

Garden Layouts for Mecklenburg County, NC

Cool-Season Annual Vegetables, Fruits, & Herbs

Spring into Gardening!

Here in the southern Piedmont of North Carolina, we are lucky to have 3 growing seasons - spring, summer, and fall. Most vegetables are annuals that complete their life-cycle in a single growing season. Some thrive and grow to maturity in cooler temperatures (cool-season vegetables), others prefer the heat of summer (warm-season vegetables), and a few are perennial continuing to grow and produce year after year. The two garden layouts provided here are grids where **each square = 1 ft²**. These designs are for a **4' by 10' raised bed with a depth of 8" or more**, suitable for school and community gardens or back yards. The edibles in the two spring-planted gardens are easy-to-grow IF bed is properly located with at least 6 hours of direct sunlight per day and access to a reliable water source. Fill with a high quality garden blend and add finished compost annually to replenish nutrients. Place taller crops on north and west sides; install supports while plants are small to avoid damaging feeder roots.

The edibles included in the garden layouts for **early spring planting** are listed below; perennials can remain in garden from season to season. A few specific varieties that are favorites from the Mecklenburg Extension Master Gardener Independence Park Demonstration Garden are also provided.

Depending on their growth requirements, edible plants get their start in the outdoor garden as:

- Seeds (S) – direct sow seeds outside
- Bulbs (B) – plant bulbs outside
- Transplants (T) – start seeds indoors 4-6 weeks before time to transplant outdoors or purchase transplants (AKA starts or sets)
- Plants (P) – purchase plants (often advisable for certain perennials)

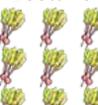
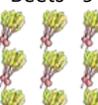
- ❑ **Arugula (S)** – also called rocket or roquette offers delicious peppery leaves for cut-and-come-again harvest (cut the leaves and new leaves grow back)
- ❑ **Beets (S)** – try 'Bulls Blood' with purple-red leaves and heart-shaped roots, 'Early Wonder' with tasty greens and flavorful red roots, or 'Golden Detroit' with sunset yellow roots and succulent green leaves
- ❑ **Broccoli (T)** – try 'Di Ciccio' a tasty Italian variety or 'Belstar' adapted for hardy spring production
- ❑ **Carrots (S)** – try 'Scarlet Nantes' with sweet mild flavor and deep orange color, 'Cosmic Purple' with deep orange flesh surrounded by purple skin, or 'Little Finger' a quick-developing, sweet, bright orange 3" baby carrot
- ❑ **Cauliflower (S, T)** – try 'Snowball Self-Blanching' with self-wrapping leaves, 'Graffiti' a flashy purple, or 'Cheddar' a beautiful, early, orange cauliflower
- ❑ **Chinese cabbage (S, T)** – includes mild, sweet Pak Choi/Bok Choy and crispy, crunchy Napa cabbage; try fast-to-mature 'Joi Choi', 'Toy Choi' with 4-5" crisp white stalks and tender green leaves, or Napa varieties 'Minuet' and 'Bilko' both with sweet flavor
- ❑ **Chives (S, T)** – perennial 8-12" clumps of slender green leaves with stems topped with edible purple to pink flowers
- ❑ **Cilantro/Coriander (S)** – citrusy, fresh herb with leaves harvested before flowering (seeds are coriander); try 'Slo-Bolting' with great cilantro flavor or terrifically prolific 'Calypto'
- ❑ **Kale (S, T)** – try 'Lacinato' or 'Dinosaur Kale' with great flavor and texture, 'Red Russian' with beautiful reddish purple stems, or 'Vates, Dwarf Blue Curled Scotch' with crinkled leaves that make good kale chips
- ❑ **Kohlrabi (S, T)** – harvest by cutting tap root at soil line just below bulb when bulbs are under 3"; try 'Purple Vienna' with purple-skinned bulbs with greenish-white flesh or 'White Vienna' with light green globes
- ❑ **Lettuce (S)** – harvest above growth point for cut-and-come-again production or at soil line for single harvest; try 'Rouge de Hiver' a romaine type with buttery texture and deep-red outer leaves, 'Buttercrunch' with crunchy leaves, 'Freckles' a romaine lettuce splattered with red, 'Black-Seeded Simpson' a dependable grower in a variety of growing conditions, or 'Red Sails' with tasty ruffled leaves of burgundy red
- ❑ **Mache or Dutch Corn Salad (S)** – oval green leaves form small rosettes with mild flavor; these soft and tender greens are excellent in salads
- ❑ **Mizuna (S)** – harvest above growth point for cut-and-come-again production; mildly spicy, serrated leaves are bright green with white ribs
- ❑ **Onions, green (S, T)** – plant close together in clumps and harvest by pulling entire clump when greens are diameter of a pencil; try 'Evergreen Bunching Nebuka' with delicious flavor or 'Crimson Forest' with small purplish-red bulbs
- ❑ **Oregano (P)** – quick-spreading, evergreen perennial herb with aromatic delicious leaves that accompany many favorite dishes
- ❑ **Parsley (S, T)** – this biennial herb can be harvested for 2 growing seasons before plant bolts: try 'Italian Flat Leaf' preferred by chefs, 'Triple Moss Curled' with peppery leaves, or 'Forest Green' with curly dark green leaves
- ❑ **Peas, Shelling (S)** – also called garden or English peas; try 'Wando' a good southern producer or 'Little Marvel' a dwarf plant (only 15-20" but still needs some support) with early, steady production
- ❑ **Peas, Snap/Snow (S)** – provide a trellis for support and harvest when pods are tender and peas are immature; try 'Dwarf Grey Sugar' a tasty snow pea with purple blossoms or for snap peas try 'Sugar Snap' a crunchy, sweet treat or 'Sugar Daddy' a stringless compact snap pea with succulent pods
- ❑ **Radishes (S)** – good for beginning gardeners; try 'French Breakfast' a mild flavored, fast growing red root with white tips or 'Easter Egg Mix' with red, purple, and white radishes
- ❑ **Sage (P)** – savory perennial herb with flavorful, silvery evergreen foliage
- ❑ **Spinach (S)** – spring plantings are quick to flower and go to seed so plant early; try 'Bloomsdale Long Standing' a reliable, heavy-yielding spinach or 'Nobel Giant' with giant, tender leaves great for eating raw
- ❑ **Strawberries (P)** – plant these perennials when average temps are 40-50°F and protect open blossoms below 31°F; try 'Galletta' a vigorous June-bearing variety, 'Albion' an ever-bearing type, or 'Seascape' a high-yielding plant good for any garden soil
- ❑ **Swiss Chard (S, T)** – try 'Ruby Red' a beautiful, tasty addition to any garden or 'Rainbow' with ribs in shades of red, orange, pink, yellow, and white
- ❑ **Tatsoi (S)** – rosettes of deep green spoon-shaped leaves on narrow white stems; harvest above growth point for cut-and-come-again production
- ❑ **Thyme (P)** – evergreen perennial herb with many culinary uses for the aromatic leaves and a lovely garden addition
- ❑ **Turnips (S)** – perfect in stews or harvest baby turnips to eat fresh; try 'Golden Globe' with a sweet mild flavor, 'Purple Top White Globe' with purple skin above the soil and white skin below, or 'Scarlet Ohno Revival' with hot pink skin and crisp white inside

