

Vegetables and Herbs Successfully Grown in Summit County

Direct Seed=DS Transplant=TP

[Vegetable Growing Guides](#)
HighCountryConservation.org

Cold Season (frost tolerant)	Degree of Difficulty	Planting Method	Planting Date	Minimum Soil Temp. (°F)	Days to Germination	Intensive Plant Spacing	Notes
<i>Baby Leaf; Cut- And Come-Again</i>				this is the lowest temp. for seeds to germinate			Get a soil thermometer or chef's thermometer. Make sure the temperature readings go as low as at least 20°F and as high as at least 100°F. The basic analog types cost between \$5-\$10 and will be the most useful tool for understanding when to start planting. Measure at 8am, 4" deep
Baby Leaf Lettuce (Mesclun Mix, Spring Mix, etc.)	beginner	DS	May-late August	41	7-14	Sow in a 2-4" wide band, 3/4" apart, about 60 seeds/ft.	Shake packet to mix the seeds. Tap the packet to sprinkle seeds about 60 seeds per foot (~5/inch) in a 2-4" wide band, lightly cover (1/8"), and firm gently. Dry soil must be sprinkled to ensure even germination. Begin harvesting in about 3 weeks by clipping with scissors or serrated knife; most plants in the mix will regrow. Good quality usually lasts up to 5 wks.
Spinach	beginner	DS or TP	May-late August	43	5-10	Sow in a 2-4" wide band, 3/4" apart, about 40 seeds/ft.	Begin sowing in spring as soon as the ground can be worked. Germinates best in cool soil; in soil over 85°F risks low/erratic germination; irrigating can help cool soil and improve germination. Slow-growing varieties mature best under warmer conditions, whereas faster-growing varieties mature best under cooler conditions. Sow in mid to late summer for a fall harvest. Can also be planted from late summer until freeze in protected structures for fall, winter, and spring harvest. Using floating row covers offers additional winter protection. For baby leaf harvest: clip small leaves above root attachment in 3-5 weeks, depending on time of year and speed of growth.
Arugula	beginner	DS	May-late August	45	4-7	Sow in a 2-4" wide band, 3/4" apart, 1/8" deep, about 30- 50 seeds/ft.	Prefers cool conditions. Keep soil moist to slow bolting*. Plant until 1 month prior to first avg. frost date. Tastes best with no more than 2-3 cuts. After plants flower, the leaves can still be used but taste is sharp to bitter. Flowers are edible.
Mustard Greens	beginner	DS	May-late August	45	5-10	Sow in a 2-4" wide band, 3/4" apart, about 60 seeds/ft.	Different varieties can range in flavor from mild to spicy and can be fast bolting or slower to bolt. To harvest, clip leaves in about 3 wks. Plants will regrow.
Tatsoi	beginner	DS	May-late August	50	4-8	Baby Leaf: sow in a 2-4" wide band at 60 seeds/ft; Full size: thin to 6-8" apart	Prefers cooler weather. Leaves form a compact, thick rosette. Long harvest period. Mild flavor for salads, stir-fries, etc. Don't rush it; spring sowings should be made after last frost date to eliminate risk of premature bolting. Harvest before flowering. For baby leaf, clip young leaves when 3-6" tall.
Baby Kale	beginner	DS	May-late August	56	7-12	Sow in a 2-4" wide band, 3/4" apart, about 60 seeds/ft.	Begin harvesting about 3 weeks from emergence by clipping leaves. One planting generally maintains good eating quality throughout the season.
<i>Full Sized Greens</i>							

Head Lettuce	beginner	DS or TP	May-early August	41	7-14	8"x8"	For quicker maturity and higher production in small spaces, plant baby leaf cut- come-again instead of heads.
Swiss Chard	beginner	DS or TP	May-June	41	5-7	4-6" x 4-6"	Provides fresh greens all season from one sowing. Prefers cool, mild weather; has some heat tolerance. Seedlings will tolerate light frosts, and mature plants are hardy to moderate frosts. Can be used at baby-leaf or full-size. To harvest, twist mature leaves individually from base of stem. For baby leaf, clip young plants just above the soil. New leaves will grow back for multiple harvests.
