A New York City Garden Calendar: Veggies and Cover Crops for All Seasons

Have you ever had early-planted tomatoes get zapped by a late frost? Or summer-planted broccoli flower and turn bitter? If so, you know that planting crops at the right time is important to ensure healthy plants and a good harvest! This timeline shows rough planting dates for **Spring, Summer, and Fall vegetables** and seasonal niches for **Summer, Winter-Kill, and Over-Wintering cover crops**. See the back of this handout for lists of vegetables and cover crops in each category.

### Rotation Planning
- Each year, try to **plant 1-2 vegetables AND a cover crop in each section of your garden**. Below are example rotation plans.
- Be sure to **rotate to vegetables in a different plant family each year**, to avoid building up soil-borne diseases and pests, and to replenish nutrients after periods when heavy-feeding crops are grown (for example, plants in the Tomato and Cucurbit families).

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<th>Year 1</th>
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| **Spring Veggie:**  
Ex: peas  
(over-wintering cover crop from last year – cut down in late April) | **Summer Veggie:**  
Ex: cucumber or zucchini  
**Fall Veggie:**  
Ex: kale | **Spring Veggie:**  
Ex: spinach or beets  
**Summer Veggie:**  
Ex: lettuce, salad greens  
**Winter-kill Cover Crop:**  
Ex: buckwheat & crimson clover | **Fall Veggie:**  
Ex: broccoli or cauliflower |
## Vegetable Planting by Season & Family

### SPRING VEGGIES:
Start seeds indoors (transplants) in Feb. Sow seeds outdoors & plant transplants in April.

**Transplants:**
- **Alliums:** Onions, Scallions (sets)
- **Brassicas:** Bok choy, Broccoli, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Collards, Kale
- **Chenopods:** Chard

**Direct seeding:**
- **Alliums:** Leeks
- **Aster family:** Lettuce
- **Brassicas:** Kohlrabi, Radish, Turnip
- **Chenopods:** Spinach, Beets
- **Legumes:** Peas

### SUMMER VEGGIES:
Start seeds indoors in March. Sow seeds outdoors & plant transplants in May-early June.

**Transplants:**
- **Basellaceae Family:** Malabar spinach
- **Cucurbits:** Cucumber, Melon, Pumpkin, Summer & Winter Squash
- **Mallow Family:** Okra
- **Solanaceae (Nightshade) Family:** Tomato, Pepper, Eggplant

**Direct seeding:**
- **Apiaceae Family:** Carrots
- **Legumes:** Beans

### FALL VEGGIES:
Start seeds in mid-July. Sow seeds outdoors & plant transplants in mid-August- early September.

**Transplants:**
- **Brassicas:** Bok choy, Broccoli, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Collards, Kale
- **Chenopods:** Chard
- (**Cucurbits:** Planted in summer, Pumpkin & Winter Squash will grow through the fall)

**Direct seeding:**
- **Apiaceae Family:** Carrots
- **Aster family:** Lettuce
- **Brassicas:** Kohlrabi, Radish, Turnip
- **Chenopods:** Spinach, Beets
- **Legumes:** Peas

## Cover Crop Seasonal Niches

### WINTER-KILL COVER CROPS:
Seed in mid-August; killed by the cold. Plant Spring crops into the mulch.

- **Legumes:** Field Peas
- **Grass-Legume Mixture:** Oats & Field Peas

### OVER-WINTERING COVER CROPS:
Interseed in September & October beneath & between summer vegetables. Cut down at flowering in mid- to late-April before planting summer vegetables.

- **Legumes:** Crimson Clover (seed in early Sept); Hairy Vetch (seed in early October)
- **Grass-Legume Mixtures:** Rye & Crimson Clover; Rye & Hairy Vetch

### SUMMER COVER CROPS:
Seed after early spring crops in May – June. Cut down in August before fall crops. In buckwheat/legume mixtures, trim the buckwheat at flowering to increase space & light for legume growth.

- **Legumes:** Berseem Clover, Crimson Clover
- **Buckwheat-Legume Mixtures:** Buckwheat & Berseem or Crimson Clover