



FLOWER POWER

2026 GARDEN CALENDAR

 EXTENSION

Happy New Year, Friends and Garden Enthusiasts!

A new year and a new gardening season are upon us, and this year, we're exploring the ways in which we can grow and enrich our gardens through "Flower Power."

Flowers provide many benefits to the West Virginia garden, and as gardeners, we should always develop garden plans that include flowers. Without flowers, there would be no biodiversity in the garden.

Flowers provide food and health to people, beneficial insects, birds, and even pesky herbivores, which are all part of the large, diverse ecosystem found in gardens of all sizes. In a traditional seasonal garden, flowers serve as excellent rotation and companion plants with many popular garden vegetables and fruits.

Additionally, flowers provide joy and comfort to daily life and improve the aesthetics of the garden. And for those same reasons, there's also an emerging market for fresh-cut flowers at many local farmers markets.

We'll cover a number of flower varieties throughout this year's calendar, but there is a vast diversity of flower phenotypes and species to choose from. So many, in fact, one could spend their entire gardening life trying new flowers – if you're up for the challenge.

In 2026, take a leap and try something new and exciting by growing flowers in your garden!

Sincerely,



Lewis W. Jett

Commercial Horticulture Specialist
Faculty Advisor, Garden Calendar
WVU Extension



JANUARY

DECEMBER 2025

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FEBRUARY 2026

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Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

				1 New Year's Day Plan garden layout Increase humidity for houseplants	2 Browse seed catalogs Cut poinsettias and place in sunny windows	3 Order herb seeds Harvest overwintered Brussels sprouts ● Full Moon
4 Order seed varieties Harvest overwintered kale Create a garden map	5 Seed tomatoes for early high tunnel planting	6 Service power equipment Clean garden tools	7 Plant amaryllis in indoor pots Test germination of stored seeds	8 Use grow lights for vegetable seedlings Turn compost Sharpen tillage tools	9 Gently remove snow or ice from evergreens and shrubs ● Last Quarter	10
11 Organize a community garden	12 Order fertilizer and lime according to soil test results	13 Seed spinach in cold frame or high tunnel	14 Develop a flowering landscape design for the lawn and garden	15 Order strawberry plants	16 Order harvest supplies	17
18 ● New Moon Martin Luther King Jr. Day Order blackberry and raspberry plants	19 Seed mache or claytonia in cold frame	20 Order dahlia tubers for spring planting	21 Browse flower seed catalogs for diverse flowers and garden	22 Order zinnia and sunflower seeds	23 Order seed for annual flowers such as zinnia and sunflowers	24
25 ● First Quarter	26	27	28	29 Order dahlia tubers for spring planting	30	31

Roses

By Mira Danilovich, WVU Extension Specialist – Consumer Horticulture

Throughout history, roses have been welcoming us with a great display of their fragrant, delicate, and beautiful flowers in every color imaginable.

Botanically speaking, they belong to the genus *Rosa*, a member of the *Rosaceae* family. There are many different types of roses – miniatures, grandifloras, floribundas, polyanthas, climbing, and teas.

Roses require a bit of attention to grow, but they are certainly worth it. For best performance, they require full sun all day, or at least 6 hours of direct sunlight. They should be planted away from large shrubs and trees that would compete for the sun, water, and nutrients.

One of the crucial factors in site selection is drainage since they do not tolerate “wet feet,” or else the roots will start to rot. Air movement through the shrub to dry up the leaves faster is critical in minimizing potential for disease development.

Roses could be successfully grown in containers and in the garden. They could be grown on their own root (self-rooted) or grafted on a certain rootstock. Container-grown roses must have at least 18 inches in diameter and 24 inches of depth.

Place gravel at the bottom of the container for good drainage, then use a growth medium that offers excellent drainage without becoming waterlogged, while providing the necessary nutrients for vibrant growth. The best growth mediums contain three parts of loam-based medium and one part of organic matter, such as compost or well-rotted manure.

Garden-grown roses need the same attention to detail when it comes to soil preparation, drainage, sun exposure, and other ambient considerations.



FEBRUARY

JANUARY 2026

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MARCH 2026

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 ○ Full Moon	2 Harvest overwintered vegetables Order herb seeds Groundhog Day	3 Apply lime and fertilizer Order fruit trees Build a high tunnel	4 Seed head lettuce (indoors) Turn compost	5 Build a low tunnel or cold frame Seed leeks (indoors)	6 Seed cauliflower (indoors) Seed celery (indoors)	7 Happy 159 Birthday WVU! Clean dust from houseplants with damp cloth
8	9 Seed carrots, leafy salad greens and radishes in high tunnel ● Last Quarter	10 Start a kitchen herb garden Prune grapes	11 Seed broccoli and cabbage (indoors) Seed collards and kale (indoors)	12 Seed peas (outdoors) south of U.S. Rt. 60	13 Order seed potatoes	14 Valentine's Day Plant Irish potatoes in high tunnel
15	16 Prune blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, elderberries Presidents Day	17 Seed carrots, onions and greens in cold frame or low tunnel ● New Moon	18 Ash Wednesday Apply dormant oil spray to fruit trees	19 Prune deciduous trees and shrubs	20 Mow asparagus ferns	21 Propagate grapes and blueberries from hardwood cuttings
22	23 Propagate elderberries from cuttings Order cold-hardy fig plants	24 Presprout seed potatoes Build a raised bed garden ● First Quarter	25 Order wildflower seeds	26 Sow sweet pea flower seeds for outdoor planting in mid-April	27 Seed celery as transplants	28 Prune figs

Tip: To add more fresh produce to your plate, check out the recipes at the back of the calendar from our Family Nutrition Program.

Dahlias

By Jody Carpenter, WVU Extension Agent – Barbour County

Growing flowers by themselves or alongside a vegetable garden can bring a splash of color into your landscape, and what brings more color than dahlias? These easy to grow flowers can be enjoyed for years, all with a little knowledge and proper storage.

Dahlias are native to the mountains of Mexico, where they were discovered by Swedish botanist Anders Dahl, hence the name “dahlia.” The original flowers most likely consisted of a single row of ray florets surrounding a yellow center disc florets. While this variety is still grown, many newer varieties come in all shapes, sizes, and colors.

There are 15 colors that are recognized by the American Dahlia Society: white, yellow, orange, pink, dark pink, red, dark red, lavender, purple, light blend, bronze, flame, dark blend, variegated, and bicolor.

Dahlias are purchased as dry crowns, with radiating tubers. Dahlias perform best in full sun and well-drained soil, as tubers will rot if exposed to too much moisture. A viable tuber will have an “eye” from the original crown, a connecting “neck,” and associated roots. Tubers should be planted horizontally, covered with 1 to 2 inches of soil, and watered thoroughly.

A support or trellis should be provided if dahlias are grown for their blooms to ensure plants won’t lodge. To aid in bigger blooms, side shoots can be removed, although this isn’t necessary. Deadheading, the removal of spent blooms, will encourage additional blooming.

