

Getting the most from the 2021 home fruit and vegetables

UT extension w436

<https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/documents/w436.pdf>

- Step 1. Be aware of climate and temperature trends in your specific location. There is a large range in growing season length across Tennessee, so be familiar with the local climate.
- A brief table is below. Additionally, more detailed information can be found by consulting [weather.gov/media/ohx/PDF/frostfreeze probs.pdf](https://www.weather.gov/media/ohx/PDF/frostfreeze probs.pdf).
- This National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) publication will allow you to look at frost/freezing probability data for all stations in Tennessee.

	McMinnville	Nashville
• Last spring frost	April 28	April 21
• First fall frost	Oct. 6	Oct. 10

Check out UThort.com to find all these publications and more

You can find the publication online or the extension office at 315 John Rice Blvd

- W 346-A Site selection and soil testing extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-A.pdf
- W 346-B Garden planning, plant preparation and planting extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-B.pdf
- W 346-C Managing plant nutrition extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-C.pdf
- W 346-D Plant management practices extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-D.pdf
- W 346-E Building and using raised beds extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-E.pdf
- W 346-F Season extension methods extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-F.pdf
- W 346-G Stewardship in soil management extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-G.pdf
- W 346-H Growing tomatoes extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-H.pdf
- W 346-I Harvest and storage extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-I.pdf
- A series of ten crop specific publications on garden vegetables numbers D57-61, D68-71: extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/D57.pdf
- W 661 Conventional and organic garden products extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W661.pdf
- W 316 Home vegetable garden disease control extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W316.pdf
- PB 595 You can control garden insects extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/PB595.pdf
- PB 1622 Disease and insect control in home fruit plantings extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/PB1622.pdf

Getting Started Well with Home Fruit

- Selecting Crops that Fit Your Needs and Site – What Are Your Goals?
- Home fruit can be very rewarding but also very challenging.
- Think of home fruit in terms of your goals and how much time, effort, and money you are willing to invest.
- Fruit can be grown for fresh eating, preservation or simply for interesting crops that support wildlife.
- The more you are interested in production, the more time and care the crop will need.
- Site selection, cultivar selection, site preparation, and ongoing management will be essential for rewarding production from fruit trees and small fruit plantings.
- If this all sounds like a bit too much effort, then start much smaller with a few strawberry, blueberry or cranberry plants in raised beds.
- Here is a simple flow chart to walk you through some important decisions tiny.utk.edu/HomeFruitRealities

Selecting Cultivars that Fit Your Needs and Site

- Select cultivars that are well suited to Tennessee climates. Consider chilling hours to make sure bloom time will not be too early or too late.
- Select cultivars that have resistance to common diseases in Tennessee. Our warm, humid climate means that resistance will be very important for many tree fruit diseases like cedar apple rust and fire-blight.
- Select cultivars that produce fruit that you like and in a season of the year that fits your lifestyle.

Excerpts from January

- Wk of Jan 4th; Prepare your garden plan
- Wk of Jan 11th; When considering fruit plant purchases, those from tissue culture are lower in disease risk
- Test germination of leftover seed from last year
- Wk of Jan 18th; Purchase or gather materials to prepare transplants.
- Wk of Jan 25th; Adjust soil pH well before planting blueberries. pH lowering sulfur can take months to fully take effect.

TASKS FOR FEBRUARY

- Now is the time for dormant pruning on many fruit crops—make sure to remove any diseased wood while pruning for production.
- Dormant sprays are also an important early season fruit practice. extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/PB1622.pdf
- Seed cool-season crops for transplanting if needed. Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and similar crops will need approximately 8 weeks from seeding to transplanting. A late March or early April planting will require an early February seeding. extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/D59.pdf
- Gather scion wood for grafting fruit trees if still dormant (this varies by year and region).
- Selecting and storing scion wood for grafting - MSU Extension www.canr.msu.edu/news/selecting_and_storing_sci...
- Apr 11, 2014 — This is the time of year to begin collecting scion wood if you are thinking you may need to perform some grafting this late winter or early spring.
- Order remainder of garden seeds for the 2021 garden. Direct seeded crops can be ordered later, but early provides best selection.

