

# THO

THE SECOND  
SEASON: YOUR  
GUIDE TO A  
WINTER  
GARDEN

Purple Haze & Scarlet Nantes



*"In the midst of winter, I finally learned that there was in me an invincible summer."* Albert Camus

## Winter Garden?

A winter garden is such a blessing! As the days grow shorter and the mornings and evenings grow cooler, many of our most flavorful, useful and unusual vegetables are ready to be planted. Interestingly, many of our favorite vegetables **NEED** that snap of cold weather to deliver their unique taste. These winter vegetables also require less water than their summer counterparts. So let's get those garden plans written! Many veggies need special ordered, such as garlic, onion, [potatoes](#) and [asparagus](#). But first, let's prepare the soil.

## Winter

## Veggies

Artichoke

Arugula

Asparagus

Beets

Berries

Broccoli

Carrot

Cabbage

Cauliflower

Celery

Collards

Dill

Fava Beans

Garlic

Kale

Kohlrabi

Leek

Lettuce

Mustard

Onion

Parsnip

Potatoes

Radish

Snap Peas

Spinach

Swiss

Chard

Turnip

## Preparation



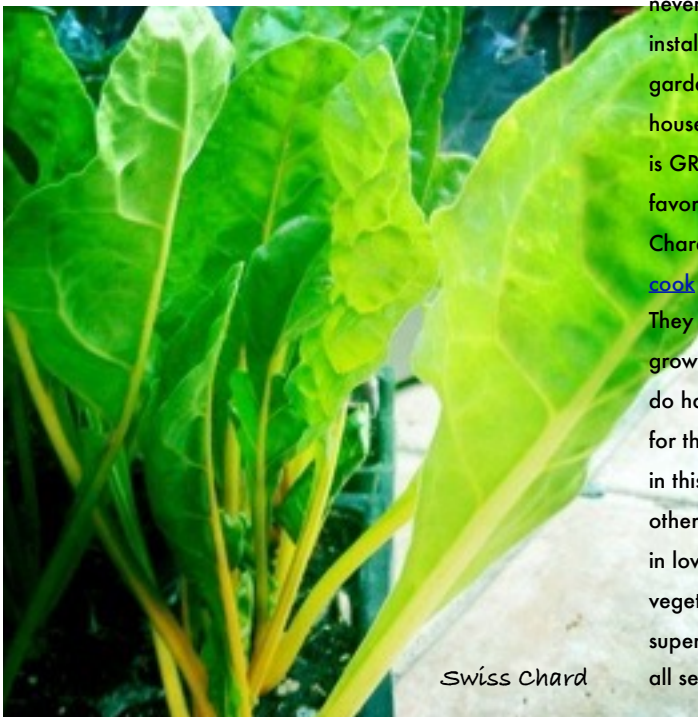
get better  
yields from  
better soil

Fall is a great time to turn over your soil. You want to dig down at least 12 inches. Discard debris, roots, rocks and [cutworms](#). Work the soil between your [gloved](#) fingers to break up clods of dirt. This is a lot of work but essential to a healthy garden.

All vegetables like well-drained soil and this is how you get it. You need to pay special attention if you are growing root vegetables which require a soil medium that is free of obstructions. Your soil should be a fine silty loam. Otherwise you will have bent, pock-marked and/or diseased veggies and you won't know it until you pull them out. That makes for a disappointing harvest, so put in the work now. Seeds grow best in this soil too. A good turn of the garden soil also means you can avoid diseases that affect winter crops like broccoli, cabbage and potatoes. These crops should NOT be planted in the exact same soil they were

the year before. In my raised beds, I find turning the soil prevents those problems. If you grew these crops in a container, you should re-purpose the soil. While preparing the soil, push your spent bean plants down into the soil to make use of all their stored nitrogen. It's also time to amend your garden. I add [compost](#) at this time as well as dry organic fertilizers. I use a mix of [Dr. Earth Organic Vegetable Fertilizer](#), [bone meal](#), [blood meal](#) and [agricultural lime](#). I [buy my fertilizers in bulk](#) and mix them up as I go along. I store the fertilizer mix in recycled glass jars. To avoid fertilizer burn, always water well after adding dry fertilizers to the soil, and try to wait a day or two before you plant if you can. You can also add the fertilizers to your compost in advance of planting your vegetables.

## Greens: Chard & Kale



Swiss Chard

My favorite garden vegetable is one I never tried before installing a vegetable garden at my own house. That vegetable is GREENS! My favorites are Swiss Chard & Kale. I love to [cook](#) and [juice](#) them. They are super easy to grow year long. You do have to watch out for the pests described in this blog, but otherwise you will be in love with these vegetables and their super-healthy benefits all season long.