In the fall after the killing frost, plant debris should be removed, and tubers should remain in the soil for 1 to 2 weeks to “cure.” After this curing period, tubers can be lifted, shaken off, washed, dried, placed in a non-organic material, and stored in a colder environment, such as a basement or root cellar.



MARCH

FEBRUARY 2026

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APRIL 2026

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Seed peppers (indoors) for high tunnel production	3 Seed globe artichokes (indoors) Order rhubarb crowns ○ Full Moon	4 Order specialty seed potatoes Plant or seed shallots	5 Seed leeks as transplants Seed microgreens	6 Plant broadleaf evergreens Turn compost	7 Plant onion sets Remove dead leaves from overwintered strawberries
8 Daylight Saving Time Begins	9 Take cuttings from herbs Seed chives	10 Seed leaf lettuce and spinach (indoors)	11 Seed tomatoes (indoors) ● Last Quarter	12 Seed peppers (indoors)	13 Seed Swiss chard (indoors) Divide old rhubarb planting	14 Seed peas (outdoors) Plant nonflowering trees and shrubs
15	16 Seed radishes, spinach and leeks (outdoors)	17 St. Patrick's Day Seed parsnips Plant roses	18 Seed salsify Set head lettuce ● New Moon	19 Seed celery as transplants Seed celeriac	20 Spring Begins Seed eggplant (indoors)	21 Fertilize spring-flowering bulbs Plant asparagus (outdoors)
22	23 Transplant strawberry plants Plant figs	24 Divide old rhubarb plants	25 WVU Day of Giving Begin dogwood anthracnose control ● First Quarter	26 Use row covers for freeze protection	27 Seed lavender (indoors) Seed cutting celery (indoors)	28 Sow rosemary seed Plant table grapes
29	30 Plant horseradish	31 Plant rhubarb	Tip: It's time to spring forward safely! The beginning and end of Daylight Saving Time are great opportunities to change the batteries in your smoke alarms.			

Tulips

By Josh Malencia, WVU Extension Agent – Monongalia County

The tulip can be found everywhere from farms, fields, and forests in Appalachia. While native to Central Asia and Turkey, they were planted in West Virginia for their flowers in spring.

Tulips are a perennial bulbous flower that grow in a temperate climate, they range from zones 3 to 8. It is a cold hardy flower that can take frost and snow.

Tulips are commonly planted as a bulb for small scale farms and homes, while larger operations and nurseries grow them by seed.

With more than 4,000 varieties that have been created over time, tulips have become one of the most popular flowers. Tulips range from red, white, yellow, purple, pink, green, or orange, and many are variegated or a combination of colors.

The best time to plant is in the fall to have blooms in the spring. Tuck tulip bulbs 4 to 8 inches into the soil and gently cover them up.

The flowers can remain in the ground or be used as a beautiful cut flower. After the flowers are cut, the foliage is left to turn yellow before being trimmed back. This allows the plant to store energy in the bulb for the next season. Tulips also make a good potted or container flower.

Tulips often last 7 days as a cut flower, especially if put in fresh water that is changed regularly. Tulips are phototropic and will follow the light – to keep the stems straight, the flowers should be rotated if stored inside.

Tulips are a great addition to a home, garden, or cut flower operation because of their ease of planting and cold hardiness, and they are perennial.



APRIL

MARCH 2026

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MAY 2026

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

				1 Passover Begins Monitor for asparagus beetles Plant figs ● Full Moon	2 Seed onions, beets and radishes (outdoors) Seed kale and collards	3 Plant cabbage and kohlrabi Seed basil for transplant (indoors)	4 Seed beets and kale (outdoors) Plant potatoes
5 Easter	6 Seed or plant broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower (outdoors) Seed Ethiopian kale	7 Seed zinnia, cosmos and sunflowers for transplanting 6 weeks later	8 Seed parsnips (outdoors) Seed leaf lettuce (outdoors)	9 Passover Ends Plant fruit and hazelnut trees Apply crabgrass control	10 West Virginia Arbor Day ● Last Quarter	11 Seed carrots Seed celery as transplants Order sweet potato slips	
12	13 Transplant strawberry plants	14 Plant turmeric and ginger in high tunnels	15 Tax Day Seed tatsoi, lettuce, spinach and leeks outdoors	16 Seed late tomatoes (indoors) Start new compost pile	17 Remove row cover from strawberries Plant perennials ● New Moon	18 Refresh mulch in landscape beds Seed or transplant peas (outdoors)	
19	20 Seed chives and chamomile (outdoors) Transplant leeks	21 Seed annual flowers in pots	22 Earth Day Plant blackberry and raspberry plants	23 Begin spraying fruit trees after petals fall Seed carrots and Swiss chard ● First Quarter	24 National Arbor Day Apply pre-emergent landscape weed control	25 Plant summer-flowering bulbs Seed sweet corn Seed Asian greens	
26	27 Buy herb cuttings/plugs Start grafting tomato plants	28	29 Seed tomatillo for transplants Seed or transplant lemon balm (outdoors)	30 Seed edible flowers such as nasturtiums and calendula			

Peonies

By Ryan Snyder, WVU Extension Agent – Berkeley County

No matter how you pronounce it, peonies make a stunning addition to any landscape. These hardy perennials feature large, vibrant blooms in a variety of colors, shapes and sizes, with a lovely fragrance to match.

Ideal for beginner gardeners, herbaceous peonies are hardy and adaptable to a range of growing conditions. The Lactiflora cultivars are the most commonly grown and come in a wide array of colors and flower forms, making them perfect for both garden displays and cut flowers.

Woody peonies grow with a more upright, shrub-like habit but still produce the large, showy flowers peonies are known for.

Itoh peonies are hybrids between Lactiflora and woody peonies. They combine the best of both types – grown like herbaceous varieties but featuring the foliage, stems and flowers of woody peonies. Itoh varieties are known for being hardy and easy to care for.

Species peonies are closer to their wild relatives and can be more challenging to grow. However, they often produce unique blooms not found in cultivated varieties, offering a rewarding experience for adventurous gardeners.

Peonies should be planted away from trees and shrubs – especially lilacs – as they compete for the same nutrients. Choose a location with well-drained soil. Most peonies prefer full sun, though some woody types tolerate partial shade. They don't require much water in summer but need consistent moisture in spring and fall.

A common myth is that peonies need ants to bloom. In truth, ants are simply attracted to the sugary secretions on flower buds – they're not essential to the blooming process.



