

## FALL GARDEN

Were you too busy this spring to get your garden planted? Or did the hot weather sneak up on you too quickly this spring? Did your garden get hailed out in this summer's storms? Maybe your garden has done well and you are looking to prolong the growing season. Whatever the case, planting a fall garden can keep you from hitting the produce aisle at the grocery store for a few more months. Below you will find a list of Texas Panhandle friendly fall garden plants. Seeds for fall gardens can be found at your local garden center.

<u>Garden Plants</u>	<u>Fall Garden Dates</u>
Snap and Pole Beans	July 15 <sup>th</sup>
Beets	August 15 <sup>th</sup>
Broccoli	July 15 <sup>th</sup>
Carrots	July 15 <sup>th</sup>
Sweet Corn	July 15 <sup>th</sup>
Lettuce	September 1 <sup>st</sup>
Radish	September 1 <sup>st</sup>
Spinach	August 15 <sup>th</sup>
Summer Squash	August 1 <sup>st</sup>
Cabbage	July 15 <sup>th</sup>



When establishing vegetables during the late summer there are several techniques that can make your garden more successful. Using a lightweight shade cloth, 1 to 2 feet above the ground, will help keep the soil and air temperature cool around plants during the heat of the late summer. Mulches such as shredded paper, wood chips, straw or grass clippings can also be used to keep the soil temperature cool as well. This is particularly important for cooler season vegetables like beets, broccoli, carrots, lettuce, radish, cabbage, and spinach that may have a harder time establishing in the summer heat.

As we transition into fall, the cold weather will become the biggest challenge fall gardeners face. In an average year, the first light frost will usually occur in mid- to late October, although some years the first frost occurs sometime in November. A light frost, where the low temperature dips down to 30-32 degrees, will not damage fall vegetables. The cold may even improve the color and flavor of the vegetables like broccoli and spinach. Most fall vegetables will tolerate temperatures down to 28 degrees without significant damage. In fact, allowing exposure to below-freezing temperatures will often allow the plants to better adapt to the cold, increasing their hardiness to later cold weather. When low temperatures dip below the mid-to upper 20s, it will be necessary to protect semi-hardy fall vegetables with a light row cover to minimize damage on those vegetables. Some particularly hardy vegetables, such as spinach, will not need extra protection until the low temperature is near 20 degrees. Happy gardening.

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