

# A SEED GROWER'S GUIDE TO GARDEN VEGETABLES

Note: References to information contained in Doug Miller's article are printed in italics.

<u>VEGETABLE</u>	<u>VIABILITY</u>	<u>LIFE CYCLE</u>	<u>POLLINATION</u>	<u>ISOLATION</u>	<u>RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES</u>
BEEF and SWISS CHARD	4 Years	Biennial	Wind	Caging or Alternate Planting	Overwinter in a cool, dry place. After seeds have formed, cut tops and hang indoors to dry. Thresh as described in the article for <i>Small-Seeded Crops</i> .
BEAN and PEA	3 Years	Annual	Self	None	Harvesting: see <i>Beans, Peas, and Other Legumes</i> section of accompanying article.
BROCCOLI	4 Years	Annual	Insects	Caging or Alternate Planting	The only annual among the cole crops. Allow 7—8 months to produce seed. Harvesting: see <i>Mustard Family Crops</i> .
COLE CROPS (CABBAGE, KALE, KOHLRABI, CAULIFLOWER, BRUSSELS SPROUTS, and COLLARDS)	4 Years	Biennial	Insects	Caging or Alternate Planting	All the cole crops belong to the same species and will cross-pollinate readily. Isolate these vegetables if you—or your neighbors—are growing any of the others for seed. In mild climates, cole crops can be left in the garden to overwinter. Otherwise, store in a cool, moist place, then transplant to the garden in early spring. After cabbage heads are established, cut a one-inch-deep cross in the top of each to permit the flower stalk to emerge. Harvesting: see <i>Mustard Family Crops</i> .
CARROT and PARSLEY	2—3 Years	Biennial	Insects	Caging or Alternate Planting	Garden carrots cross readily with Queen Anne's lace and should be isolated from this wild cousin. Pick roots the first fall and store in a cold, dry place. The following spring, plant them in the garden 10—12 inches apart. Harvesting: see <i>Small-Seeded Crops</i> .
CHINESE CABBAGE and MUSTARD	4 Years	Annual	Insects	Caging or Alternate Planting	Chinese cabbage and mustard will cross with turnips, rutabagas, radishes, and horseradish . . . but not with the cole crops. Harvesting: see <i>Mustard Family Crops</i> .
CORN	1—2 Years	Annual	Wind	Hand-Pollination	See <i>Hand-Pollination</i> . Harvesting: see <i>Corn</i> .
CUCUMBER, MUSKMELON, and WATERMELON	5 Years	Annual	Insects	Hand-Pollination	See <i>Hand-Pollination</i> . Harvesting: see <i>Pulpy Fruits and Vegetables</i> . Note: cucumbers, muskmelons, and watermelons will not cross with one another, nor with squashes and pumpkins.
EGGPLANT	5 Years	Annual	Self and Insects	Hand-Pollination	See <i>Hand-Pollination</i> . Harvesting: See <i>Pulpy Fruits and Vegetables</i> .
ENDIVE	5 Years	Biennial	Insects	Caging or Alternate Planting	Leave plants in ground over winter . . . protected by a heavy mulch. Harvesting: see <i>Small-Seeded Crops</i> .
HORSERADISH	—	Biennial	Insects	None	Not grown for seed. Propagate from cuttings.
LETTUCE, CELERY, CELERIAC, and SALSIFY	5 Years	Annual	Mostly Self	Caging or Alternate Planting	In colder regions, plant as early in spring as possible. Elsewhere, plant in late fall. Crisp-headed varieties will need help to produce seed. After a head has formed, carefully remove it by cutting around the central seed stalk, <i>which must be left intact</i> . This surgery will allow the flowering shoot to develop . . . and you can enjoy the severed head. Harvesting: see <i>Small-Seeded Crops</i> .
OKRA	2 Years	Annual	Self	None	Harvesting: see <i>Pulpy Fruits and Vegetables</i> .
ONIONS, LEEKS, and CHIVES	1 Year	Biennial	Insects	Caging or Alternate Planting	Rogue out any bulbs that produce flowering shoots the first year. Save only the largest bulbs for seed production. Dig up in fall, remove tops, and leave in the sun to cure for 2—3 weeks. Then store over winter in cool, dry place. Pick mature seed heads as they appear. Harvesting: see <i>Small-Seeded Crops</i> .
PEPPER	3 Years	Annual	Self and Insects	Hand-Pollination	Harvesting: see <i>Pulpy Fruits and Vegetables</i> . Or, you may simply hang up peppers to dry. The seeds keep very well right in the fruit.
POTATO	—	Annual	Insects	None	Not normally grown for seed by the home gardener. To propagate, allow potato to sprout. Then cut into chunks, each with several good eyes. Before planting the pieces, let them dry for a couple of days. Otherwise they may rot in the soil.
RADISH	4 Years	Annual	Insects	Caging or Alternate Planting	When harvesting roots for food, pick out a few of the best and truest to type for seed production. Trim the tops and replant. Harvesting: see <i>Mustard Family Crops</i> .
SPINACH	4 Years	Annual	Wind	Alternate Planting	Spinach pollen is so tiny that it can penetrate even muslin, so caging is not practical. Rogue out all but the most true-to-type plants for seed production. Harvesting: see <i>Small-Seeded Crops</i> .
SQUASH and PUMPKIN	4 Years	Annual	Insects	Hand-Pollination	Squashes and pumpkins derive from four different species of the genus <i>Cucurbita</i> . Some will cross . . . some won't. To be on the safe side, hand-pollinate. Harvesting: see <i>Pulpy Fruits and Vegetables</i> .
TOMATO	3 Years	Annual	Self	None	Select the finest tomatoes on the finest plants for seed production. Harvesting: see <i>Pulpy Fruits and Vegetables</i> .
TURNIP, RUTABAGA, and WINTER (or ICICLE) RADISH	4 Years	Biennial	Insects	Caging or Alternate Planting	Overwinter as you would carrots. Harvesting: see <i>Mustard Family Crops</i> .