

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a carrot in a garden. The hand is positioned at the top right, with fingers gripping the green leafy top of the carrot. The carrot is orange and has some soil on it. In the foreground, there are several heads of green lettuce. The ground is covered with brown autumn leaves. The background is a dense field of green carrot tops. A white crosshair graphic is overlaid on the image, with a circle centered on the hand.

FALL HARVEST PLANTING

As we transition from summer to fall, think about the opportunity this season offers to gardeners. Mid-summer is the perfect time to start planting for an autumn harvest.

THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE YOU GET STARTED



Know your region's average first frost date.

- This will help you figure out when to plant so your vegetables will reach full maturity before they may be damaged by the cold weather.
- Or, strategically plant various cool-season crops that thrive in fall's cooler temperatures later in the season.



Consider the days to maturity for different vegetable varieties.



Prepare your soil with organic matter and maintain optimal moisture levels.

Consider growing your plants in containers or raised beds, as direct ground planting needs well-drained soil.

- If you want to opt out of containers or raised beds, consider a crop rotation plan to help increase soil health.



HARVESTING IN FALL

When planting in late summer for a fall harvest, remember which plants can handle the cooler temperatures and shorter daylight hours.

SUITABLE CROPS FOR FALL HARVEST

- **Leafy Greens**

- Spinach
- Kale
- Lettuce

- **Root vegetables**

- Carrots
- Radishes
- Beets.

- **Garlic and onions for a late season harvest**



EFFICIENT HARVESTING TECHNIQUES



Efficient harvesting techniques are not just a routine; they maximize the yield and quality of produce. By harvesting at the right time, you ensure peak tenderness and flavor.

Understanding the signs of ripeness for different vegetables and being aware of frost dates are key factors for efficient fall harvesting.

- Regularly check the crops for ripeness, using appropriate tools such as sharp knives and pruning shears.
- Avoiding wet conditions during harvesting preserves the quality of the produce and encourages a larger yield.
- You can harvest leafy vegetables like Swiss chard, kale and mustard greens before the leaves reach full size.
- After harvesting a late-maturing crop, you can plant garlic in that space.