MAY

APRIL 2026

JUNE 2026

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
					Plant figs Seed or transplant parsley ○ Full Moon	Transplant onions Seed fennel Plant fingerling potatoes
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Plant potatoes Transplant or seed Chinese cabbage	Seed broccoli raab Seed snap beans Seed head lettuce	Seed leaf lettuce and winter squash Control broadleaf weeds in lawn	Seed summer squash and cucumber Seed or transplant broccoli	Happy Birthday Cooperative Extension! Seed late celery	Seed sweet corn Seed cilantro Plant bok choy Seed thyme ● Last Quarter
10 Mother's Day	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Plant early celery and tomatoes Grow mint in containers	Seed or transplant zinnias, marigolds, cosmos and sunflowers	Plant sweet potatoes Harvest scapes from hardneck garlic	Plant peppers, okra and cabbage Harvest established asparagus	Seed borage Seed lima beans Plant dahlia tubers	Seed sweet corn Remove strawberry blossoms on newly transplanted plants ● New Moon
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	Seed leeks as transplants for planting in early August	Seed or transplant basil Seed lemon cucumbers	Seed or transplant Mexican sunflowers, echinacea and rudbeckia	Prune azaleas, viburnum, lilac and forsythia after blooming	Tip primocane blackberry canes at 36-inch height	Do not over fertilize flowers ● First Quarter
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
○ Full Moon 31 Memorial Day		Plant jack-o'-lantern pumpkins	Prune tomatoes at first flowering Plant an herb garden	Stake and mulch tomatoes Trellis cucumbers	Plant asparagus beans Transplant fennel	Seed leaf lettuce as a companion plant with trellised cucumbers



Marigolds

By Jennifer Friend, WVU Extension Agent – Harrison County

A favorite for many, the marigold is a versatile annual flower. There are multiple uses for marigolds. From cut flowers, borders, and companion plants, the options are nearly endless. In fact, there are a few different common types of marigolds that you can select to best fit your gardening needs.

The African marigold (often called giant marigold) has long, sturdy stems and is a great option if you want to grow marigolds for cut flowers. These marigolds are often 3 feet tall. African marigolds have large blooms in a multitude of colors.

French marigolds work great for containers or borders. They also are a great option for companion planting, since they will be shorter than their vegetable companion. French marigolds are usually only up to 12 inches tall.

Finally, the signet (gem) marigold is often used for edible flowers as well as borders and garden beds. They have the smallest blooms and grow 10 to 18 inches tall.

If you are wanting to start flowers from seed, marigolds are a great option to begin with. Start your seeds about 4 to 6 weeks prior to your frost-free date. Lightly cover the seeds with moistened potting media. Seedlings can be set out after the danger of frost.

Marigolds should be pinched to increase branching, which means pinching the top and removing spent blooms.

Marigolds are great companion plants for your vegetable garden. Not only do they attract beneficial insects, such as hoverflies, but they also add color to the garden as well and increase biodiversity. Marigolds also can help repel certain pests, such as deer and rabbits.

JUNE

MAY 2026

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JULY 2026

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26	27	28	29	30		

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Seed lettuce as a companion plant to tomatoes	Seed parsley Seed snap beans and carrots	Seed summer squash and corn for late crop	Seed cabbage, broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cauliflower for late crop	Plant tomatoes Seed pumpkins and winter squash
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	Seed leaf and bibb lettuce Plant a late crop of Irish potatoes ● Last Quarter	Mulch garden to conserve soil moisture Plant celery	Monitor for garden pests Summer prune apples and peaches	Pinch blackberry canes	Begin control measures for squash vine borer	Seed sweet corn, beets, pumpkins and winter squash Begin bagworm control
14 Flag Day ● New Moon	15 Seed basil as tomato companion plant	16 Side-dress sweet corn that is knee-high with additional nitrogen	17 Transplant thyme Deadhead annual flowers Turn compost	18 Prune spring-flowering shrubs Plant peppers	19 Juneteenth Control cabbage worms with DiPel® or row cover	20 Summer Begins West Virginia Day Renovate strawberries after last harvest
21 Father's Day ● First Quarter	22 Seed dill Seed or transplant cantaloupes for fall	23 24 Treat lawn for white grubs End asparagus harvest	25 Prune pine trees Seed Brussels sprouts	26 Seed peppers Seed or transplant savory Harvest beet greens	27 Plant late tomatoes and peppers Fertilize asparagus	
28	29 Stake peppers Transplant rosemary Plant cilantro and parsley ○ Full Moon	30 Stake tall-growing flowers to prevent wind damage	<p>Tip: Succession plant sunflowers by sowing seeds every 2 to 4 weeks to provide a continuous supply of flowers through the summer months.</p>			

Wildflowers

By Candace DeLong, WVU Extension Agent – Hampshire County

An established wildflower meadow can produce bouquets for the table, all while serving as the perfect haven for insects and wildlife. Adding these plots of wispy flowers transforms a manicured lawn into a magical getaway and can reduce time spent on the lawn mower!

The long-term success of a wildflower plot involves careful site selection and preparation. Most wildflower species need at least 6 hours of sunlight each day. Ideally, wildflowers should be close to a water source so the planting can be watered until germination, as well as periodically in dry seasons. If possible, avoid soggy soils and areas with difficult-to-eradicate perennial weeds.

For seed germination to occur, existing sod or vegetation must be eliminated. Once the area is cleared of vegetation, it's time to sow the seeds.

Many types of wildflower seed mixes are readily available. Some mixes include showy cut-flower blooms, while others focus on specific pollinator needs. Several West Virginia wildflower mixes are available and contain beneficial native species. Some individual species to consider for your flower patch include purple coneflower, ox-eye sunflower, common milkweed, show tick trefoil, wild bergamot, and showy goldenrod.

To plant, combine wildflower seed mix with sand, toss it out over the cleared soil, and gently press in with your feet or a lawn roller. The wildflower patch may need frequent weeding during the first year to ensure the desirable wildflower species are not crowded out by weeds. Established wildflower meadows should be mowed down once a year in late fall or early winter to assist with seed dispersal.



JULY

JUNE 2026

AUGUST 2026

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21	22	23	24	25	26	27	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
28	29	30					23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30	31					

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
			Seed late cabbage and cauliflower Seed or plant endive	Seed late corn, snap beans, kale and broccoli	Watch for early and late tomato blight Seed carrots and Swiss chard	Independence Day Plant grape or cherry tomatoes for fall
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Seed late sweet corn and beets Order garlic cloves for fall planting	Watch for Japanese beetles Order garlic seed ● Last Quarter	Plant napa Chinese cabbage Remove raspberry canes after fruiting	Harvest new potatoes with tender skins Seed borage	Pinch the top of black raspberry canes	For the largest flowers, remove side shoots from main stem
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	Seed dill Turn compost	Harvest summer squash frequently ● New Moon	Seed collards and kale for fall Don't let weeds go to seed	Transplant cauliflower, broccoli and Swiss chard	Seed fall cucumbers	Seed wildflowers as beneficial insect and pollinator attractant around perimeter of garden
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	Plant peppers for fall crop Seed summer squash for fall crop	Take cuttings from herbs ● First Quarter	Mulch garden to conserve soil moisture	Water young trees and shrubs during dry periods	Pinch basil to retain four pairs of leaves per plant	Transplant Brussels sprouts
26	27	28	29	30	31	
	Add non-seed-bearing weeds to compost	Seed beets	Tip or pinch dahlia plants to encourage more branching ○ Full Moon			

Zinnias

By Brian Sparks, WVU Extension Agent –
Fayette and Nicholas Counties

Zinnias are popular flowers for annual gardens as they are easy and quick to grow both from seeds and transplants. Known for their bold colors and long flowering season, zinnias are a member of the aster family and native to Mexico and Central America and will bring beauty to any garden.

