

Garden 101: Layering Succession in the Garden

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The goal is to create a revolving door for your own enjoyment, consumption, and for the local pollinators. Consider every season and select plants that thrive within each. The more we add to each season within season, the more robust our gardens become for us and the pollinators we cannot live without. Remember to consider both the *temporal* and *spatial* aspects of your space when choosing food for your home garden.

Fruit production varies both within and across seasons. Plant quick-maturing strawberries and cane fruits to jumpstart your perennial productivity and add cherries, pears, apples, and novelties like figs and cold hardy citrus to round out the seasonality and successions of your fruit garden.

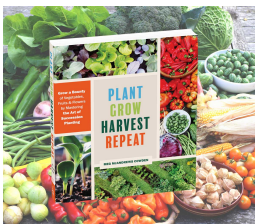
Vegetable production can be year-round for you in zones 7 and warmer. In winter it's more of a harvest season than a growing season. You will harvest what you sowed in late summer and early fall. The rest of the year, you're succession planting for a robust and diverse harvest each month. Give your winter produce ample time to mature before the Persephone Period, which commences in November and lasts until February.

Be strategic in summer with your open spaces and allocate a portion of your late summer garden for winter harvests — parsnips, carrots, beets, peas, daikon, turnips, spinach, mâche, cilantro, arugula, kale, Brussels sprouts, overwintering broccoli, and lettuce.

Layering succession in our food gardens also helps thwart disease and environmental pressures, thus making it an essential tool for all gardens that want to thrive amid a changing climate. It helps keep our gardens nimble and our productivity manageable in our kitchens.

Succession Planting Best Practices

- Choose food from each type of succession planting method (early, mid, late, and generalist succession, as defined in *Plant Grow Harvest Repeat*)
- Further select different varieties with varying days to maturity (staggered successions)
- Strategically plant in blocks for ease of turning over beds and adding more successions
- Plant new seeds as often as possible—the more often you plant, the more diverse your food offerings within and across your growing season
- Consider replacing disease-riddled plantings in late summer as an opportunity to reset a bed
- The sooner we replant beds in summer, the more options we have for replanting (eg, more varieties can mature before first fall frost); the earlier we plant in late winter, the more this is possible (see Sowing Hope Pro Tips)
- In September, with daylight diminishing, chose quick-maturing (<50 days to maturity) brassicas, cilantro, and leafy greens for your direct-seeded succession planting stars
- Implement season extending methods to add successions on both ends of your growing season



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