- Seed the earliest of warm-season transplants. An early May transplant date will require a February or early March seeding.
- If conditions allow, you may prepare soil for early seeded cool-season crops. Allow plenty of time for cover crops to decompose. extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-G.pdf

Choosing Between Bare Root and Container Plants

What works best in your....

- **Pros and Cons of Bare Root Plants**

Bare root stock is planted in the early spring while dormant.

It can be cheaper to purchase and ship and a wide range of cultivars are available from suppliers.

Roots can begin growing in native soil immediately and avoid the risk of damage or circling found in container grown roots.

Planting times are restricted to the early spring.

- **Pros and Cons of Container Plants**

Container-grown trees and plants may be planted throughout the year.

This is their main benefit.

They may be more expensive and harder to transport.

Inspect roots for any damage or disease at purchase to ensure you aren't bringing in issues.

Some excerpts from February

- Wk of Feb 22 Could direct seed English peas, mustard, kale and collards in much of Middle TN
- Prepare garden soil in Middle TN and East TN if dry enough.

TASKS FOR MARCH

- Plant fruit trees or plants. Make sure to prevent bare root stock from drying out prior to installation. They can be heeled in outdoors.
- Remove straw protection from strawberry plants before bloom.
- Assemble your spray materials to prepare for fruit season.
- Seed the remainder of warm-season transplants. Tomato transplants need 6-8 weeks, so March seeding means May transplants. extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-B.pdf
- Prepare garden soil if conditions allow. If you are tilling in a cover crop, a few weeks may be needed to decompose the cover crop material. extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-G.pdf
- Seed or transplant cool-season crops.
 - Hardy cool-season crops are usually seeded or transplanted 4-6 weeks before the frost-free date while less cold hardy cool-season crops are usually started 2 weeks prior.
 - weather.gov/media/ohx/PDF/frostfreeze probs.pdf
- Cool season: Beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, onions, peas, potatoes, reddish, spinach, turnips
- Warm season: Beans-[bush, pole, lima], cucumbers, sweet corn, eggplant, okra, peppers, tomato, sweet potato, summer squash, watermelon
- Fall vegetables: Broccoli, cabbage, cucumber[2nd], lettuce, potato, radish, spinach, squash [2nd], tomato [2nd], turnips

Kitchen Equivalents

- 16 ounces = 1 pounds
- 4 pecks = 1 bushel
- 8 quarts = 1 peck
- 4 quarts = 1 gallon

Farm Measures

- Apples 1 bushel = 48 pounds
- Peaches 1 bushel = 48 pounds
- Beans, snap or green 1 bushel = 32 pounds
- Sweet corn in husk 1 bushel = 35 pounds
- Irish potatoes 1 bushel = 56 pounds
- Sweet potatoes 1 bushel = 50-56 pounds
- Tomatoes 1 bushel = 53-59 pounds

From UT Extension Publication sp291-p and TSU Growing Vegetables in Minigardens

- | Vegetable | planting | between | harvest | yield/100 ft row |
|--------------|---------------------|------------|---------|------------------|
| | | row plants | season | |
| • Snap beans | Apr 10
- June 20 | 24" 3" | 52 days | 80-120 lbs. |
| • Tomato | Apr 10-
June 10 | 48" 24" | 70 days | 200- 300 lbs. |

- Install row covers or low tunnels over early season transplants to increase day and night temperatures and support early season growth. extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-F.pdf
- Don't forget to harden of any transplants (see April) to reduce stress and loss once placed in the ground.
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If you do not want to till up your lawn you may consider a container gardening in 2021

[W 436 2021 Tennessee Home Fruit and Vegetable Garden](#)

The **UT Extension** Home Fruit and Vegetable Workgroup has put together a list of ... **Container**-grown trees and **plants** may be planted throughout the year.

- Straw Bale Gardening Has Advantages. Mar 14, 2016 — **University of Tennessee** ... Straw bale gardening is becoming popular as a form of "**container**" gardening, without the container.

Questions: [Garden Basics - Master Gardeners of Rutherford County](#) 2021 **Garden Basics** Class. **Garden Basics** 2021 will be held live on-line via Zoom Meetings.