As prolific bloomers all season long, they perform well in garden beds, preferring full sun and well-drained soil. After the first frost, zinnias can be planted in $\frac{1}{4}$ inch deep soil, and later seedlings should be thinned to 6 to 12 inches apart to promote air flow and prevent mildew. Mulching helps maintain moisture and dead heading spent blooms encourages continued flowering throughout the season. Zinnias tolerate drier soil better than overly wet soil.

The foliage of zinnias comes in varying shades of green, but the flowers come in every color and sometimes a combination of colors. There are three types of blooms: single, double, and semi-double. Because of their brilliant color, types of blooms, and heights, zinnias are ideal for borders, beds, and floral arrangements.

As cut flowers, zinnias last a long time and brighten indoor spaces. In the garden, they offer months of stunning blooms. Dwarf zinnias also make an excellent container plant. Besides their vibrant colors, zinnias attract pollinators like bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds, thus supporting a healthy ecosystem. In addition, they are somewhat deer resistant and relatively pest free, making them ideal for any garden.



AUGUST

JULY 2026

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SEPTEMBER 2026

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27	28	29	30			

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Tip: The end of the growing season is a great time to take a soil sample for your lawn or garden and send it to the WVU Soil Testing Lab. Scan the QR Code to learn more about the soil testing!



1

Water plants deeply each time

2

Seed beans and peas for fall crop
Plant cabbage for fall crop

3

Plant napa Chinese cabbage
Seed spinach
Seed fall carrots

4

Seed lettuce for fall crop
Watch for downy mildew
● Last Quarter

5

Seed mustard greens and radishes

6

Seed fall cucumbers
Control broadleaf lawn weeds

7

Take note of new varieties
Seed bush beans

8

9

Turn compost
Harvest okra pods every other day

10

Seed rutabagas
Seed Asian greens

11

Watch for powdery mildew on pumpkins and winter squash
● New Moon

12

Seed radishes and leeks

13

Plant strawberries

15

Install sod
Seed fall herbs

16

Seed bok choy

17

Seed winter sprouting broccoli

18

Seed turnips
● First Quarter

19

Plant collards

20

Seed lawn

22

Seed spinach
Apply nitrogen to strawberries

23

24

Seed Ethiopian kale as replacement for arugula

25

26

Seed fall green bunching onions

27

Seed kale and kohlrabi
○ Full Moon

29

Turn compost

30

31

Sunflower

By Brandy Brabham, WVU Extension Agent – Roane County

Sunflowers are a colorful garden addition. These vibrant, fast-growing flowers can be food sources for people, wildlife, and pollinators. Sunflowers come in various shapes, sizes, and bloom colors. Branching cultivars produce many blooms over time and get quite large, requiring space to flourish. Plant at least 18 to 24 inches apart.

Pollenless or “pollen-free” cultivars don’t contain the bright yellow pollen that can stain clothing. They are used primarily as cut flowers or garden plants. Heights range from 2 to 8 feet with a variety of flower colors and forms.

Dwarf cultivars are used in limited spaces or containers. Due to their small size of 3 feet or less, these cultivars are placed toward the front of beds or along borders.

Between 3 to 8 feet in height, semi-dwarf cultivars do not usually require staking and work well in landscape beds.

Giant cultivars (over 8 feet tall) require staking due to their size in height, flower, and seed head. Spacing 2-feet apart ensures good air circulation for these.

Large seeds make planting easy. After frost, stagger plantings by a couple weeks to extend blooming. Seed no deeper than 1 inch; no closer than 6 inches apart.

Sunflowers enjoy full sun, at least 6 hours, and slightly acidic (6.0 to 6.8 pH), well-drained soil. They prefer sandy loam soils. Soil testing helps determine nutritional needs.

Regularly watering young plants creates strong roots helping sunflowers withstand wind and heat. One inch of water a week is needed. Control weeds with cultivation or mulch. Fertilize as needed. Cut flowers early in the morning for bouquets to avoid wilting.



SEPTEMBER

AUGUST 2026

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OCTOBER 2026

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Order spring-flowering bulbs	2 Seed spinach Plant crocus Build a high tunnel or cold frame	3 Harvest primocane blackberries and raspberries	4 Dig late potatoes Turn compost Renovate lawn or reseed bare spots ● Last Quarter	5 Seed cover crop to improve soil health Prepare root cellar
6 Labor Day Seed lettuce for fall crop Plant fall turnips	7	8 Divide peonies Seed carrots in high tunnel or cold frame	9 Harvest early pumpkins Don't let weeds go to seed	10 Plant hardy evergreens ● New Moon	11 Patriot Day Seed bunching onions in a cold frame	12 Control broadleaf weeds in lawn Harvest peppers
13 Plant garden mums Begin 14 hours of darkness to turn color of poinsettias	14	15 Begin pumpkin harvest Seed lettuce in high tunnel	16 Transplant winter sprouting broccoli	17 Repot houseplants Seed fall spinach	18 Harvest early-planted sweet potatoes ● First Quarter	19 Plant shallots and potato onions
20 Water young trees and shrubs during dry periods	21	22 Plant elephant garlic Seed salad greens in high tunnel Autumn Begins	23 Plant hyacinths Harvest storage onions	24 Bring rosemary plants indoors before frost	25 Seed carrots in high tunnel or cold frame	26 Save heirloom tomato seeds ● Full Moon
27 Seed leeks for overwintering in cold frame	28	29	30 Harvest seeds from wildflowers and place in cool, dry storage			

Cosmos

By Shawnee Iser, Former WVU Extension Agent – Mineral County

If you're looking to add color, charm, and pollinator appeal to your garden, cosmos might be the perfect fit. These bright flowers bloom throughout summer and into fall, thriving in full sun and less-than-perfect soil. Best of all? They're easy to grow from seed, making them ideal for both beginner and seasoned gardeners.

Cosmos come in a variety of colors, such as pink, white, orange, yellow, and burgundy—and can reach heights of 1 to 6 feet, depending on the variety. Common species include *Cosmos bipinnatus*, which have tall, feathery foliage, and *Cosmos sulphureus*, which are more compact and heat-tolerant. Their light, airy texture adds movement and a wildflower aesthetic to garden beds, borders, and pollinator plots.

