

alabama SCHOOL GARDEN calendar





AUGUST

What to Expect:

- Temperatures are hot! This is a very stressful environment for plants and they will need to be watered regularly.
- Summer plants can continue growing into September with proper care (*plenty of water, pest control*); however, they may need to be removed to make space for the fall garden.

Purchase	Garden Tasks	Plant Indoors	Plant Outdoors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compost • Seeds for fall plantings • Indoor seed starting supplies: seed starting mix, craft sticks, and additional pots, as needed • Gardening supplies: tools, gloves, pest controls, fertilizers, row covers, etc. • Education supplies: journals, pencils, clipboards, etc. • Plant seedlings (<i>if you will not be starting seeds indoors and the weather is cool enough to plant in late August</i>) • Mulch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize seeds • Inventory gardening and educational supplies • Start seeds in greenhouse or Grow Cart (<i>1st or 2nd week of August</i>) • Calculate how many cubic yards of compost are needed (<i>use an online compost calculator to help!</i>) • Remove summer plants (<i>if applicable</i>) and add 1–2” of compost • Work soil, prepare beds, and apply mulch to beds • Direct seed if conditions are favorable (<i>3rd or 4th week of August</i>) • If you purchased seedlings, transplant if conditions are favorable (<i>3rd or 4th week of August</i>) • Plan crop map for fall garden • Test irrigation system and repair if needed • Turn compost pile 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broccoli • Bok Choy • Cabbage • Cauliflower • Cilantro • Collards • Dill • Kale • Kohlrabi • Head Lettuce • Mustard Greens • Parsley • Spinach • Swiss chard 	<p><i>Direct Seed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arugula • Beets • Carrots • Cilantro • Collards • Dill • Kale • Lettuce/Salad Mix • Mustard Greens • Parsley • Radishes • Spinach • Swiss Chard • Turnips 	<p><i>If cool enough, transplant:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broccoli • Bok Choy • Cabbage • Cauliflower • Cilantro • Collards • Dill • Kale • Kohlrabi • Head Lettuce • Mustard Greens • Parsley • Spinach • Swiss chard



SEPTEMBER

What to Expect:

- Temperatures are still hot; may start to see some cooler nights.
- After transplanting, plants will need to be watered regularly.

Purchase	Garden Tasks	Plant Indoors	Plant Outdoors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant seedlings as needed <i>(especially if you did not start seeds indoors!)</i> • Garlic bulbs and strawberry plants <i>(3rd or 4th week of September)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harden off greenhouse or Grow Cart plants one week before transplanting • Direct seed and/or transplant when conditions are favorable • Fertilize new seedlings weekly • Water well • Thin crops that have been direct seeded, if needed <i>(e.g. greens, herbs, turnips, salad mix)</i> • Turn compost pile 		<p><i>Direct Seed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arugula • Beets • Carrots • Collards • Kale • Lettuce/Salad Mix • Mustard Greens • Radishes • Spinach • Swiss Chard • Turnips <p><i>Transplant:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broccoli • Bok Choy • Cabbage • Cauliflower • Cilantro • Collards • Dill • Kale • Kohlrabi • Head Lettuce • Mustard Greens • Parsley



OCTOBER

What to Expect:

- Temperatures typically remain hot during the day, with cooler periods in the evenings. This cooler period, even if only at nighttime, helps plant growth; fall crops do not like the heat!
- If it is hot, plants may appear stressed during the day.
- October can be a month of temperature fluctuations! Be mindful of frosts and prepare to cover plants.
- Pest alert! They are often out in full force this month.

Purchase	Garden Tasks	Plant Indoors	Plant Outdoors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit donation request for seeds for Spring plantings • Garlic bulbs (<i>if planting again in November</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transplant and mulch strawberry and garlic plants • Continue to direct seed if needed (<i>1st and 2nd week of October</i>); re-seed crops that did not have good germination in September • Thin crops that have been direct seeded, if needed (<i>e.g. greens, herbs, turnips, salad mix</i>) • Harvest as necessary; plan farm stands (<i>if plants are healthy, you should be able to harvest every couple of weeks</i>) • Fertilize as needed • Water regularly • Check for pests regularly and control as needed • Remove weeds • Watch for frosts/freezes and row cover as necessary • Collect leaves to add to compost pile • Turn compost pile 		<p><i>Direct Seed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arugula • Radishes • Greens that will overwinter • Lettuce/Salad Mix that will be harvested young • Spinach <p><i>Transplant:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garlic • Strawberries



