General Planting Tips

• Seeds
  • Mark straight rows, shallow furrow – ¼” for small seeds, 1.5 to 2” for large seeds
  • Planting in hill – 6-8” inch high, 4 to 5 seeds, Squash, melons, cucumbers, sweet corn, sunflower
  • Space the seeds uniformly in rows
  • Plant at proper depth (4 times the diameter of the seed)
    • Small seeds – carrots, lettuce – ¼ to ½ inch deep
    • Large seeds – corn, beans, peas – 1 to 2 inch deep
  • Cover the seeds and firm the soil
  • After germination, thin the seedlings
General Planting Tips

• Transplant
  • Schedule planting on cloudy day or in the evening
  • An hour before planting, water the transplant
  • Dig a hole large enough than the transplant container
  • Do not disturb the root ball
  • Plant ½ inch deeper
  • Gently firm the soil around the plant
  • Jiffy pellets, peat pots, soil block – bury the container below the soil line.
  • Water the newly planted crops gently and thoroughly
  • Spread a light mulch – newspaper, rice hull, clean straw
  • Sudden drop in night temperature - floating row cover, baskets, boxes
Succession Planting

• Extend the harvest
• Fast growing vegetables & its varieties – salad greens, bush beans, peas, cucumbers, green onions
• Sow the seeds second or third week after initial planting
Interplanting

- Space efficiency, reduce weed pressure between rows
- Slower growing vegetables like cabbage, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, sweet corn
- Seed fast growing crops between rows – leaf lettuce, arugula, radishes, green onions
Crop specific plant spacing guidelines - Resources

• “Vegetable Gardening in the Midwest” by C.E. Voigt and J.S. Vandemark, University of IL Extension

• http://urbanext.illinois.edu/veggies/directory.cfm

• Cultivar selection:

• Seed packets, transplant tag
Perennial Crop – Asparagus

• Choose male cultivars – Jersey Knight, Jersey Supreme, Jersey Prince, Purple Passion
• Prep the bed – organic matter
• Incorporate fertilizer
• Dig a 6” trench, with 12-18” wide
• Space the crowns 9-12” apart
• Spread the roots with crown centered and facing up
• Fill the trench, water thoroughly
• Do not harvest the spears during first year of planting
• Weed Control – Mulch, shallow cultivation in following spring
Onions

• In Wisconsin – Long day onions
  • Require 14 hours day light for bulb initiation
  • Can be used for immediate consumption or for long-term storage
• Dry Onions – Long-term storage
• Sweet Onions– Immediate consumption
• Green onions – Immature true onions, harvested before the bulbs are formed, 6” tall
• Long day onions three types – white, yellow, and red.
• Large sets (bigger than dime size in diameter) are best for green onions
• Small sets are ideal for bulb formation.
• At the time of planting, moisten the roots to give a head start.
• Well drained, loose soil is needed. Best in raised beds. Work out the soil, add organic matter, fertilizer.
• For dry onions – Plant the sets 1” deep, with 4” spacing between sets. Allow 12-18” spacing between rows.
• For green onions – 1.5” deep, and 1” spacing
• Mulch can be used for smothering weeds.
• In windy areas, protect the young onions from strong wind.
Potatoes

- Planted in May, can withstand light frost in spring.
- White skinned, red skinned, russets, and yellow fleshed types.
- Russet Burbank – For commercial production variety
- Yukon gold – Popular yellow fleshed variety
- B-size seed-small tubers weighs 1½-2 oz. These tubers should not be cut before planting.
- Larger tubers or 4-6 ounces in size should be cut before planting.
  - Each seed piece should have two or more eyes, at least 1” height and width
  - Cut 5-10 days prior to planting, store at normal room temperature
Planting

• Well drained soil is important. Add organic matter to improve the clayey soil structure.
• Shallow trench of 3-4” deep and plant the seed pieces about 10-12” apart, row spacing 24-36” wide.
• First hilling - when plants are 6” tall,
• Last hilling when plant is 15” tall, the last ridges should be 4-6” tall.
• Irrigate the crop in summer
Tomato – Determinate vs. Indeterminate