Kale & Swiss Chard can be planted by [seed](#) or by seedling. Chard comes in a variety of colors but it is no match for Kale's variety (which has been around for centuries). A few of Kale's varieties include the meaty, "Dino" Lacinato, the colorful Red Russian and the curly Winterbor and Redbor. To use in salads, cut kale with a fine chop and use lemon or lime juice to make the leaves tender.

## Winter Garden Issues



I wish I could say winter was the end of garden pests but I swear the buggers just get hungrier. These innocuous looking cabbage worms will wipe out an entire kale or broccoli plant in a matter of days. Your best bet is to hand pick them off. Where you see one, you will see more. Check every day. They really blend in and love to rest along stems and under leaves right along the rib of the leaf. They can be much smaller than the ones pictured here and yet very destructive.







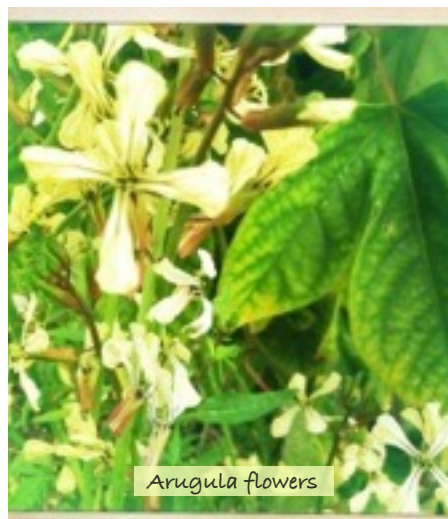
## Lettuce

Lettuce comes in lots of tasty varieties and it grows well from seed, so I invite you to experiment with different tastes and textures. Even their names invite you: Speckles, Freckles, Deer Tongue, Tango, Lolla Rossa. I have had much success from seed with [Black-Seeded Simpson](#) and [Parris Island Cos](#). Lettuce doesn't take up much room in your garden and can grow under larger plants as well. It is compatible to all veggies.

Lettuce does not like burning heat or too much direct sun. In summer I cover mine with a [floating row cover](#) or a [shade net](#). Too much warmth can make a lettuce "bolt" which is what happens when a lettuce plant starts to spiral upward. The end result is the lettuce will flower before it should, making the leaves bitter. Remove the plant at that time. (In general, you can treat spinach as you would lettuce.)

The exception to the bolting rule is arugula. Arugula is a spicy lettuce green known as "Rocket" in England. You can cultivate an arugula "patch" by letting the arugula flower and go to seed without removing it. The seeds will fall out of their dry little pockets and re-seed in your garden giving you a another round of peppery goodness.

Harvesting lettuce is easy. Simply cut off the leaves you want to use, starting from the outside of the plant, and leaving two inches at the bottom. The plant will grow back several times if you are lucky. You can harvest an entire head of lettuce this way as long as you leave the 2" of plant at the base. As part of your regular maintenance, remove browning, broken or wilted leaves from the plant.



## On the down-low

### Root Vegetables

To get the best yield from all root veggies, completely break up the soil and add lots of fresh compost. (Revisit the earlier garden preparation section for more information.)

To harvest any root vegetable, dig up a bit of the veggie and see how big it has grown. It is fine to harvest younger, smaller veggies. If you want the plant to grow a little more, simply cover it back up. Root vegetables need mounded or mulched as they grow to keep their "shoulders" from drying out. If you see their shoulders peeking out, cover them up with soil or compost. Mounding also allows for more root growth!

#### Carrot

You will never again take a simple carrot for granted after growing your own. It feels like a miracle when you get a long, straight carrot, and it is! Enjoy the [many unique varieties of carrot](#) not available in grocery stores or nurseries as carrots grow well from seed. Look for [pelleted seeds](#) for easier planting. Expect that your carrots will grow a bit shorter than what is pictured in the seed catalogs.

#### Beet

Both the greens and the root of these veggies are delicious. You can harvest the greens off beets 2x before harvesting the beets underground. Here is a [classic recipe](#) for cooking beet greens. These grow well from seed or seedling. Harvest the beets when they are young. They dry out easily in our temperate winter.

#### Radish

I give a lot of info on growing and preparing radishes in this [Seed to Plate blog](#). Radishes grow briskly from seed and can be planted in the exact same row with carrot seeds. Try the beautiful [Cherry Belle & French Breakfast](#).





