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Vegetable Planting Times - Guidelines for Long Island

The following table can be used as a guideline for determining when you may want to consider planting vegetable seeds outdoors, seeds indoors (for starting transplants), and transplants (plants) outdoors on Long Island. Weather conditions will vary on Long Island and in any given year the spring growing season may be “ahead” or “behind” schedule sometimes for a week or two or more. Another limiting factor in spring is wet soil conditions. Turning soil under or rototilling when soil is wet has the potential to damage the soil structure. This can cause a hard, crusty layer of soil at the surface as well as hard clods or balls of soil that interfere with seeding and good root development.

The information below is a guideline. There is considerable room for adjustment depending on the size of your garden, method of gardening, individual variety characteristics, and the methods you use to cultivate soil between plants and rows to control weeds. You can also obtain valuable information on seed spacing and plant thinning from the seed package label. You may also find the leaflet titled [Using Average Freeze Dates for Starting Vegetable Seeds](#) (available from our office or web site) useful as well.

Vegetable	Plant/Hill Spacing	Distance Between Rows	Planting Time		
			Seeds Indoors	Seeds Outdoors	Plants Outdoors
Asparagus	12 in.	4 ½ - 6 ft.			Mid April – early May
Beans	6 – 8 in.	2 – 3 ft.		Late May - early June; up to mid July	
Beets	2 in.	16 – 24 in.		Late April	
Broccoli	7 – 10 in.	34 – 36 in.	March	Mid April to late July	Early April through early September
Cabbage	24 – 36 in.			Mid April	June to early July
Carrots	1 ½ - 2 in.	18 – 36 in.		Early April	
Cauliflower	15 – 24 in.	36 in.	March	June	April & July
Corn, sweet	8 – 12 in.	30 – 36 in.		Mid April to July	
Cucumber	10 – 15 in.	5 - 6 ft.		Late May to late June	
Eggplant	18 – 24 in.	3 – 3 ½ ft.	Early to mid April		Late May to early June
Lettuce	Variety dependant	1 ½ ft.		April to early September (depends on type)	
Muskmelon			Early – mid May	Late May – early June	Late May – early June
Onions	4 – 5 in.	1 ½ ft.	Late February	Early April	Early April

			Planting Time		
Vegetable	Plant/Hill Spacing	Distance Between Rows	Seeds Indoors	Seeds Outdoors	Plants Outdoors
Peas	½ - 1 in.	32 – 36 in.		Late March to Late May	
Peppers	12 in.	3 ft.	Early to mid April		Late May – early June
Potatoes	6 – 15 in.	34 – 36 in.			Potato (seed pieces)
Pumpkin & Squash	(Bush type) 18 – 24 in.; (Vine type) 12 – 24 in.	(Bush type) 4 – 6 ft.; (Vine type) 6 – 8 ft.		Late May to late June	
Radishes	1 in.	1 ft.		April through August	
Spinach	6 to 8 per ft.	12 – 18 in.		Early April – May (spring) & August (fall)	
Tomatoes	12 – 30 in. (varies with variety, staking/caging method)	3 – 6 ft. (varies with variety, staking/caging method)	Early - mid April		Late May – early June
Watermelon	3 – 4 ft.	6 -8 ft.	Late April – early May	Late May – early June	Late May – early June

Key for table: *Plant/Hill Spacing* = amount of space to leave between each plant or hill in a row; *Distance Between Rows* = the suggested distance to leave between each row – this distance can be less when space is limited or experience has shown that closer spacing is manageable; *Seeds Indoors/Seeds Outdoors/Plants Outdoors* = time periods to use as a guide to start seeds or to plant transplants (plants).

Resource: *Vegetable Production Handbook*. 142-VPH. Cornell University. 1994.

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