

# Growing a Fall Vegetable Garden

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## Fall is for growing in Texas



Small Sugar Pumpkin

Whether you were born in North Texas, or got here as fast as you could, you are one lucky gardener. You get not one, but two growing seasons and NOW is the time to get planting that fall garden! Fall is a wonderful time to garden because many vegetables need to mature in cooler temperatures in order to have a better taste and not bolt (go to seed) too early.

Before you start putting seeds in the soil, there are a few key things you will want to do first. The most important is **preparing the soil**. Black clay is the prevalent soil type in our area and while it is usually fertile, it can be difficult to work with. The soil will need to be tilled or spaded to a depth of 8 to 12 inches, and the more organic matter you can add the better. Compost, well-rotted manure, and weed-free straw are all good choices.

The next step is to **plan your garden**. What will you grow? How will you lay it out? How big a garden do you want? To help you with these decisions, take advantage of the information on the back of a seed packet. It will tell you how to space your seeds, how much room that plant will eventually need,

and how many days until harvest. Count back from our first average frost date, November 11<sup>th</sup>, to determine if that plant will have enough time to mature and produce.

**Why mulch?** A 3 to 4 inch layer of organic mulch will hold in moisture when you water, it will keep the weeds from dominating, and it will make the stragglers easier to pull out. Mulch will also lower the soil temperature in the hot summertime. It may be the most important thing you can do to ensure success in your garden.

### What Can I Plant?

tomatoes and peppers - transplants only  
pumpkins and winter squash - plant ASAP  
cucumbers and zucchini  
green beans and peas  
spinach, lettuce, and cabbage  
broccoli, brussel sprouts, root vegetables  
shallots and garlic - plant bulbs

For a more complete list, visit me on the web

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### IN THIS ARTICLE :

- Preparing the soil
- Plan your garden
- Why mulch ?
- What can I plant ?

### RESOURCES :

- All New Square Foot Gardening by Mel Bartholomew
- Lasagna Gardening by Patricia Lanza
- The Vegetable Book: A Texan's Guide to Gardening by Sam Cotner
- Texas Gardener Magazine

### GARDEN SOURCES :

- Fedco Seeds
- Territorial Seed Company
- Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds
- Gourmet Garlic Gardens

### NEXT TIME:

## Market Talk

Saturday, Sept 5<sup>th</sup> 10am  
Historic Elmont Farmers Market

"Growing Fruit in the Home Orchard"