Plant seeds directly into soil after the danger of frost has passed. These sun-loving annuals don't need rich soil; in fact, too much fertility can reduce flowering. Water regularly until plants are established, then you can enjoy their drought tolerance. Deadheading spent blooms will encourage even more flowers, although letting some go to seed provides food for birds and allows self-seeding for next year.

Cosmos are favorites among bees, butterflies, and other pollinators, and they also make excellent cut flowers. Their long, wiry stems and delicate blooms look beautiful in casual arrangements, lasting several days in a vase.

Whether you're planning a pollinator-friendly garden, adding easy beauty to a vegetable patch, or growing flowers for bouquets, cosmos offer a colorful, low-maintenance option that gives back all season long.



OCTOBER

SEPTEMBER 2026

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NOVEMBER 2026

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Plant winter cabbage in high tunnel Cure onions for storage	2 Turn compost Dig canna, dahlia, gladiolas and tubular begonias	3 Harvest green tomatoes and gourds before frost ● Last Quarter
4 Seed carrots for overwintering in high tunnel	5 Harvest and cure sweet potatoes	6 Divide perennials Harvest pumpkins and winter squash	7 Remove old crop residue and seed winter cover crop	8 Store winter squash in cool, dry location Plant multiplier or potato onions	9 Plant or transplant lilies that flower July 15 to Sept. 15 ● New Moon	10 Plant or transplant lilies that flower July 15 to Sept. 15 ● New Moon
11 Columbus Day Plant spring bulbs	12 13 Top Brussels sprouts to size up sprouts	14 Prepare landscape bed for spring planting	15 Plant or transplant deciduous trees and shrubs after leaves drop	16 17 Save wildflower seeds for spring planting		
18 ● First Quarter Mow lawn for last time Prune roses and root cuttings	19 Plant garlic	20 Seed spinach in cold frame or high tunnel	21 Take a fall soil test Mulch greens (chard, collards, etc.)	22 Plant mache in cold frame	23 24 Dig up dahlia tubers and place in cool storage area out of direct sunlight	
25 Harvest fall Irish potatoes ● Full Moon	26 Turn compost	27 28	29 30		31 Halloween	



Lavender

By Jesica Streets, WVU Extension Agent – Tucker County

More than just a symbol of peace and tranquility, lavender is a very diverse flowering shrub. Every garden needs at least one!

Lavender is a perennial flower that is a great addition to attract butterflies, bees, and other pollinators to your garden. There are several different varieties, but the most common are English and French. English lavender is known for its sweet floral aroma and cold hardiness, while French lavender blooms longer and has a rosemary-like scent. French lavender is not as cold tolerant and is recommended for containers in cooler climates. Both varieties are suitable for containers, flower beds, or gardens.

Lavender is a sun-loving plant and requires 6 to 8 hours of sunlight daily. It also prefers well-drained soil. When it comes to watering, less is more. If your plant is established, you can water sparingly due to its drought-resistant nature.

Like watering, you will not need to feed lavender. It prefers slightly alkaline soils. A soil test should be completed to see if amendments are needed.

Pruning is needed regularly for lavender plants. They can be pruned after flowering or in early spring to remove winter damage. Pruning helps to not only maintain its shape but also to encourage new growth and prevent it from becoming woody.

When flowers are slightly open, it is time to harvest. You cut just above the woody part of the plant – anywhere from 8 to 12 inches. Bundle your stems to dry. Once the lavender has dried, you can use it in lotions, cooking, or just to enjoy.

A flower that is more than aesthetically pleasing, it also can serve as a repellent for mosquitos and other insects in your garden. Give it a try!

NOVEMBER

OCTOBER 2026

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DECEMBER 2026

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Daylight Saving Time Ends ● Last Quarter	2 Plant leeks in cold frames	3 Plant short-day onions in cold frames	4 Remove stakes and trellises	5 Mulch carrots for winter use	6 Fertilize under deciduous trees and shrubs	7 Water trees and shrubs thoroughly if fall has been dry
8	9 Remove diseased plant debris from garden ● New Moon	10 Apply lime and fertilizer according to soil test	11 Veterans Day	12 Winterize garden tools	13 Clean residue from flower beds	14 Mulch strawberries
15	16 Mulch thyme plants before winter	17 Turn compost ● First Quarter	18 Mulch perennial beds	19 Harvest salad greens from high tunnel	20	21 Cut hardy chrysanthemums to 2 or 3 inches and mulch
22	23 Fertilize houseplants	24 Mulch garlic ○ Full Moon	25 Store winter squash and gourds for winter	26 Thanksgiving Day	27 Harvest Brussels sprouts or overwinter in garden	28
29	30					

Saving Flower Seeds

By Lewis W. Jett, WVU Extension Specialist – Commercial Horticulture

Many annual and perennial flower varieties can be preserved for future planting by saving seed.

Seed saving from annual flowers is somewhat challenging since flowers within the same genus or species, like sunflowers, can easily cross pollinate.

Seed saving is a venerable gardening practice and will preserve varieties that are adapted to the garden.

Only open-pollinated varieties should be saved for seed since the seed will have similar traits to the harvested plant. Hybrids, will not breed true-to-type.

Select flowers with vibrant color and appearance for seed saving. Healthy, strong stems and robust foliage are traits of genetically vigorous flower varieties worthy of seed saving.

As a flower blooms and is pollinated, the flower petals dry and fall from the flower as the plant directs energy into developing seeds for the next generation. When the seed feels visibly dry, it can be harvested. The seed may need to be threshed to remove the outer hulls of the seed, which can be done by hand. Most flower seeds dry naturally on the plant and will be relatively easy to prepare for storage. Seeds can be sized using a sieve or colander.

Place the seeds in a paper envelope and store in a cool, dry environment with a desiccant packet. A refrigerator or freezer can be used to store the seeds for several years. Carefully label the seed packets with the variety and year in which it was saved. The following spring, the seed will be available for you to enjoy another season of vibrant flowers!



DECEMBER

NOVEMBER 2026

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JANUARY 2027

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Protect shrubs from harsh weather ● Last Quarter	2 Mulch hybrid roses	3 Select cut Christmas tree with flexible needles	4 Hanukkah Begins Overwinter spinach and Swiss chard	5 Mulch perennial herbs
6 Harvest high tunnel carrots and lettuce	7 Buy live Christmas tree ● New Moon	8 Store leftover and saved seed in cool, dry place	9	10	11 Participate in a seed swap or donate seeds to seed libraries	12 Hanukkah Ends
13	14	15	16	17 Turn compost ● First Quarter	18	19
20 Winter Begins	21	22	23 ○ Full Moon	24	25 Christmas Day	26 Plant live Christmas tree
27	28	29	30 ● Last Quarter	31 New Year's Eve		

