



2021 Seed Starting Plan

Good Morning!

This plan is customized for Second Breakfast Gardens and my hopes for this year. Please use a model for creating your own plan or in any way that is helpful to you.

USDA Hardiness Zone: 8b

Garden Jargon Glossary

- **Annuals:** Plants that complete their life cycle in one year.
- **Biennials:** Plants that complete their life cycle in two years.
- **Perennials:** Plants that live 2+ years.
- **Direct Sow:** To plant a seed in a garden bed outside.
- **Start:** To plant a seed in sterile potting medium indoors.
- **Transplant:** Plant a start outside.
- **Cold Stratify:** Expose seeds to cold and moisture for a period of time.

January

Cold stratify these perennial flowers: mallow, echinacea, feverfew, artichoke

February

(Second half of the month.)

Start Seeds Indoors:

These take longer to germinate and need a little more time to grow before being transplanted and benefit from a February head start.

Garden Veggies:

- Broccoli (Double check your seed packet, there is a lot of variety with broccoli and some are more cold hardy / heat tolerant than others.)

- Peppers
- Chard
- Onions (shallots)

Herb for my Tea Garden:

- Roman Chamomile - Perennial (This is my first time growing--so excited!)

Direct Sow:

Some people start their peas outside in February, but I've had better success waiting until March.

March

Start Seeds Indoors:

Herbs for my Tea Garden:

- German Chamomile - Annual (I have more success starting indoors than direct sowing.)
- Marshmallow - Perennial
- Bee Balm - Perennial
- Echinacea - Perennial
- Feverfew - Biennial - This herb is purported to be helpful for headaches.
- Holy Basil - Annual (Heat loving - sow last)

Garden Veggies:

- Kale
- Arugula
- Leaf Lettuce (I like to both start seeds and direct sow lettuces.)
- Cauliflower

Culinary Garden Herbs:

- Cilantro
- Parsley

Garden Flowers: Sweet Alyssum (for beauty and pollinator support)

Direct Sow: (second half of March)

- Peas
- Carrots
- Beets
- Potatoes
- Sweet Pea (Flowers for pollinators, beauty, and fragrance)
- Calendula (Broadcast in fruit tree guilds.)

April

Start Seeds Indoors:

Culinary Garden Herbs:

- Shisho
- Basil

Garden Fruits:

- Sugar Pie Pumpkin
- Tomatillo
- Lemon Cucumbers
- Zucchini

Tip for cucurbit family (squash, cucumber, melons):

These plants have very sensitive, yet vigorous root systems. For best results, sow in a newspaper pot, then up-pot into a larger plantable pot as soon as the roots poke through. Then plant the whole pot in the garden bed. This enables the roots to penetrate the pot into the surrounding soil with minimal disturbance to their delicate root hairs.

Direct Sow:

Garden Veggies:

- Spinach
- Leaf Lettuces
- Nasturtiums
- Pole Beans (I always get suckered in by a warm weekend. If they survive the slugs and cool nights, they do amazing, but usually I need to re-sow in May.)

Summer Cover Crop:

- Buckwheat (For SBG 3 bed. This bed has become unproductive due to a suspected soil pest overburden. I'm putting this bed on a 3 year rest with no summer irrigation.)
- Crimson clover for any planting area not under current cultivation.

Transplanting:

Begin hardening off cool tolerant crops: All February and March starts (except peppers). Transplant during this month. Look for a cloudy, mild day. Refresh slug traps. Keep moist. Monitor weather for cold spells.

May

Direct Sow:

- Pole Bean

Transplanting:

Begin hardening off peppers and April starts. Transplant on a mild day. Refresh slug traps. Keep moist. Monitor for cold spells and heavy rain.

Plants to Buy from Nursery or Farmer's Market

The following plants are difficult to start and home, and I need only one each so it makes sense to buy from a local grower. Plus, it gives me a reason to visit and talk with other growers.

- Lemon Grass
- Sorrell
- Passion Flower (I REALLY want one of these.)
- Replacements for failures. (It's inevitable.)
- Whatever else strikes my fancy. There's always room for one more!

July & August

Start Seeds Indoors:

What? Starting seeds in July? Yep. The garden is usually full with a bonanza of plants. But in the dog days of summer we can start our fall veggies indoors then transplant as space opens up for a fall harvest. This year I want to try:

- Cilantro (I cannot get cilantro to germinate outside because it is so dry.)
- Spinach
- Broccoli (Fall variety)
- Cabbage

September - November

Direct Sow:

- Fall Cover Crop
- [Garlic](#) - My favorite is the hardneck garlic. They produce a curly scape in late spring which can be cut and prepared and eaten as you would with asparagus spears or diced and used a mild garlic. If you leave it to form bulbettes, your garlic root will be smaller.

In November, I put things to bed for the season, with leaves, compost, and cover crop. My Edible Stories Market Garden friends are able to grow spinach, mustard greens, cilantro, broccoli, cabbage throughout the winter in their hoop houses. The slug pressure can be pretty intense though.

What what?! What about tomatoes? When are you planting your tomatoes?

No, you didn't miss anything. I'm not growing them this year. They take up 2' square for each in my beds, and I am the only tomato lover in my family. After I've had my fill, I push them to my friends and neighbors who are also avid tomato growers. When I'm on top of things, I make special runs to the Food Bank to donate and when I'm not they rot on the vine. However, if you'd like my opinion for dates, I normally **start tomatoes indoors in late March and early April**. I plan for up-potting at least once before **transplanting out in May**. I have more luck with small cherry tomatoes, and less with slicers, but other growers do very well with slicing tomatoes in 8b. (When I learn their secrets, I will share with you dear friend.)

Good luck to you my friend. Happy planting!

For Further Reading:

OSU Extension Guide: [Fall and Winter Vegetable Gardening in the Pacific Northwest](#)
OSU [Growing Your Own Guide](#) (PDF)