

Garden Layouts for Mecklenburg County, NC

Cool-Season 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 garden site needs at least 6-8 hours of direct sunlight per day and access to a reliable water source. Fill beds with a high-quality garden blend and add finished compost annually to replenish nutrients. A trellis on the north side of the bed as indicated on layouts is useful for supporting tall vining crops; install any other supports while plants are small to avoid damaging feeder roots.

As listed below, each of the two garden layouts offers suggested crops for late winter/early spring planting. Other suitable cool-season choices are available; each gardener must decide on the quantities and varieties of crops best for them to grow. A few specific varieties that are Mecklenburg Extension Master Gardener favorites are also provided in the list.

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

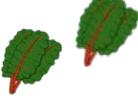
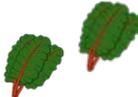
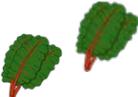
- Seeds (S) – direct sow seeds outside
- Bulbs (B) – plant bulbs outside
- Transplants (T) – start seeds indoors 4-6 weeks before time to transplant outdoors or purchase transplants (also called starts or sets)
- Plants (P) – purchase plants (often advisable for certain perennials including herbs)

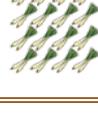
- Arugula (S)** – also called rocket or roquette offers delicious peppery leaves for cut-and-come-again harvest (cut the leaves and new leaves grow back)
- Beets (S)** – try ‘Bulls Blood’ with purple-red leaves and heart-shaped roots or ‘Early Wonder’ with tasty greens and roots
- Broccoli (T)** – try ‘Di Ciccio’ a tasty Italian variety or ‘Belstar’ adapted for hardy spring production
- Carrots (S)** – try ‘Scarlet Nantes’ with sweet mild flavor; ‘Cosmic Purple’ with purple skin; or ‘Little Finger’ a sweet, 3" baby carrot
- Cauliflower (S, T)** – try ‘Snowball Self-Blanching’ with self-wrapping leaves, ‘Graffiti’ a flashy purple, or orange ‘Cheddar’
- Chinese cabbage (S, T)** – includes mild, sweet Pak Choi/Bok Choy and crispy Napa cabbage; try fast-to-mature ‘Joi Choi,’ ‘Toy Choi,’ 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’
- Kale (S, T)** – try ‘Red Russian’ with red-purple stems, or ‘Vates, Dwarf Blue Curled Scotch’ with crinkled leaves good for kale chips
- Kohlrabi (S, T)** – to harvest cut tap root at soil line just below bulb when bulbs are under 3"; try ‘Purple Vienna’ or ‘White Vienna’
- Lettuce (S)** – harvest leaves above growth point for cut-and-come-again production or at soil line for single harvest; try ‘Freckles’ romaine, dependable ‘Black-Seeded Simpson,’ or tasty ‘Red Sails’
- Mache or Dutch Corn Salad (S)** – oval green leaves form small rosettes; these mild, tender greens are excellent in salads
- Mizuna (S)** – harvest mildly spicy, bright green, serrated leaves above growth point for cut-and-come-again production
- Onions, green (S, T)** – plant close together in clumps; harvest by pulling entire clump when greens are diameter of a pencil; try ‘Evergreen Bunching Nebuka’ or ‘Crimson Forest’
- Oregano (P)** – quick-spreading, evergreen perennial herb with aromatic delicious leaves that accompany many favorite dishes
- Parsley (S, T)** – harvest this biennial herb for 2 growing seasons before it bolts: try ‘Italian Flat Leaf’ or ‘Triple Moss Curled’
- 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)** – trellis for support and harvest when pods are tender and peas are immature; try ‘Dwarf Grey Sugar’ a tasty snow pea or for snap peas try ‘Sugar Daddy’ a tringless compact
- Radishes (S)** – good for beginning gardeners; try mild, fast-growing ‘French Breakfast’ or multi-colored ‘Easter Egg Mix’
- Sage (P)** – savory perennial herb with silvery evergreen foliage
- Spinach (S)** – spring plantings are quick to flower and go to seed, so plant early; try ‘Bloomsdale Long Standing’ or ‘Nobel Giant’
- Strawberries (P)** – plant these perennials when average temps are 40-50°F and protect blooms below 31°F; try June-bearing ‘Galletta,’ ever-bearing ‘Albion,’ or high-yielding ‘Seascape’
- Swiss Chard (S, T)** – try ‘Ruby Red’ a beautiful, tasty addition to any garden or flavorful ‘Rainbow’ with multi-colored ribs
- Tatsoi (S)** – rosettes of spoon-shaped leaves on 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 sweet ‘Golden Globe’ or delicious ‘Scarlet Ohno Revival’

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

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

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

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



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For answers to your garden and lawn care questions, visit www.mastergardenersmecklenburg.org or find Mecklenburg Extension Master Gardeners on Facebook.
Mecklenburg Extension Master Gardeners Hort Help Line - Call: 704-336-4011 or E-mail: info@mastergardenersmecklenburg.org