Broccoli Raab/Kailaan	beginner	DS or TP	May-late July	48	7	6-7.5" x 6-7.5"	Flowering shoots, tender leaves and stems for salads, stir-fries, pasta. Shorter days cause stems to elongate for increased yield. Just before yellow blossoms open, hand harvest 4-8" long florets/shoots by snapping them and twisting tender leaves from main stem-- if they don't snap easily they are overmature and too tough to eat. Plants should be between 1-2' tall. Harvest regularly to encourage continued production. Good for about 3-4 weeks of harvest before losing quality. The stem, shoots and leaves are all edible.
Pac Choi (Bok Choy)	beginner	DS	May- early August	50	5-8	2-4" Mini; 6-12" Full Size	Prefers cooler seasons, most types perform relatively well in warm weather. Use closer spacing for baby, larger spacing for full size. Read package directions for variety specifics. Don't rush it; young plants will bolt if they experience too much cold weather. Using a knife, harvest whole heads before flowering by cutting stem just above soil line. For baby leaf, sow 60 seeds/ft. in a 2" to 4" wide band. Clip 4-5 week-old leaves.
Collards	beginner	DS or TP	May-June	55	8-14	10-12" x 10-12"	Harvest about 2 months after planting, by twisting individual leaves off of the stalk. Very hardy; eating quality will improve into the late fall with light frost.
Chinese (Napa) Cabbage	intermediate	DS or TP	DS June, TP mid July	56	5-7	8-12" x 8-12"	Performs best in gradually decreasing day length and cooler temps of late summer; can be grown successfully in spring if careful attention is paid to prevent bolting. For spring/early summer transplanted crops, wait until the last spring frost date has passed.
Kale	beginner	DS or TP	May-June	56	7-12	10-12" x 10-12"	Harvest about 2 months after planting, by twisting individual leaves off of the stalk. Very hardy; eating quality will improve into the late fall with light frost.
Roots & Such							
Parsnip	intermediate	DS	late April-May	40	21	2-3"x2-3"	Not recommended for small gardens wanting higher production. Do not allow soil to dry out prior to emergence. 110+ days to maturity.
Potatoes	beginner	seed potatoes	mid-late May-June	40	10-28	8-12"x8-12"; 2-4" deep	Select early maturing varieties (60-80 days). Typically 8-10 tubers in 1# of seed (which equals 8-10 plants). Cut tubers into pieces roughly the size of an egg or golf ball, with at least 1 "eye" per piece. Small tubers may be planted whole. Good in containers. If planting very early in the spring, be careful-- young plants can suffer from early frost damage if planted too early. Small, "new" potatoes can be harvested about 7-8 wks. Main crop is harvested in fall. After leaves have died back, stop watering, leave tubers in the ground for 1-2 wks to set skin.
Beets	beginner	DS	May-mid July	41	8-10	3-4" x 3-4"	Must thin to 3-4" spacing be successful; Protip: use a ruler to thin!! Must keep moist while germinating; do not allow soil to crust before the emergence of seedlings. Micro-sprinklers, mulch, row cover can help with this. Must thin to ~1.5-2" apart to be successful. Protip: use a ruler to thin!! Choose early and main crop varieties that mature in 60-80 days. Harvest as soon as they look big enough to eat.
Carrots	intermediate	DS	late April-late June	41	10-20	1.5-2"x1.5-2"	Sow ¼" apart in rows of 2-3" wide bands, ¼-½" deep. Must be kept evenly watered to avoid drying out while germinating, or germination will be poor. Thin to about 1" apart only if large diameter is needed.
Bunching Onions/Scallions	beginner/ intermediate	DS or TP	May-early July	45	7-14	1"x1"	Plant as soon as the soil can be worked. Do not thin. Use a trellis net or chicken wire to keep vines upright, easy to pick and off the ground. Suspend the bottom of the trellis or chicken wire just above the young plants. The best time to install a trellis is at planting. Harvest when peas enlarge in the pods.
