



## Fall & Winter Vegetable Gardening

By Shilo Neilson

Wondering what to do with the bare ground or empty beds when the summer veggies have succumbed to winter's bite? Plant a winter garden, of course! Many vegetables that have a short season in the spring will hop along quite nicely all winter. Some may harvest during the cold, others will be storing up for an early spring bounty.

### Veggies to plant from seed in October/November for early spring harvest:

- Spinach
- Peas
- Fava Beans
- Chives (these are perennial, so select a site accordingly)
- Onions (seeds early or sets in late fall for summer harvest)
- Garlic (cloves) (for summer harvest)



### Seed these veggies from the end of August through mid-November for winter harvest:



- Lettuce
- Asian greens
- Turnips
- Carrots
- Broccoli (plant if after Oct)
- Cabbage (plant if after Oct)
- Radishes (these mature so fast you can plant almost any time)



And if you don't feel like planting from seed, we have starts available (though root crops are best done from seed).

### To confuse pests and disease, try the scattered method for planting:

Start with a few bamboo poles or tomato cages in the center of an area. Plant peas and favas next to these. Crowd them in, peas can take it. Surround that with carrots and turnips. These will be harvested before the peas.

Broadcast broccoli and cabbage seeds randomly in an area. Follow with lettuce and spinach. Lettuce will come out earlier, leaving room for the larger veggies to mature. Asian greens and spinach can be broadcast together and harvested for an extended amount of time.

Toss in a few pansy or Johnny Jump-up seeds (the flowers are edible) and get back! An explosion of gastronomic delights awaits!

### Before you plant

Make sure to clean out old plant material that is not decomposed (twigs, large roots, rotten fruit, etc.) Add new **organic material!** This is **the single most important** step. If you have home compost that is well done (looks like dirt, smells good, no recognizable pieces) that is fine. If you

don't, Super Organic Mix from the Nursery is ideal for bulk needs or Soil Building Compost (SBC) in the bag (3cf). Spread a 2 inch layer on top of the old planting area. Don't worry about tilling, that should really be done once, when an



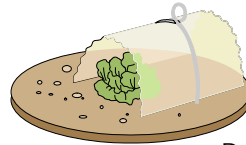
area of ground is first prepared. Once a good planting ground is established, tilling does more harm than good by destroying good fungi (including Mycorrhizae, a beneficial bacteria), earthworms, and other beneficial soil microbes. We also have Gardner & Bloome Planting Mix in bags or bulk soil for your raised beds. If there seems to be a lot of old weed or weed seeds in this area, put down a layer of newspaper or cardboard under the new compost. This will act as a temporary weed cloth until your seeds get established. It will eventually break down and improve the soil.



Add a light dressing of an organic fertilizer such as Dr. Earth Tomato and Vegetable or Dr. Earth Fruit Tree (has a little more nitrogen for greens), or composted Llama manure. Mix this in with your top layer of compost/planting mix. This mix should sustain your winter garden well up until early spring harvest. Some veggies, like leafy greens, may need another application of fertilizer.

### Planting

Larger seeds like peas and favas need to be poked into the soil. Smaller seeds can be broadcast. Only do one type of seed at a time or the heavier ones will clump in one area (the back) while the lighter ones won't get as far.



Cover the area with a floating row cover (such as Remay). You can make a cold frame out of bamboo stakes, sticks, PVC, or whatever you have lying around. I have used tomato cages set on their side, just to keep the Remay off the seedlings. Stake the remay down around the edges with metal jute staples or the like. This keeps bugs and varmints from getting in and eating your seedlings. It also keeps it just a little warmer, but still allows air and rain through. Keep this on until the plants become too big. Or, ideally, don't take it off at all until spring. I have harvested lettuce under this system for months. Just pick up the fabric, harvest, and put it back down. Keep the soil moist until the rains take over.

This really is the easiest season of veggie gardening. There is almost no weeding or watering, just check every few days to see what is ready to eat. Get ready to be the envy of everyone in the spring when your bounty of peas comes in just as your friends are starting to get garden fever.



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*Bon Appetit!*

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