Vegetable Varieties Recommended for West Virginia

Vegetable	Varieties
Asparagus	Jersey Giant, Jersey Supreme Purple Passion, Millennium
Beans (green)	Bronco (bush), Caprice (bush), Jade II (bush), Crockett (bush), Prevail (bush), Boone (bush), Maxibel (filet bean), Strike (bush), Roma II (romano), Mountaineer (half-runner), Volunteer (half-runner), Josephine Jackson (half-runner), Fat Man (pole), Non-Tough (half-runner)
Beets	Red Ace, Pacemaker III, Touchstone Gold (yellow), Kestrel, Chioggia (multicolored), Bull's Blood (beet tops), Baby Beat (baby-sized)
Broccoli	Gypsy, Arcadia, Eastern Crown, Emerald Crown, Lieutenant, Imperial, Major, Captain, Del Rico (side shoots), Everest, Green Sessantina Grossa (broccoli raab), Red Fire (winter sprouting)
Brussels Sprouts	Jade Cross E, Prince Marvel
Cabbage	Bronco, Bravo, Charmant, Cheers, Savoy Ace, Caraflex (mini-head), Red Dynasty, Tiara (mini-head), Fast Vantage
Cantaloupe	Sugar Cube (mini), Athena (large), Ambrosia
Carrots	Hercules, Mokum, Sugarsnax 54, Nectar, Napoli, Bolero, Laguna, Romance
Cauliflower	Snow Crown, Cheddar (orange), Graffiti (purple)
Celery	Tango, Tendercrisp
Chinese Cabbage (bok choy)	Joi Choi, Win Choi, Mei Qing Choi
Chinese Cabbage (napa)	Jade Pagoda, Blues, Mirako, Nikko
Collards	Top Bunch, Georgia, Vates, Champion
Cucumbers	Dasher II, Marketmore 76, Diva (burpless), Sweet Slice, Cool Breeze (pickles), Excelsior, Little Leaf (pickles), Lisboa (high tunnel), Picolino (high tunnel)
Eggplant	Nadia, Hansel, Orient Charm, Ghostbuster (white), Fairy Tale, Aretusa (white)
Garlic	Music (porcelain), Inchelleum Red German X-tra Hardy White
Irish Potato	Superior, Salem, Chieftain (red-skin), Lehigh (yellow), Russian Banana (fingerling), Purple Majesty (purple), Sierra (russet)

Vegetable	Varieties
Kale	Red Russian, Winterbor, Redbor, Tuscan, Scotch Siberian
Kohlrabi	Kolibri (purple), Winner
Leeks	King Richard, Lancelot, Bandit, Tadorna (winter)
Lettuce	Buttercrunch (bibb), Cherokee (red batavian), Magenta (batavian), Sierra (bibb), Red Sails (leaf), Monte Carlo (romaine), Green Towers/Green Forest (romaine), Winter Density (green romaine), Jericho (romaine), Cherokee (bibb)
Okra	Annie Oakley II, Clemson Spineless
Onions	Candy (yellow), Candy Apple (red), Red Bull (red), Copra (yellow), Red Wing (red), Beltsville Bunching, Nabechan (bunching), Guardsman (bunching)
Parsley	Giant of Italy
Peas	Knight (shell), Frosty (shell), Cascadia (sugar snap), Sugar Anne (sugar snap)
Peppers	Red Knight, Revolution, Achimedes, Paladin, Blushing Beauty, Carmen
Pumpkins	Magic Lantern, Aladdin, Hulk, Gladiator, Super Herc, Field Trip
Spinach	Avon, Regiment, Melody, Space, Bloomsdale, Abundant Bloomsdale
Squash – Acorn	Table Ace, Taybelle, Autumn Delight
Squash – Buttercup	Orange Cutie, Sunshine, Bon Bon
Squash – Butternut	Waltham, Butternut 242, Metro, Bugle, Avalon
Squash – Summer	Multipik, Patriot II (summer yellow), Sultan (zucchini), Independence II, Tigress (zucchini), Cashflow (zucchini), Magda
Sweet Corn	Incredible, Bodacious, Delectable, Montauk (all sugar enhanced var.)
Sweet Potatoes	Beauregard, Jewel, Evangeline, Burgundy
Swiss Chard	Rainbow, Bright Lights, Argentata
Tomatoes	Skyway 687, Crista, Mt. Fresh Plus. Fl 91, Floralina, Big Beef, Celebrity, Primo Red, Brandy Boy, Scarlet Red, Rocky Top, Sun Gold (grape), Sunshine (early), BHN 589, BHN 876 (yellow), Mortgage Lifter, Kellogg's Breakfast
Watermelons	Sangria, SS5244 (seedless), Crimson Sweet, Crunchy Red (seedless), Petite Treat (mini), Serval (mini seedless), Petite Yellow

Additional Resources

Here For You

WVU Extension combines knowledge and research to bring the people of West Virginia trusted, reliable resources for their everyday lives. While the Garden Calendar provides basic gardening know-how and tips, next-level gardening assistance and information are available through additional WVU Extension programs.

- 1. Open smartphone camera and scan QR code.**
- 2. Click pop-up link and explore!**



WVU Soil Testing Laboratory

Soil testing is the easiest and most reliable method of assessing a soil's nutrients. To learn more about WVU's soil testing services, visit extension.wvu.edu/soil-testing.



WVU Plant Diagnostic Clinic

The WVU Plant Diagnostic Clinic identifies all kinds of plant problems for homeowners, gardeners, landscapers, growers and farmers. The clinic recommends ways to treat or prevent the problems. For more information on the WVU Plant Diagnostic Clinic, visit extension.wvu.edu/plant-diagnostic-clinic.



WVU Extension Master Gardener Program

The WVU Extension Master Gardener program lets residents expand their gardening knowledge and skills by taking part in basic and advanced horticulture training. To learn more about becoming a Master Gardener, visit extension.wvu.edu/master-gardener-program.



WVU Extension Family Nutrition Program

The Family Nutrition Program helps families, youths and adults improve their health by sharing low-cost, healthy recipes, as well as other healthy lifestyle programs. For more information on how you can benefit from the Family Nutrition Program, visit extension.wvu.edu/family-nutrition-program.



For more help with your gardening efforts, contact your local WVU Extension office.