Peas (Sugar Snap, Shelling, Snow)	beginner	DS	May-June	45	5-12	dbl row 4-5" apart, 1" ss	

Onions/Shallots	intermediate	TP onion sets; DS not recommended	May-June	45	7-14	3-4"x3-4"	Not recommended if trying to maximize space in a small garden. Choose intermediate or day neutral types. Frisco is 39.57 N Latitude. Harvest when necks become soft and tops are falling over, pull and sun-cure at least 2-7 days, depending on weather. Move to a protected location to finish drying. 100+ days to maturity.
Kohlrabi	intermediate	DS or TP	May-mid July	46	4-10	7"x7"	Prefers mild or cool weather but brief exposure to freezing temps can cause plants to bolt. A week of temps below 50 can also induce flowering. Heavy feeder. Harvest when roots are about 2-3" diameter.
Salad Turnips/Turnips	beginner	DS	May-late August	47	3-7	2-3"x2-3"	Tolerant of moderate frost. Salad Turnips (Hakurei, Scarlet Queen): mature early (~30-40 days), best harvested young up to 2" diameter, are eaten raw and are sweet/fruity, the texture is crisp/tender. For larger turnips (~50 days), thin to 3" apart and harvest when desired size is reached. Tops are edible raw or lightly cooked. Can be harvested gradually, starting with the largest and allowing the smaller ones to grow into the spaces.
Broccoli	intermediate	DS or TP	May-June	48	5-10	15-18"x15-18"	Needs a lot of space. Heavy feeder. Prefers cool weather. Will have the best chance if transplanted. Use early maturing varieties. Harvest by cutting the center head before flower buds open. Harvest secondary side shoots regularly to encourage continued production.
Radish	beginner	DS	May-late August	50	3-7	2"x2"	Adversely affected by hot, dry weather and should be grown rapidly with plenty of moisture to be mild, tender, and attractive. Begin harvesting at about 3-4 weeks when roots are the size of a large marble. Harvest promptly to avoid pithiness, roots becoming too tough and too spicy and bolting. Tops are edible and will remain more tender when harvested promptly. Winter radishes and daikon types are grown differently, so be sure to know which variety you're planting.
Brussel Sprouts	intermediate/ difficult	DS or TP	May	50	5-10	18"x18"	Requires good soil, timely planting, protection from pests. Not recommended for community garden growers or those with limited space. Select earliest varieties. Start seeds inside 4-6 wks before anticipated transplant date. Direct seed about 4 months before expected fall frost (note that 20 days should be added to days to maturity if direct seeding). 90+ days to maturity. Begin harvest after frost (improves flavor), when sprouts are firm and well formed, starting at bottom of stem. The upper sprouts will continue to form and enlarge as the lower ones are harvested.
Daikon/Specialty Radish	beginner	DS	read packet directions for variety specific instructions	usually around 51	3-7	4-6"x4-6"	Be sure to read package for variety specific notes. Root length can vary from 4"-18". Days to maturity are typically from 50-60 days. Take note of the planting seasons/soil temps. in variety descriptions to reduce bolting. Daikons are larger and more brittle than round radishes; use gardening forks or undermine and lift roots carefully. Tops are edible and nutrient-rich.
Cabbage	intermediate	DS or TP	later May-June	57	5-14	8-16"x8-16"	Not recommended for small gardens with limited space but can plant mini heads at a tighter spacing. Heavy feeder. Use early maturing varieties. Prefers cooler growing temperatures, between 55-75°F.
Garlic	beginner	DS individual cloves	Sept.8-Oct.14	48-62	n/a	rows 9-12" apart; ss 4-6"	Use Hardneck/Stiffneck varieties. Plant individual cloves approximately 4"-6" apart (XL cloves @ 6") in rows 8.5-12" apart. Push the clove, root end (rounded end) down, about 2 - 3" into the soil, or place cloves in a furrow and cover with 2-3" of soil. Cover with 4-6" of mulch from straw or leaves. The largest cloves will produce the largest bulbs. The color, flavor, and size of garlic heads can be variable depending on location, fertility, and weather.