NOVEMBER

What to Expect:

- Days are shorter – daylight saving time ends.
- Temperatures are generally cooler, though there may still be some hot days! If warm weather persists, you may see some premature “bolting” of plants.
- Plant growth will begin to slow in plants that have already reached full maturity.
- Less need to water and fertilize.
- Expect more frosts/freezes during this month; plan to row cover accordingly.
- If temperatures remain cold, pest problems should taper off.

Purchase	Garden Tasks	Plant Indoors	Plant Outdoors	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvest as necessary; plan farm stands • Thin carrots and beets • Water as needed • Fertilize as needed • Check for pests regularly and control as needed • Watch for frosts/freezes and row cover as necessary • Make plans for Thanksgiving holiday garden care • Collect leaves to add to compost pile • Turn compost pile 		<i>Direct Seed:</i>	<i>Transplant:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garlic



DECEMBER

What to Expect:

- Days continue to get shorter throughout the month; plant growth begins to slow down.
- Cold temperatures, more frosts and freezes.
- Wetter month.
- Garden will mostly take care of itself; very little maintenance required.

Purchase	Garden Tasks	Plant Indoors	Plant Outdoors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeds for spring plantings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to thin carrots and beets as necessary • Harvest as much as possible this month, as there will likely be frosts/freezes; some crops can be left to overwinter (<i>e.g. beets, carrots, cabbage, any greens that are still healthy</i>) • Plan at least one farm stand before Winter Break • Watch for frosts/freezes and row cover as necessary • Make plans for Winter Break garden care • Plan crops for spring garden 		<i>Direct Seed:</i>	<i>Transplant:</i>



JANUARY

What to Expect:

- Days are shorter and plant growth slows down; many crops will move into dormancy if there is less than 10 hours of daylight.
- Cold temperatures mean crops are generally happier, there are fewer insect pests, and row covers are necessary to protect against frosts/freezes.
- If there are unseasonably mild temperatures, crops may begin to “bolt” (*denoting the end of their life cycle!*), pests will linger, and strawberry plants may set flowers prematurely (*which is not desirable!*).

Purchase	Garden Tasks	Plant Indoors	Plant Outdoors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indoor seed starting supplies: seed starting mix, craft sticks, and additional pots as needed • Seeds for spring plantings (<i>especially if you did not buy any before Winter Break!</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garden clean-up – remove dead/diseased plants or plants that have bolted; remove yellowing or diseased leaves from plants that will remain in the garden; <i>optional:</i> leave flowering plants in the garden as a teaching tool or to attract pollinators in the spring • Harvest when necessary • Clean pots for indoor seed starting, if reusing • Inventory Grow Cart supplies and change lightbulbs as necessary • Start seeds in greenhouse or Grow Cart • Watch for frosts/freezes and row cover as necessary • Remove any premature blooms on strawberry plants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broccoli • Cauliflower • Cilantro • Collards • Dill • Kale • Kohlrabi • Head Lettuce • Mustard Greens • Napa Cabbage • Pac Choi • Parsley • Spinach • Swiss chard 	<i>Direct Seed:</i>	<i>Transplant:</i>



FEBRUARY

What to Expect:

- Days are still cold, wet, and gray. More daylight starts towards the end of the month.
- It's the rainy season! Wet conditions mean less watering.
- Increase in garden maintenance is necessary.

Purchase	Garden Tasks	Plant Indoors	Plant Outdoors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional compost to top off beds (<i>if needed</i>) • Spring Onions (<i>1st week of February</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add compost as needed • Work soil and prepare beds for spring plantings • Build pea trellis • Start fertilizing strawberries; water when necessary • Harvest when necessary; cabbages and carrots may be ready during this month • Direct seed when conditions are favorable (<i>sugar snap peas and beets must be seeded in the 1st or 2nd week of February</i>) • Water newly seeded beds well • Monitor and care for seedlings in greenhouse or Grow Cart; start more seeds indoors in the case of poor germination • Watch for frosts/freezes and row cover as necessary (<i>especially seedlings!</i>) • Turn compost pile 		<p><i>Direct Seed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arugula • Beets • Carrots • Cilantro • Collards • Dill • Kale • Lettuce/Salad Mix • Mustard Greens • Parsley • Radishes • Spinach • Swiss Chard • Sugar Snap Peas • Turnips <p><i>Transplant:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring Onions



MARCH



What to Expect:

- Daylight saving starts in early March; days are getting longer.
- It's still the rainy season! Monitor soil moisture and water when needed.

