KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION | FACT SHEET

Information about the Kentucky State University Cooperative Extension Program 2021

Developing a Crop Planting Calendar

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This worksheet is designed to help you create a planting calendar for your farm or garden. The following instructions and table will help you gather the information you need to determine when to plant different crops and if you are planting multiple crops during the growing season, track when items could be harvested and the second crop can be planted.

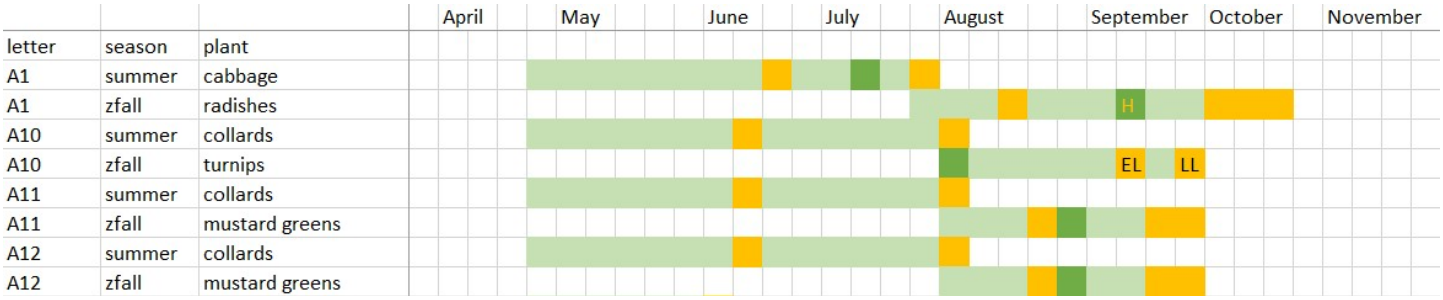
1. Consult available guides including the UK ID-128 Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky (Available at https://grayson.ca.uky.edu/files/id-128_home_vegetable_gardening_in_ky.pdf) and the UK ID-36 Vegetable Production Guide for Commercial Growers (Available at http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/id/id36/id36.pdf) and decide what crops you are going to grow in your garden or on your farm. Things to consider when selecting crops to grow include:
    a. What is your family likely to eat?
    b. What do you have experience with? (cooking or growing)
    c. What would you like to try?
    d. If you plan to sell, is there a market for what you plan to grow?
    e. Consider disease resistant varieties and varieties that grow well in your area.
2. Using a map of your farm or your growing area, decide where you will grow each crop. Keep in mind that you may get multiple harvests out of a single bed or area depending on the crop's time to maturity and ideal growing season. For example, you could grow lettuce and carrots in a bed in the spring, grow tomatoes in the same bed in the summer, and follow it with beans in the fall.
3. Enter each crop you would like to grow in the Crop Column in the following table.
4. Using your growing guides and information sources, determine if the crop should be planted as a transplant or from seed. This information can be found for many crops in Table 4 in UK ID-128. Enter this information in the second column of the following table.
5. Find and enter the earliest and latest safe planting dates for Kentucky in the following table. If you will be growing in a controlled environment, enter that in these fields instead.
    a. Table 14 in UK ID-128 contains this information for many crops.
    b. If you are growing a crop not included in that table, you may find the information in another source. This information may be provided in relation to the last and first frost dates, or based on soil temperature
    c. Average last and first frost dates for some Kentucky locations can be found on the UK Ag Weather Center (http://weather.uky.edu/) under the climate tab.
6. For each crop you will plant as transplants and not direct seed, determine the time from seeding to transplanting and enter this information in the following table.
    a. This information can be found in Table 5 in UK ID-128, seed catalogues, and many other sources.

b. Then using a calendar, determine the seeding date and enter it in the following table.
c. Leave these columns blank for any crops that will not be transplanted.

7. For each crop you are growing, find the days to maturity for each crop and write it in the table below.
   a. This information can be found for many crops in Tables 10-12 in UK ID-128. Keep in mind that these numbers are general and include variation for different varieties.
   b. Specific information for your chosen variety can be found on seed packets and in seed catalogues.If you would like to also estimate sales, follow these instructions to complete the tables. Keep in mind that if you do not plan to sell the produce from your farm or garden, this will be expected savings from not having to purchase those foods.
8. Determine the planting date and estimated harvest date for each harvest of each crop you wish to have and enter it in the following table.
   a. If you want to harvest a crop more than once, or stagger harvesting, create a new line in the table for each harvest you want to have. Keep in mind that this may be based on earliest or latest safe planting dates, or your desired harvest date and the crops days to maturity.
   b. Use a calendar to help.
   c. As you do this, consult your map to make sure you are not unintentionally overlapping crops in a bed.

Once you have planting and estimated harvest dates, these can be transferred to a calendar or planner of your choice. As a visual person, I have used different colors in an Excel file to get an overall picture of the planting and harvesting in the beds. It might look something like the following chart.

In this chart, the letters represent sections of a raised bed. I have added a z to the front of fall so that the seasons will alphabetize in chronological order. The dark green squares represent the latest planting date on this section of the chart. For summer crops, they would also represent the earliest planting date. The light green squares represent when crops are growing in the bed and orange is the window of time for harvesting. These are not variety specific which means that for some crops there is a two or three week window where harvest might take place.



References:

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Crop	Transplant (T) or Seed (S)	Earliest Planting Date	Latest Planting Date	Weeks from seeding to transplanting	Seeding date for transplants	Planting date (seeds or transplants)	Days to Maturity	Harvest Date