Warm Season (not frost tolerant)	Must be kept above 50°F; not recommended unless using some type of protected system; cover EVERY night	Planting Method	Planting Date	Minimum Soil Temp. (°F)	Days to Germination	Intensive Plant Spacing	
Beans, Bush	beginner	DS	when soil warms, after danger of frost has past	60-90	7-10	4-6"x4-6"	Do not start seeds inside. They don't like being transplanted. Dark-colored seeds germinate better in cool soil than white seeds, but germination under 60F will be poor regardless of color. Soaking beans to hasten germination may damage seeds. Harvest regularly to encourage new pod set. Deformed pods may be the result of lack of moisture, poor soil fertility or insect damage during blooming.
Beans, Pole	beginner/ intermediate	DS	when soil warms, after danger of frost has past	60-90	7-10	single row, 3" seed spacing	For small gardens, consider pole beans--they'll yield 2-3 times more from the same space and are easier to harvest, but they do need a 5- 8' tall support. Construct trellises or large mesh fencing, 4-pole tepees, or single-pole supports before seeding to avoid injuring plant roots later. Bamboo poles or saplings lashed together make easy, inexpensive supports. Do not locate trellis where it will shade other plants that need full sun.
Tomatoes	intermediate/ difficult	TP	well after danger of frost has past (once weather has thoroughly settled)	60-95	6-12	Determinate (bush): 12-24" Indeterminate (climbing): staked/trellised/pruned): 9-18"	Choose early season determinate varieties for earlier harvest in cool conditions. Compact varieties are good choices for containers and flower beds. Variety selection is key (indeterminate vs. determinate; early season types). Easier if you purchase plants. Avoid plants that are tall, leggy, or yellowish, or have started flowering. Difficult if you start from seed. If growing your own starts, begin 5-6 weeks before transplanting outside. Cold soil and air temps can stress plants. Wait at least a week or two after the last frost. Harden off plants by reducing water and fertilizer, not by exposing to cold temps, which causes stress and can stunt growth. Night temps should be consistently above 45F. Use black plastic mulch to warm soil and/or row covers, walls-of-water, or other protection to keep plants warm. Keeps plants evenly moist through regular watering. DETERMINATE (Bush): Do not need pruning. May be grown with or without support; fruit ripens within a concentrated time period. INDETERMINATE (Climbing): Should be staked, trellised, or caged, and pruned for best results; fruit ripens over an extended period.
Basil	beginner/ intermediate	TP	after danger of frost has past or keep inside	65	5-10	4-6"x4-6"	Grows well in inside--Greek types are particularly suited to container growing. Direct seed (recommended for containers): Plant seeds 1/4" deep, 2-3 seeds per inch, keep at 70°F for best germination. Note: Holy Basil requires some light for germination, so sow more shallowly than other basil. Transplant (recommended if outside): Sow indoors 4-6 wks (May 4-18) prior to setting out, after last date of frost and when seedlings have 3-4 sets of leaves. Begin light harvesting after plants have become established. It is best done in the early morning when temps are cooler and the leaves are less likely to wilt. Do not store at a temperature less than 50°F
Cucumbers	intermediate/ difficult	TP	well after danger of frost has past (once weather has thoroughly settled)	65-90	3-10	16-18"x16-18"	Very sensitive to cold. Sow indoors 3-4 weeks before transplanting. Make sure both soil and air temps have warmed prior to transplanting. Using plastic mulch and row covers will provide warmth and insect protection. For greenhouse or high tunnel production the use of gynoecious (all female flowers) and parthenocarpic (self-pollinating) varieties is highly recommended. Consistent, adequate irrigation is needed to produce an abundant crop and avoid bitter taste. Can be finicky to transplant, do not disturb roots. Save space by trellising vertically. Once fruit bearing begins, pick daily.

Zucchini/ Summer Squash	intermediate	TP	well after danger of frost has past (once weather has thoroughly settled)	60-95	5-10	18-24"	Consumes a lot of space in small gardens but can be prolific. In this region, recommended to start inside 3 to 4 wks before transplanting out. Sow 3-4 seeds per pot, thin to 1 plant by snipping off the weaker plants to avoid damaging the roots. Harden off by cutting back water and reducing temp. Do not disturb roots during transplant. Use black plastic mulch to warm soil before transplanting. For some varieties, it's common for the first fruits to be malformed, wither, or blacken, which indicates poor pollination; usually remedied as more male flowers appear and by hand pollinating. Harvest 2-3 times a week, once plants begin to produce. Cut or gently twist off fruits when they reach desired size.