- **Determinate**
  - 3-4 ft. tall
  - Plant ends in flower bud

- **Indeterminate**
  - 7-15 ft. tall
  - Plant “never ends,” remains vegetative
  - Forms flowers in leaf axils
  - Cherry and pear tomatoes

- **Semi determinate**
  - Relatively compact than indeterminate but produces till first frost

- One plant can produce 10-50 lbs. fruit per season
Transplanting

- Indeterminate varieties spacing – 4’ between plants and row
- Determinate varieties spacing – 3’ between plants, 4’ between row
- Dig holes large enough for all roots, deep enough to come just below the true leaves
- Pinch off the bottom one or two sets of leaves close to the soil surface
- Leggy plants can be laid on side with top above ground level
- Spread a light mulch around the base
Growing Season

• Water well and evenly.
  • Soaker hose best, not overhead.
  • Early morning so plant leaves dry, preventing disease.

• Mulch in mid- to late-June to about 2-4” deep
  • Straw, rice hulls, leaves, newspaper (not colored portions).

• Stake, trellis or cage
• Indeterminate, trellis, stake – prune suckers
Pumpkins

• Plant by end of May or first of June where soil temperature is 65-70°F

• Vining pumpkins:
  • Plant seeds 1” deep (4-5 seeds per hill)
  • Allow 5-6 ft. between hill and row spacing 10-15 ft. apart
  • During young stage, thin to 2 or 3 plants per hill

• Semi-bush varieties:
  • 4 feet between hill and 8 feet row spacing, thin to 2 plants per hill

• Miniatures:
  • Plant 2 or 3 seeds per hill, thin to one plant per hill
  • Hill spacing – 2 ft. apart and 6-8 ft. between rows
• Bees are essential for pollination.
• Cross pollination – pumpkin, squash & gourds, does not affect the current crop
• Irrigate – shallow root, mulching helps.
• First flowers of pumpkins are male flowers.
• Female flowers have a swollen base.
Cucumbers

• Slicing, compact, pickling, novelty
• Warm soil for germination and growth
• Direct seeding - hill system, row planting
• Sow the seeds ½ to 1 inch deep and thin one plant per 12 inch
• 3 plants in hill about 3’ apart
• Transplant – don’t get large size plants, 12” apart spacing
• Shallow rooted – water the base, don’t stress during its fruiting stage
• Cucumbers do not cross pollinate with melons
Peppers

- Warm season crop, slow to grow and mature
- Sweet peppers - banana, bell, cherry and pimiento
- Hot peppers - ancho, chili, habanero, jalapeño, hot banana and serrano
- Raised bed, black plastic mulch bed are best
- Night temperature above 55 F
- Transplant spacing – 18 to 24” apart in row or 14 to 18” in all direction in beds
- Avoid frequent light watering
Sweet Potato

• Beauregard, centennial
• Well drained soil, warm soil temperature
• Raised bed, mounded beds with black plastic mulch
• Plant slips after frost
• Soak the slips for an hour before planting
• Plant spacing – 2 -3’ apart and 5’ between row
• Plant slips 10” deep in raised beds or 8” high ridged hills
• Water thoroughly after planting
Garden Pests & Growing Tips

• go.wisc.edu/planthealthadvising

• Call: 608-298-6945

• Email: planthealth.advisors@extension.wisc.edu

• Walk-in Diagnosis PHA Locations (Hours vary by location, call or email prior to visit):
  • Kenosha County: Extension Kenosha County, Kenosha County Center, 19600-75th Street, Suite 2, Bristol, WI 53104
  • Milwaukee County: Boerner Botanical Garden, 9400 Boerner Drive, Hales Corners, WI 53130
  • Racine County: Racine County Ives Grove Offices 14200 Washington Avenue Sturtevant, WI 53177