

# SEPTEMBER

## LIVINGSCAPE BACKYARD FOOD GARDENING WORKSHOP

### FALL AND WINTER GARDENING - LAST CHANCE

Early Sept. is the last chance to plant fast growing greens for harvest late in the Fall. Plant things like lettuce, spinach, chicory, beets, Swiss chard, or one of the mixes in a dense stand. As soon as they are big enough start harvesting the "baby" plants for salads and to provide space for the other plants to grow larger before harvest. Once the days shorten and the weather cools the plant growth will slow and then stop. You can try over wintering the remaining plants by building a cloche to keep the rain off or just let them fend for themselves. If they slugs don't eat them all they will begin to grow late next Feb. and may provide more salad greens in March and April.

### OVER WINTERING PLANTS

Some types of broccoli and cauliflower have very long days to maturity, 150-250 days, and are bred to be planted in the summer then harvested from Jan. to May of the following year. Checkout Territorial Seed's Fall and Winter catalog for these type of seeds. It's too late to plant these seeds but regular vegetable seeds with 60-80 days to maturity can be planted in mid-Sept. and hold in the garden until next spring when their growth will resume and they will make a crop. Other plants to try over wintering are fava beans, peas, potatoes, and onions (Walla Walla Sweets). These plants will mature much earlier than any Spring planted seed or transplant. Success often depends more on the winter weather than gardening skill but using a cloche and controlling slugs will greatly increase your chance of success.

### Planting calendar and what to do in the garden in Sept./Oct.

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| September / <b>Bold</b> crops for this month and next month are planted for Fall and Winter harvest. Will mature from Oct. through June of the following year. | <b>Garlic, Radishes, Spinach, Lettuce, Fava Beans</b> |
| October  | <b>Garlic, Fava Beans</b>                             |

September is another transition month in the garden. The summer crops are winding down and the early maturing fall crops are just getting started. If the weather holds tomatoes, pole beans, summer squash, egg plant and peppers will produce well into October. By late Sept. broccoli, lettuce, carrots, beets, and most of the other July and Aug. planted produce should be ready for harvest. With the shorter, cooler days in late Sept. these crops hold well in the garden without bolting or deteriorating in quality. As your summer veges. become unproductive try to remove them as soon a possible, add them to the compost pile, and plant a cover crop or allow the bed to go fallow. This is a great time to add unfinished compost or other organic matter to the beds. Try digging a trench 8"-10" deep in the center of the bed then filling it with organic matter than is not completely broken down. Pile the soil back on to cover the organic matter. Most soil organisms that break down organic matter are not active during the winter when the soil is cold but one, the earth worm, is active all winter. When you turn the bed over in the spring the organic matter will be full of earth worms and should be well broken down. This is also a good time to prepare a bed to be used in Feb. or March for early peas, fava bean, or potatoes. Add compost and till the bed when the moisture is correct in Sept. or early Oct. Hump the soil up in the center of the raised bed so the rain will run off and cover it with clear plastic held down by rocks or boards. The plastic will keep the winter rain from compacting the soil and keep it dryer. After sowing seeds or potatoes the plastic can be put back in place to warm the soil then be removed when the seeds germinate and replaced with a floating row cover. This technique allows you to have a planting bed with excellent tilth even if we have nonstop rain for the month of February.