Eggplant	intermediate/ difficult	TP	well after danger of frost has past (once weather has thoroughly settled)	65-95	7-12	18"x18"	Very tender; cold weather may weaken plants. Use row covers. Needs 2+ months with night-time temps near 70F for good production. Sow indoors 6-8 wks prior to transplanting (around April 13). Will not germinate in cool soil. Harden plants about a week before transplanting by reducing water and temperature (to 60-65F). Too much nitrogen results in large plants with small fruit set. May be pruned and staked to keep plant upright and fruits straight. In this region, better suited to containers that can be brought inside each night; small-fruited and dwarf varieties are best.
Peppers	intermediate/ difficult	TP	well after danger of frost has past (once weather has thoroughly settled)	68-95	7-12	9-12"x9-12"	Sow indoors 8-10 wks prior to transplanting (around March 30-April 13). Seeds germinate very slowly in cool soil. Harden plants about a week before transplanting by reducing water and temperature (to 60-65F). Must be covered every night or grown inside; plastic mulch and row covers supported by wire hoops are an ideal combination. Nighttime temps below 60F can reduce fruit set. Select early maturing varieties. Sirenevyi & Hungarian Hot Wax are great early varieties to try. Better suited to containers that can be brought inside each night; may need staking.
Herbs	Degree of Difficulty	Planting Method	Planting Date	Minimum Soil Temp. (°F)	Days to Germination	Intensive Plant Spacing	Annuals: Plants that flower and die in one season—some might drop seeds that grow new plants in the spring. Perennials: Come back for many seasons; the top portion dies back in winter, and new growth appears the following spring from the same root system. Cut perennials back to the ground before winter. This will make for healthier, more prolific plants the following year.
Chives	beginner	DS or TP	late May, after soil warms	60-70	7-14	6-8"	Perennial; gets better each year; frost tolerant. Direct seed (recommended): In spring, sow 1/4" deep as soon as the soil warms up. Place 4-6 seeds every 6", thin to 2-3 plants every 6-8". Transplant: Start 6-8 wks before last frost. Transplant seedling clusters 2-8" apart. Harvest with scissors once the plants are established. Cut leaves before flowering begins. Leaves can be harvested 3-4 times/year, cut at ground level. Edible Flowers: Pull the florets apart and sprinkle on salads, dips, sauces, soups, stir-fries, and pizza. Flavor is of mild, sweet onion.
Cilantro	beginner	DS	late May, after soil warms	55-70	7-14	2-4"	Annual; easy to save seed; frost tolerant. Bolts quickly but the flowers are edible and attract beneficial insects. Direct seed (recommended) - spring through late summer. Sow 1-2 seeds per inch, 1/4- 1/2" deep in rows 2-4" apart. For leaf harvest, there is no need to thin; grows well when sown thickly. For coriander seed production, thin to stand 2-4" apart. Harvest once the plants have become established and before flowering begins. Mature seeds are produced about 3 months after planting and are harvested when dry on the plant.

Dill	beginner	DS	mid-late June, after soil warms	60-70	10-21	3-4"x3-4"	Annual; easy to save seed, tolerates light frost. Does best direct sown, tends to bolt more quickly if transplanted. Slow-bolting types are ideal for leaf harvest, some varieties are suited for container gardening. Plant seeds 1/8-1/4" deep, 2 seeds/inch. Thinning is not necessary, but a 3-4" final spacing produces healthy, full plants. Harvest leaves and flowers once plants become established. Harvest seed heads as the seeds begin to turn golden brown. Foliage and seeds can both be dried and stored for future use.