Fruit and Spinach Salad with Honey Mustard Vinaigrette

Makes 6 servings

www.planeatmove.com

Ingredients:

1/4 cup olive oil
1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
1/4 cup yellow mustard
1/4 cup honey
10 ounces baby spinach
1 apple, diced
1/2 small red onion, thinly sliced rings
1/3 cup coarsely chopped nuts (almonds, pecans, walnuts, etc.)
1/4 cup dried cranberries or raisins
1/2 cup reduced-fat shredded cheddar cheese

— over —

Strawberry Green Tea

Makes 16 servings

www.planeatmove.com

Ingredients:

1 pound fresh strawberries
13 cups water
13 green tea bags, regular size
1 cup honey
1 lemon, optional

— over —

Awesome Watermelon Salad

Makes 2 servings

www.planeatmove.com

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1/2 teaspoon minced garlic (optional)
1/2 teaspoon fresh diced cilantro
1/4 teaspoon fresh ground pepper
1/4 cup olive oil
3 cups, 2-inch, cubed watermelon
1/4 cup crumbled, low-fat feta cheese
1/2 red onion, sliced very thin
Coarse ground black pepper
Cilantro, for garnish

— over —

Easy Tortilla Breakfast Pizza

Makes 3 servings

www.planeatmove.com

Ingredients:

Nonstick cooking spray
1 (8 inch) whole wheat tortilla
1 cup spinach
3 medium eggs
1/2 medium tomato, diced
Dash of salt and pepper
1/4 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese

— over —

Directions:

1. In a small bowl, mix vinegar, lemon juice and Dijon mustard. Stir in garlic (if using), cilantro and black pepper.
2. Slowly pour olive oil into the mixture while whisking vigorously.
3. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use.
4. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use.
5. Combine the watermelon, low-fat feta cheese and red onion in a large bowl; toss lightly to mix and season with coarse ground black pepper.
6. Pour half of dressing over salad mixture; gently toss to coat.
7. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
8. Drizzle remaining dressing over salad and garnish with cilantro just before serving.



Directions:

1. In a separate small bowl, whisk together olive oil, apple cider vinegar, mustard and honey for the salad dressing. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, place spinach in the bottom. On top of spinach, layer apples, onion, nuts, dried cranberries and cheese.
3. Drizzle dressing over salad mixture and toss. Dr serve the dressing on the side. Serve immediately.
4. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours

Directions:

1. Spray a 10-inch skillet with nonstick spray and place tortilla inside.
2. Place spinach over the tortilla and make three slight wells with spinach.
3. Sprinkle tomatoes, salt, pepper and mozzarella over the eggs.
4. Cover with lid and cook on medium/low heat for 12 minutes, or until egg yolk is cooked through.
5. Remove from heat and slice into three wedges with one egg done.
6. Store leftovers in the refrigerator within 2 hours.



Directions:

1. Wash strawberries and remove the tops.
2. Chop the berries with a hand chopper in a large pot.
3. Add water to the chopped berries in large pot and bring to a boil, stirring occasionally.
4. Remove from heat and let mixture cool for 5 minutes.
5. Add tea bags and submerge. Steep tea for 2 to 3 minutes.
6. Strain the tea through a mesh strainer or cheesecloth lined colander into a 1-gallon pitcher.
7. Add honey and stir until dissolved.
8. Chill and serve.
9. Garnish with a lemon slice or a fresh strawberry, if desired.

Garlic Tomato Bruschetta

Makes 8 servings

Ingredients:

3 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
2 tablespoons olive oil
3 to 4 garlic cloves, minced
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
4 medium tomatoes, diced
2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
1 loaf (1 pound) unsliced French bread

— over —

Lemon Chicken Rice Soup

Makes 6 servings

www.mashed.com

Ingredients:

1 pound boneless skinless chicken breasts, fat trimmed
2 medium or 3 small carrots, peeled and diced
2 celery stalks, diced (about 1 cup)
1 yellow onion, diced (about 1 cup)
1/4 cup uncooked brown rice
2 tablespoons lemon juice (can use bottled)
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon dill
32 ounces (4 cups) reduced sodium chicken broth (not needed until day of cooking)

— over —



Spicy Cauliflower and Brussels Sprouts

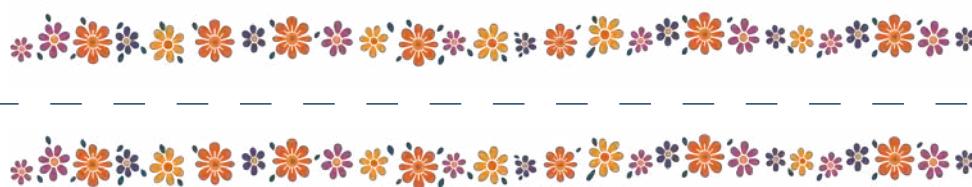
Makes 6 servings

www.mashed.com

Ingredients:

1 small head cauliflower
1 pound Brussels sprouts (washed, ends trimmed)
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons hot honey (or regular honey – mix with 1 teaspoon hot sauce, if desired)
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1/2 teaspoon cumin
1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 teaspoon onion powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper

— over —



Tuscan Chicken Pasta

Makes 6 servings

www.planeatmove.com

Ingredients:

1 pound boneless and skinless chicken breasts
2 pints cherry tomatoes, halved
3 tablespoons olive oil
1/4 cup balsamic vinaigrette or Italian dressing
1 tablespoon dried basil
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon onion powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
8 ounces whole-wheat pasta or spaghetti
1 bag (6 ounces) spinach, chopped coarsely
Parmesan cheese (optional)

— over —



Directions:**EXTENSION**

8. Transfer to a bowl to serve.

7. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Spread the coated vegetables on the baking sheet. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until tender and slightly charred.

6. Pour the mixture over the vegetables and toss well to coat.

5. In another small bowl, stir together the olive oil, honey, spices, salt and pepper.

4. Transfer the cauliflower and Brussels sprouts to a large mixing bowl.

3. Peel the outer leaves from the Brussels sprouts and cut them into halves. So all of the pieces are roughly the same size.

2. Split the cauliflower into florets, then cut each into halves or quarters so all of the pieces are roughly the same size.

1. Preheat the oven to 400 F.

**Directions:****EXTENSION****Directions:****EXTENSION**

7. Reheat to a bowl to serve.

6. Cut the chicken into thin strips about 1/2-inches. Combine cooked pasta with chicken, tomatoes and juices from the baking pan. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese, if desired.

5. Remove from the oven and add chopped spinach to the baking sheet. Cover and allow the spinach to steam and add the chicken to rest for about 10 minutes or until the spinach wilts.

4. Prepare the pasta according to package directions.

3. Bake for about 30 to 40 minutes or until the chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165 F using a meat thermometer.

2. If using thick chicken breasts, slice crosswise into thinner cutlets. Place the chicken breast and halved tomatoes on the baking sheet. Drizzle with the olive oil and basilamic vinaigrette (or Italian dressing). Sprinkle with basil, garlic powder, onion powder, salt and black pepper.

1. Preheat the oven to 400 F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper or aluminum foil.

Directions:**EXTENSION**

8. Transfer to a bowl to serve.

7. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Spread the coated vegetables on the baking sheet. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until tender and slightly charred.

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3. Bake for about 30 to 40 minutes or until the chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165 F using a meat thermometer.

2. If using thick chicken breasts, slice crosswise into thinner cutlets. Place the chicken

1. Preheat the oven to 400 F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper or aluminum foil.

Slow Cooker Method**EXTENSION**

7. Remove chicken from the slow cooker and return to the slow cooker.

6. Add the chicken to the slow cooker with the broth and cook on "low" setting for 6 to 8 hours.

5. Remove from the oven and add chopped spinach to the baking sheet. Cover and allow the

4. Transfer to a bowl to serve.

3. Remove the chicken from the slow cooker and return to the slow cooker.

2. Add all ingredients to the slow cooker bag (except broth), seal and freeze up to three months.

1. Label a gallon-sized plastic freezer bag with the name of the recipe, cooking instructions, and use-by date (three months from the prep date).

