guide to Sowing Seeds



**Zone 7b January 21-31 *11 weeks before last frost
*INDOORS!***

- Review seed catalogues to help you plan this year's garden. Order catalogues, but be sure to review shipping charges before ordering.
- Make a rough map of your veggie beds marking last year's crops, so you know where to rotate them. Map your perennial beds, so you can note who grows where -- especially the hidden over-wintered bulbs.
- Check local garden centres and hardware store flyers for gardening supplies – most offer early bird specials.
- Check the number of days until harvest for each crop to decide which seeds you will start indoors. Mark your calendar for seed start dates.
 - Long season crops require an early start. Get out the seed trays!
 - Some plants can be directly seeded closer to frost date, but starting indoors will give you an early, or second crop.
 - Other plants don't like transplanting. These include: beans, peas, carrots, potatoes, corn. Check you catalogues, mark your calendar, so you will direct sow at the appropriate time.
- Many perennials are slow growers producing flowers in year 2, and several are hard to germinate. Seed packets or catalogues will tell you. Buy a couple as year-old plants that will bloom this year, while the seedlings develop. This is a great way to learn about a cultivar.
- Herbs like basil & dill are annuals, but most are hardy perennials. They grow easily from seed and are great border plants, so make a spot for them close to your kitchen where they are easy to harvest. As most are harvested for their leaves, it doesn't matter that they may not give you flowers the first year. Plan your herb beds or borders now.
- Start marigolds, columbine, agastache, & (thru mid Feb), artichokes.

February, Week 1 *9-10 weeks before last frost

INDOORS!

- Veggies: artichoke, leeks, sweet onions, oriental greens, kale & collards, basil, chives, strawberries.
- Flowers: impatiens, violas, pansies, sweet pea.

OUTDOORS: Direct seed broad beans.

February, Weeks 2, 3, 4 *7-8 weeks before last frost

INDOORS!

- Veggies: asparagus, lettuce, early tomato crop, perennial herbs.
- Flowers: begonias, nicotiana, petunias, sweet peas, nasturtiums.

OUTDOORS:

• Veggies: radishes, cilantro, hardy oriental greens all under cover, & a second planting of broad beans. If you have a protected, south-facing corner try planting peas --- but be prepared to re-plant!

- Flowers: hollyhocks, calendula, cone flowers, zinnias.

March, Week 1 *6 weeks before last frost

INDOORS!

- Veggies: broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, celery, peppers, & the first group of lettuces.

OUTDOORS:

• Veggies: radishes, arugula, garlic (unless you've sown it in autumn), corn salad, cilantro, spinach & hardy oriental greens under cover. If you have a protected, south-facing wall, try direct planting peas.

- Flowers: candytuft, cornflower, cosmos, wild flower mix (non-invasive only!), lavender. Harden off or direct-seed marigolds.

Begin to prepare outdoor beds as soon as the ground is workable. Clean out compost bins and spread the compost the compost and manure. This early work also gets all the over-wintered weeds sprouting, so you can easily take them out while young, and before you add your other, faster-working amendments at planting time.

March, Weeks 2 & 3 *4 - 5 weeks before last frost

INDOORS!

- Veggies: mid-season tomato, more basil, lettuces & oriental greens, beets, more brassicas (summer cabbages cauliflower, etc.)

March, Weeks 2 & 3, cont.

- Flowers: snapdragons, hollyhocks, wall flowers, and small-seeded annuals like marigolds, nasturtiums, lavatera and other annuals for hanging baskets. Pot up tomatoes, planting them up to 1st leaves. The buried stalks will grow roots & develop a better root system.
 - Thin crowded flats, keeping only the strongest plants. Keeping weak plants only robs the stronger ones of food and light. If your crop is smaller than you'd hoped, sow again for a late-season harvest.
- OUTDOORS:* direct seed meslcuns (arugula, corn salad, cress, etc.), transplant kale & collard seedlings, or direct seed. Plant more radishes. If you plant parsnips or other late root crops, try interspersing them among the radishes so you get the fast crop and save space while keeping the top soil loose for the slower germinating roots.

March, Week 4 – end *3 - 4 weeks before last frost

INDOORS!

- Veggies: cucumbers, summer squash, pumpkins, melons, more brassicas, more annual or tender herbs (savory, marjoram, dill).
 - Flowers: poppies, rudbeckia, and large-seeded annuals like ageratum.
- OUTDOORS:* begin hardening off your cole crop (broccoli, cabbage, kale, etc.), and snapdragons, violas, parsley. Direct seed peas (snap and shelling) in a warm location.

April Week 1 *2 weeks before last frost

INDOORS!

- Veggies: eggplant, more peppers & the last group of late tomatoes
- Flowers: half-hardy annuals, more sweet peas.

OUTDOORS:

• Veggies: Last of the peas, & corn salad, spinach, endive, carrots, kohlrabi, fennel. Harden off & transplant lettuces and other tender greens.

- Flowers: California poppies, borage, chives, columbine

Prepare beds for their new plants: weed, spread compost and a dusting of complete organic fertilizer. The cool spring soil needs about 2 weeks to integrate amendments. Add a nitrogen-rich fertilizer (like flax meal) around over-wintered leeks, onions, and garlic. This gives a growth boost, and stops bolting or premature flowering. Mark the spots, & dig in bulb fertilizers for your spring-planted bulbs.