



School Garden Guidelines



A collaboration between Plymouth Community Ed & Rec and Nourish

Compost: If not added in the fall, compost should be spread in spring before planting at a depth of 2-3 inches. Even if added in the fall, more compost can be added in the spring.

Mulching: Mulch added near the end of May (before summer) should help ensure adequate moisture retention and weed suppression. Perhaps the best solution would be to lay down several layers of newspaper or cardboard first and then fill in 6-8 inches of straw or leaves on top. This will keep any weed seeds from the mulch from getting in the soil, but still retain a more natural look.

Watering: If the mulch procedure is followed well, it will drastically reduce need for watering. Unless there is a major drought of several weeks, there may not need be any watering. On overhead sprinkler with a timer, going off once a week for an hour, may be a sufficient and reliable alternative to hand watering.

Below is a seeding guideline designed for early spring and fall harvesting, reducing work during the summer. Please always follow the directions on your seed packets. *** = Easiest to grow

Planting Guidelines

Crop	planting type	Plant	Harvest	Reliable Varieties	Notes
Beets***	Direct seed	May-June	Aug-Nov	Red Ace	Gold beets are fun, but can be challenging to germinate. Withstands light frost.
Broccoli	Transplant	May-June	July-Nov	Gypsy, De Cicco for small but prolific side shoots.	Most varieties grow side shoots after the main head is harvested. The side shoots allow for a much longer growing season. If planted in May, by July broccoli will likely need to be regularly harvested. Other option would be plant broccoli in early July for fall harvest. Does well with plenty of mulch.



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Brussels Sprouts***	Transplant	May	Oct-Dec	Diablo	Frost tolerant. Does well with plenty of mulch.
Cabbage***	Transplant	May	Sept	Storage #4, Ruby Perfection, Late flat Dutch, Passat (long season, storage varieties are best for schools)	Can survive light frosts. Does well with plenty of mulch.
Carrots	Direct seed	May-June	Sept-Nov (maybe later depending on season)	Danvers, Mokum, Yaya, Napoli (great for fall sowing), Bolero (longer season, storage), purple haze, White Satin, Yellowbunch (colors are harder to grow, but fun)	Keep soil wet until germination. Avoid seeding too densely, which is hard for little fingers. Can survive frosts but want to harvest before ground freezes.
Cauliflower	Transplant	May	Aug-Oct	Graffiti (purple), Cheddar (orange – fun but short season, would need to plant in middle of summer), Symphony, Skywalker	Choose long season varieties (like 80 days to maturity) to be sure they are harvested after students return in fall. Should be picked before frost. Does well with plenty of mulch.
Dry Beans	Direct seed	May	Oct	Vermont Cranberry, Midnight turtle, Hutterite	Harvest when bean pods are dry.
Garlic***	Direct Seed cloves	Oct	July	Hard neck varieties will produce scapes in June. Soft neck varieties keep a bit longer.	Great for a fall activity, but need to harvest when school is out in July. Can be stored for months. Does well with plenty of mulch.



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Jerusalem Artichoke (aka Sunchoke)	Direct seed tubers	Oct	Aug-Oct	Stampede	Perennial potato like tubers that are native to North America. They are a sunflower, so you get the added benefit of bright yellow blooms and pollinator resources. Can be invasive, so plant where able to spread.
Kale***	Transplant	May	Sept-Dec	Lacinato, Red Russian, Winterbor, Redbor	Frost tolerant. Does well with plenty of mulch.
Kohlrabi (giant/storage)***	Transplant	May	Sept-Oct	Kossack (giant)	Kohlrabi are super kid friendly.
Kohlrabi (small)***	Transplant	Mar-April or late Aug-early Sept	May or Oct-Nov	Quickstar, Early White Vienna	These mature in 35-45 days and could be planted as soon as soil allows in spring to harvest before school lets out or planted as soon as school starts and should produce before the snow flies.
Leeks	Transplant	May	Sept-Oct	Megaton, Tadorna	These are long season leeks that can grow all summer
Melons	Transplant	June	Sept	Choose varieties that mature in 75 days or more.	If given enough water and no frost, well mulched melons can be easy to grow.
Parsley***	Transplant	April	Aug-Nov		Can withstand frosts



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Peppers	Transplant	May	Sept-Oct	King of the North (red), Carmen (red), New Ace (red), Aura (gold), Glow (orange), Jalapeno	Colored peppers are so delicious, and need an entire Wisconsin season to turn colors, so a good choice for schools. Does well with plenty of mulch.
Potatoes***	Direct seed	May	Sept-Nov	Dark Red Norland, Superior, German Butterball, Kennebeck	Can withstand some frosts, but want to harvest well before the ground freezes.
Pumpkins	Transplant	May	Sept-Oct		Does well with plenty of mulch. Harvest before frost.
Radishes***	Direct seed	Mar or Sept	April-May or Oct	Easter Egg (fun, quick growing multicolored)	Quick growers can be grown as soon as soil and weather allows as well as when school starts in the fall.
Rutabagas	Direct Seed	May-June	Sept-Oct	Laurentian	Choose long season varieties like 90 – 95 days. Should be tended in the summer to thin if need be.
Salad Mix / Lettuce***	Direct seed	Mar or Sept	May Oct-Nov	Most are easy to grow.	Lettuce is pretty easy. You can find some very quick growing mixes
Scallions	Transplant	Mar or June	May or Sept		Typically these are about 50 – 60 days, but harvesting can be flexible if willing to harvest larger scallions



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Spinach***	Direct Seed	Mar-April or Sept-Oct	May-June or Oct-Dec	Most are easy to grow.	Spinach can be planted very early and quite late. It withstands hard frosts. If planted in the fall, it will often overwinter to be harvested in Feb-Mar. Varieties typically mature in less than 40 days.
Swiss Chard	Transplant	May	Aug-Nov	Bright Lights	Not as hardy as kale, but a great addition. Does well with plenty of mulch.
Tomatoes	Transplant	May	Sept-Oct	Pink Beauty, Big beef, Celebrity, Sun Gold, Black Cherry	Choose your favorite variety!! Does well with plenty of mulch.
Turnips***	Direct Seed	Aug – early Sept	Oct-Nov	Hakurei	Hakurei turnips are white with a mild taste.
Winter Squash***	Direct seed or Transplant	May	Sept	Waltham butternut, Carnival, Buttercup, Winter Sweet, Orange Kabocha	Does well with plenty of mulch. Harvest before a heavy frost.