Slow Cooker Later**EXTENSION**

7. Remove chicken from the slow cooker and return to the slow cooker.

6. Add the chicken to the slow cooker with the broth and cook on "low" setting for 6 to 8 hours.

5. Remove from the oven and add chopped spinach to the baking sheet. Cover and allow the

4. Transfer to a bowl to serve.

3. Remove the chicken from the slow cooker and return to the slow cooker.

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1. Label a gallon-sized plastic freezer bag with the name of the recipe, cooking

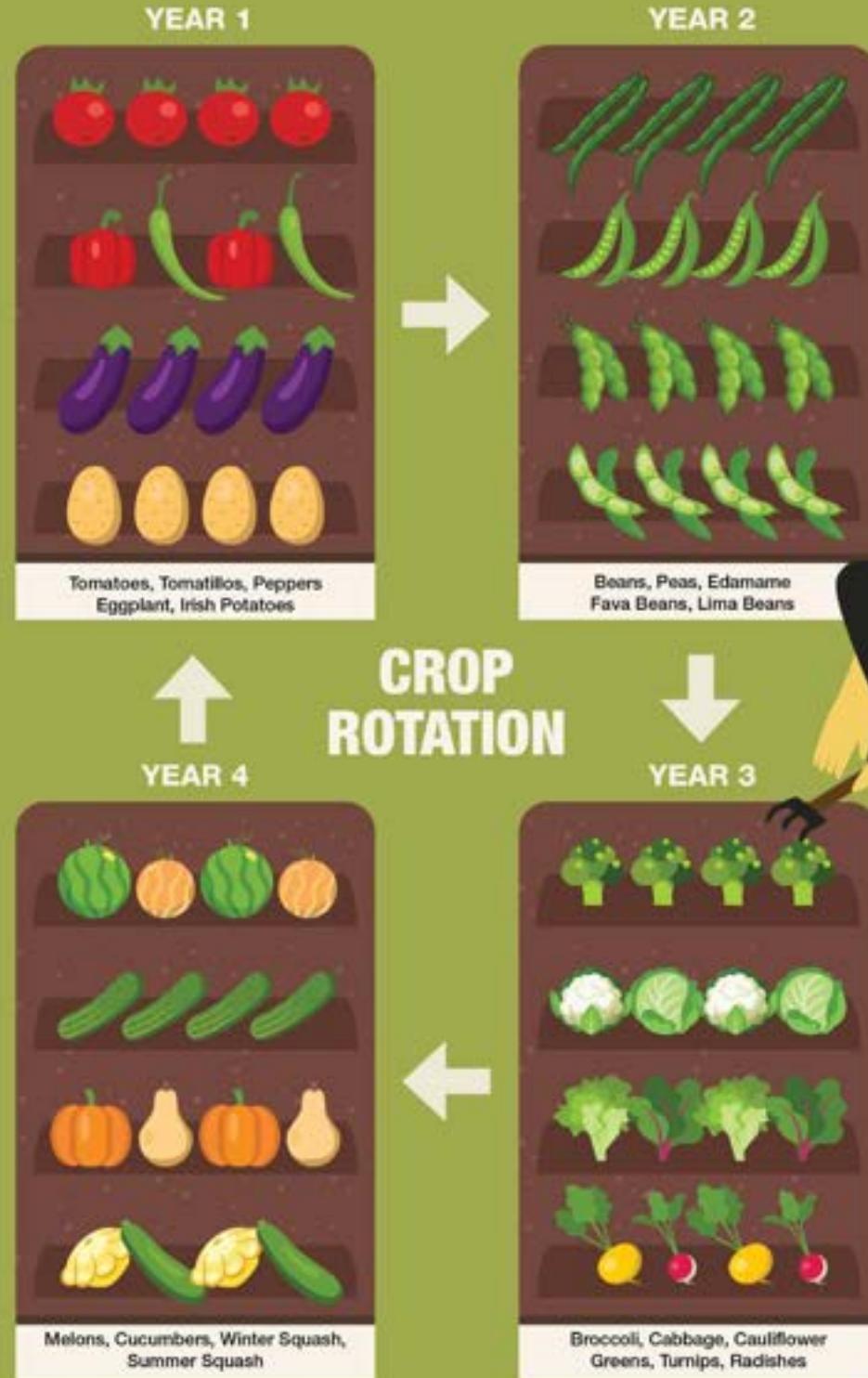


Four-Year Crop Rotation Guide

Looking for a way to help reduce insect pests, plant diseases, and the use of chemicals and pesticides? Consider rotating the crops in your garden!

Here's a sample of what a four-year crop rotation plan could look like in one area of your garden. For a comprehensive garden crop rotation and companion planting guide, scan the QR code or visit

[extension.wvu.edu/
crop-rotation-guide](http://extension.wvu.edu/crop-rotation-guide)



Preserving Your Harvest at Home

Interested in preserving your garden's bounty? Preserving food is an excellent, efficient and safe way (when following tested recipes) to keep your harvest throughout the winter months when fruit and vegetable products are generally at a minimum. Which method of preserving is right for you?

Canning

Properly canned foods are shelf stable and will maintain good quality if stored in a cool, dry, dark place between 50 and 70 F. Contrary to popular belief, canned foods will not be good forever. Instead, only the amount of food that can be eaten within one year should be canned. Canning does require several different pieces of equipment and utensils, including water-bath and pressure canners, jars, lids, rings, jar lifter and bubble remover.

Freezing

Most fruits and vegetables and virtually all meat store well in a freezer. Freezing is great for raw and cooked products. It takes relatively little equipment, only requiring freezer-safe containers, bags or a vacuum sealer, and a blancher or stockpot (for blanching raw vegetables). Most frozen items kept at 0 F or below will retain quality for at least 6 to 12 months, or much longer if properly vacuum sealed. Storage of frozen items does require electricity and available freezer space.

Drying

Food drying is generally used as a supplemental food preservation method to canning and freezing, because many items cannot be safely dried. Drying is great for making shelf-stable snacks, such as fruit leathers and jerky, and the perfect way to preserve large amounts of herbs to be used in cooking.

[Learn More Here](#)



PLANTING ZONES



The 2026 WVU Extension Garden Calendar is produced and distributed each year as a service to West Virginia's home gardeners and agricultural producers. This project is just one of many meaningful resources and programs provided by WVU Extension. If you like the calendar and would like to help us offset the costs of printing this piece, you can make a donation at give.wvu.edu/extension

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Special thanks to Mayfield Farm and Hazel Run Flower Farm for helping us capture some of our beautiful flower photos!

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