Lavender	intermediate	DS or TP	TP after last frost	50-60	14-21	12-18"	Perennial; might not survive winters here. Hardy types vary so read variety descriptions carefully. Prefers well-drained, somewhat gravelly soil, and suffers in wet, humid climates. Transplant recommended. Harvest flower spikes on a dry, warm, sunny day just as flowers are about to open. Hang to dry in a dry, well-ventilated space out of direct sunlight. Edible flowers, sweet and floral, can be used to garnish desserts; distinct flavor element in baked goods.
Lemon Balm	beginner	DS or TP	TP after last frost; DS June	65-70	7-14	12"	Perennial; can become invasive. Transplant (recommended): Sow 6-8 wks before last frost. Seeds require light to germinate. Leaves may be picked as soon as plants become established. Cut entire stalks before the plants begin to bloom. In the first year, two cuttings are possible. Best used fresh--turn brown and lose their scent when dried. Fresh leaves for tea and salads. Small white flowers full of nectar which attract bees.
Mint	beginner	DS or TP	TP early spring; DS late May	65-75	10-14	12-18"	Perennial. Invasive: Choose final location carefully, in a container or with a growth barrier. Transplant (recommended): Start 6-8 wks before setting out in early spring; young plants can withstand some freezing. Seeds require light to germinate. Pinch off the top sets of leaves regularly for a bushier, healthier plant. When 3-4" tall, transplant outside. Water deeply and less frequently, rather than watering lightly more often. Pick mint regularly for better production.
Oregano	beginner	DS or TP	TP after last frost	65-75	7-14	12"	Perennial. Excellent grown in an herb garden or container garden; also attracts beneficial insects. Transplant (recommended): Sow seeds in flats 8-10 wks before last frost. Seeds require light to germinate. Harvest entire stems just as plants are coming into bloom, cutting ~2" above base of plant. An established planting can be cut back 2-6 times during the growing season.
Parsley	beginner	DS or TP	May	50-70	14-30	4-6"x4-6"	Annual; easy to save seed; frost tolerant. Read seed packet for variety description and choose among curly-leafed, Italian flat-leafed, and those that grow well in containers. Clip leaves when needed. Can be used fresh or dried. To dry, wash clipped leaves and spread out shallowly on screens in a warm, airy place. When thoroughly dry, rub and store in jars.
Rosemary	intermediate	TP	TP after last frost	65-70	14-21	8-10" if growing as an annual. 24-36" if growing as a perennial.	Grown as perennial or annual. Easiest to buy starts, otherwise start inside 10-12 wks before last frost. Light is required for germination. May overwinter in colder climates if mulched or dug up and transferred to containers in a protected structure.
Sage	beginner	DS or TP	TP after last frost	65-70	7-21	12"	Perennial. Transplant (recommended): Start 6-8 wks before last frost. Leaves may be harvested once plants have become established. In the second and following years, cut stems to within 6" of the base of the plant just as flowers are starting to open. Becomes woody and should be replaced every 3-4 years. In very cold areas, should be mulched in winter months.
Summer Savory	beginner	TP	TP after last frost	65-70	7-14	6-8"	Annual. Light is required for germination. Cut for fresh use once the plants become established. Entire plants can be harvested when flowers are in bud stage. For flavoring fresh and dry beans, cabbage, and sauerkraut. Medicinal: Tea is gargled for sore throat. Used traditionally for digestive complaints and as an aphrodisiac.

Thyme	beginner	TP	TP after last frost	65-70	14-21	6-8"	Hardiness zones vary. Most varieties are not perennial in Summit. Read packet description. Does well in containers. Start 8-10 wks before last frost. Pinch off growing tips of upright types for bushier plants. If trying to overwinter, harvest only a few stems the first year. Then harvest just as the flowers start opening by cutting back to within 4-5" above the ground. Becomes woody and needs to be divided or replaced after 3-4 years.
*Bolting: process during which a plant flowers and goes to seed. The harvest may be lost if the plants bolt prematurely, which is usually caused by extreme climate conditions.							
**Summit County Spring Frost-Free Date: June 15th (around Father's Day)							
***First Fall Frost Date: Mid-late August-September 20 (usually around September 8th)							
Latest planting: 8/30, generally the last chance for any production before winter							