Purchase	Garden Tasks	Plant Indoors	Plant Outdoors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant seedlings as needed (<i>especially if you had little success with greenhouse or Grow Cart plants</i>) • Perennial herbs (<i>e.g. sage, rosemary, oregano, thyme, mint, chives</i>) • Additional mulch as necessary • Sweet potatoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work soil and add compost as necessary • Fertilize strawberries and water when necessary (<i>increase to once/week once flowers develop</i>) • Harvest any lingering fall crops, then remove if space is needed • Continue to direct seed (<i>before Spring Break, if you can!</i>) • Harden off Grow Cart plants one week before transplanting • Transplant seedlings (<i>mid-late March</i>) • Cover strawberries with bird block netting (<i>late March</i>) • Mulch newly planted beds • Water newly planted seeds and seedlings • Fertilize new seedlings weekly • Watch for late frosts/freezes and row cover as necessary (<i>if strawberries have produced flowers, they will also need to be covered</i>) • Make plans for Spring Break garden care • Turn compost pile 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sweet potato slips 	<p><i>Direct Seed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arugula • Radishes • Greens or Lettuce/Salad Mix that will be harvested young <p><i>Transplant:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broccoli • Cauliflower • Chives • Cilantro • Collards • Dill • Kale • Kohlrabi • Head Lettuce • Mint • Mustard Greens • Napa Cabbage • Oregano • Pac Choi • Parsley • Rosemary • Sage • Spinach • Swiss Chard • Thyme



APRIL

What to Expect:

- Warmer temperatures during the day; moderate temperatures at night.
- It's still the rainy season! Continue to monitor soil moisture and water when needed.
- Increase garden maintenance to care for newly planted crops.
- Strawberry and pea production begin this month!
- If the heat of summer arrives early, crops may begin to “bolt” and/or growth will slow.

Purchase	Garden Tasks	Plant Indoors	Plant Outdoors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeds for summer plantings (<i>e.g. flowers, cover crops, and/or vegetables if you have someone to care for the garden</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water well and regularly • Fertilize as needed • Continue to fertilize and water strawberries • Harvest berries when fully red and ripe (<i>daily</i>), peas when pods plump (<i>daily</i>), and other crops when necessary • Plan farm stands • Direct seed shorter maturity crops • Optional: direct seed flowers like sunflowers and zinnias after danger of last frost has passed • Check for pests regularly and control as needed • Remove weeds • Turn compost pile 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once sweet potato slips are a few inches tall, remove from sweet potato and transfer to water so that the slip can root 	<p><i>Direct Seed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flowers like zinnias, sunflowers, cockscomb, or cosmos • Radishes • Arugula • Salad Mix (<i>to harvest young</i>) 	<p><i>Transplant:</i></p>



MAY



What to Expect:

- Temperatures begin to rise. May be very hot at this point, so crops will need to be watered regularly.
- Heat may cause most of the spring crops to “bolt;” peas may not set fruit if it is too hot.
- Strawberry and pea production will begin to taper off in late May or June (*depending on specific variety*).
- Summer pests begin to come out!

Purchase	Garden Tasks	Plant Indoors	Plant Outdoors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit donation request for seeds for Fall plantings • Additional mulch as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water regularly • Continue to direct seed flowers throughout the month of May • Harvest as necessary; plan last farm stand before the end of school • Harvest peas and strawberries daily until the end of production • Check for pests and control as needed • Remove weeds • Remove spring crops after the end of school and mulch the beds • Turn compost pile 		<i>Direct Seed:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flowers like zinnias, sunflowers, cockscomb, or cosmos 	<i>Transplant:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sweet potato slips



This calendar will take you and your school garden throughout the entire school year. With helpful sections such as **“What to Expect”** and **“Garden Tasks,”** remembering what to do each month in your school garden will be a breeze.