# Sugar Snap Peas

## 1. Sugar Peas vs. Snow Peas



Snow Peas are flat and often used in Asian cooking. Sugar Snap Peas are the plumper, juicy ones.

## 2. Support me.

This plant grows quickly so install **supports** when you put in seeds. You can also plant seedlings but seeds come up super fast and they are so much cheaper.

## 3. Harvest carefully.

Pick your peas often. The more you pick, the most they grow. Do not yank the plant or it will break apart. Use two hands: one on the stem and one on the pod.

## 4. Battles with radish for best kid vegetable

The seeds are large and easy to handle. Kids love the taste of sugar snap peas, and unlike those dirty root vegetables, organically-grown sugar snap peas require no cleaning, and can be enjoyed right off the vine. The way kids like



Strawberries & spinach are the best of friends.



## The rest of the gang

Companion planting is always important. I know from experience that spinach and strawberries are mutually beneficial in the garden. I've read over and over that garlic and onion don't like beans and peas, but I've yet to find this to be true.

I will say, you should plant onion and garlic away from long-term plants (i.e. root vegetables, brassicas) that have high water requirements as onion and garlic go through a no-water phase. You can solve this problem by planting short-lived plants, such as lettuce, by your garlic and onion seedlings; you can quickly harvest your lettuce when garlic and onion tops fall over and need drier conditions to form their papery exteriors.

Flowers are always important to plant to bring in **pollinators** (you greenbacks call 'em "bees"). In winter I plant pansies, petunias, poppies and sweet alyssum. Mint, sage, rosemary, thyme and geranium are all good at repelling cabbage worm. (Never plant mint directly in your vegetable garden as it is extremely invasive. Keep it in a container near your garden.)

Broccoli is a wonderful garden plant, you just need to harvest the heads before they flower, and they can flower quickly! Plant several to get a good yield. I have had less success with Cauliflower (the heads need covered to keep them white) and Brussel Sprouts (they like a very compacted and undisturbed soil...do not plant any root vegetables or practice successive planting anywhere around them.)

Speaking of successive planting...add seeds every couple weeks to extend your growing season. [Here's how.](#)

## Winter Garden Issues

Aphids love winter veggies. They can be prevented by not planting your winter veggies too close together and giving constant supervision. Aphids can be killed by wiping the offensive buggers off with your fingers, with a spray from the hose or use some trusty dishwashing liquid spray all over them. The idea here is to smother them rather than poison them so you have to actually douse them (rather than dose them). Cutting off badly infected areas is a good idea and often times, the whole plant has to go for the good of the garden.

Do not let them get as bad as this photo - PLEASE!

Aphids hate onions, garlic & chives. Banana peels dug into

the soil and a dusting with flour will discourage them too.



# give



Sharing our bounty fulfills the covenant made with our miraculous, food-giving planet.

## We need to get our food to those who want it.

Our people are in need of food. They are also in need of super-nutritious foods. We all are. Yet finding truly organic, safe, natural foods from trust-worthy companies is getting harder and harder.

People are also hungry for care. And compassion. And kindness. A harvest delivered by a friend to feed their bellies fills their souls.

And you are fulfilling a great covenant when you complete the circle, when you hand over a bag of organic, homegrown, just-

picked fruits and vegetables and see the look in a mom and dad's eye. You feel it.

Therefore, the bounties and harvests we reap from our organic, home gardens are priceless, and only to become more so.

I urge you to plant a vegetable garden and share it with your neighbors. I urge you to find out who in your community wants help...might not be who you think!

I urge you to invent systems to gather and distribute the home harvest. Parent volunteers at my child's school created a food bank and families at the school were invited to use it. We now donate food from our school garden to those families, and I am

able to donate harvests from my client's gardens, and my own garden, to this fresh food bank as well.

I think an honor system farm stand at local community gardens would also be a good avenue for food distribution. Those with extras and those in need could use it at will.

When I first moved to NYC, I heard the Metropolitan Museum was free on Tuesdays, but when I arrived, I saw there was a "recommended donation." I was flat broke - just moved to New York! and now crestfallen. But then I saw the donation was 10 cents. 10 cents! There were tall plexiglass boxes and those things was positively full of dimes. I

loved that. The museum really wanted to people to see the art. So they made it happen. We can do that.

This is real help. This is not politics. This is about the wonderful feeling we all get when we give back and are allowed to receive.

No one wants a hand out. Hands are meant for helping and holding. And digging. Weeding. Seeding. Pruning. Picking. Sorting. Cleaning. Caring. And hat's off to all those who do the cooking and cleaning up too! <3



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