Central NC Planting Calendar for Annual Vegetables, Fruits, and Herbs:
<http://content.ces.ncsu.edu/central-north-carolina-planting-calendar-for-annual-vegetables-fruits-and-herbs.pdf>

Spring Garden #1 - Sensational Spring Salads and Slaws

Parsley - 2 	Carrots -16 	Broccoli - 1 	Green Onions - 9 
Carrots -16 	Carrots -16 	Broccoli - 1 	Broccoli - 1 
Spinach - 9 	Spinach - 9 	Broccoli - 1 	Broccoli - 1 
Strawberry - 1 	Spinach - 9 	Swiss Chard - 2 	Broccoli - 1 
Strawberry - 1 	Swiss Chard - 2 	Swiss Chard - 2 	Peas, Snap or Snow - 9-16 
Strawberry - 1 	Lettuce -16 	Napa Cabbage - 1 	Kale -2 
Strawberry - 1 	Lettuce -16 	Napa Cabbage - 1 	Kale -2 
Strawberry - 1 	Lettuce -16 	Napa Cabbage - 1 	Kale -2 
Radishes -16 	Radishes -16 	Mizuna - 9 	Arugula -16 
Chives - 1 	Radishes -16 	Mache -16 	Tatsoi - 9 

Spring Garden #2 - Savory Soups, Stir-Fries, and Snacks

Parsley - 2 	Carrots -16 	Carrots -16 	Cilantro - 9 
Thyme - 2 	Spinach - 9 	Spinach - 9 	Peas, Snap or Snow - 9-16 
Turnips - 9 	Kohlrabi - 4 	Kohlrabi - 4 	Peas, Shelling - 9-16 
Turnips - 9 	Sage - 1 	Sage - 1 	Pak Choi - 3 
Turnips - 9 	Kale -2 	Kale -2 	Pak Choi - 3 
Beets - 9 	Cauliflower - 1 	Broccoli - 1 	Pak Choi - 3 
Beets - 9 	Cauliflower - 1 	Broccoli - 1 	Kale -2 
Beets - 9 	Cauliflower - 1 	Broccoli - 1 	Kale -2 
Oregano - 1 	Cauliflower - 1 	Broccoli - 1 	Green Onions - 9 
Chives - 1 	Cauliflower - 1 	Broccoli - 1 	Green Onions - 9 

 <p>State University A&T State University COOPERATIVE EXTENSION Empowering People • Providing Solutions</p>	<p>1418 Armory Drive; Charlotte, NC 28204-2420 Office Hours: 8-5 Mon-Fri</p>	<p>Mecklenburg County Center Phone: 704-336-2082 FAX: 704-336-6876 Website: http://mecklenburg.ces.ncsu.edu/</p>	