

Locavore Farm Victory Garden Kit Planting Guide

Plant it. Tend it. Harvest it. Bring it to the table.

Hello, gardener.

Inside this kit is the beginning of a summer story — one that starts with roots, soil, sunlight, water, and a little bit of daily noticing. These plants have already had their first chapter in the greenhouse. Now they are ready to move into your care and begin becoming food, flowers, flavor, and beauty right outside your door.

Wait until the cold nights have passed, choose the sunniest place you have, give everything a deep drink, and tuck each plant into good soil with care.

Most of your Victory Garden plants love **6–8 hours of full sun**, steady moisture, and soil that is rich but not soggy.

Before You Plant

For best success, plant after nights are consistently above **50°F**, especially for tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, beans, and squash. These are warm-season plants and do not love cold feet. Gently loosen the roots before planting. Water each plant well before and after it goes into the ground. Add compost to the planting hole if you have it. Mulch around the base of plants with straw, shredded leaves, untreated grass clippings, or wood mulch to help hold moisture and protect the soil.

What's in Your Victory Garden Kit

Tomatoes

4 specialty tomato plants

Heirloom, cherry, and paste types may include Black Krim, Pineapple, Mortgage Lifter, cherry tomatoes, and San Marzano.

Plant: 24–36 inches apart

Sun: Full sun

Support: Cage, stake, or trellis

Water: Deeply and consistently at the base

Feed: Tomatoes are heavy feeders. Add compost at planting, then feed every 2–3 weeks once they begin growing well. Use a balanced organic vegetable fertilizer early in the season. Once flowers appear, avoid too much nitrogen, which grows lots of leaves but fewer tomatoes. A tomato fertilizer with calcium can help prevent blossom end rot.

Plant Biology: Tomatoes grow from a strong central stem and produce flowers that become fruit after pollination. The yellow flowers contain both male and female parts, so wind and gentle movement help pollinate them. Planting tomatoes deep encourages roots to grow along the buried stem, making the plant stronger and better able to take up water and nutrients.

Harvest: Pick when fully colored and slightly soft.

Use: Tomato sandwiches, salsa, roasted tomato sauce, BLTs, caprese, bruschetta, pasta sauce, and slow-roasted summer tomatoes.

Mrs. Farmer Jones Tip: Water the soil, not the leaves. Wet leaves invite disease, but deep roots grow strong plants.

Peppers

2 specialty pepper plants

Hot or mild varieties may include jalapeño, poblano, gypsy, or melrose.

Plant: 18–24 inches apart

Sun: Full sun

Water: Moderate and consistent

Feed: Peppers like fertile soil, but they do not need to be overfed. Add compost at planting and feed lightly every 3–4 weeks.

Too much nitrogen can make large, leafy plants with fewer peppers. Once flowers form, a vegetable fertilizer with more phosphorus and potassium can support fruiting.

Plant Biology: Peppers are warm-season fruiting plants. Their flowers turn into peppers after pollination. Green peppers are usually immature peppers; if left on the plant longer, many varieties turn red, yellow, orange, or deeper shades and become sweeter or more flavorful.

Harvest: Pick green or let them ripen longer for more color and flavor.

Use: Stuffed poblanos, fajitas, roasted peppers, salsa, pepper jelly, grilled vegetables, and fresh chopped toppings.

Mrs. Farmer Jones Tip: Peppers are patient plants. They often wait for real heat before they take off.

Pole Beans

2 pole bean plants

Plant: 6–8 inches apart

Sun: Full sun

Support: Trellis, fence, teepee, or pole

Water: Steady moisture, especially while flowering

Feed: Beans are light feeders. Add compost before planting, but avoid heavy fertilizer. Beans can work with soil bacteria to fix nitrogen, which means they help pull nitrogen from the air and make it usable in the soil. Too much added nitrogen can lead to lots of vines and fewer beans.

Plant Biology: Pole beans are climbing plants. They send out tendrils and winding stems that search for support. Their flowers become bean pods. The more often you harvest, the more the plant is encouraged to keep producing.

Harvest: Pick when pods are long, tender, and smooth.

Use: Steam, sauté with garlic, roast with olive oil, toss into salads, or pickle.

Mrs. Farmer Jones Tip: Give beans something to climb right away. They were made to reach upward.

Cucumbers

3 cucumber plants

Pickling or slicing varieties may include Marketmore or English cucumber.

Plant: 18–24 inches apart

Sun: Full sun

Support: Trellis if space is tight

Water: Consistent water is very important

Feed: Cucumbers are moderate to heavy feeders. Mix compost into the soil before planting and feed every 2–3 weeks once vines begin running. A balanced vegetable fertilizer works well. Avoid letting them dry out, especially once fruit begins forming.

Plant Biology: Cucumbers grow as vines and produce separate male and female flowers. The female flowers are the ones with a tiny cucumber shape behind the blossom. Bees and pollinators move pollen from male flowers to female flowers so cucumbers can form. If pollination is poor, cucumbers may grow misshapen.

Harvest: Pick when firm, crisp, and before they grow too large.

Use: Fresh cucumber salad, refrigerator pickles, tzatziki, cucumber water, sandwich slices, and snack boards.

Mrs. Farmer Jones Tip: Cucumbers can turn bitter when stressed. Steady water makes a sweeter harvest.

Herbs

5 herb plants

A mix of annual and perennial favorites such as oregano, thyme, parsley, and other kitchen herbs.

Plant: 8–18 inches apart, depending on variety

Sun: Most herbs prefer full sun

Water: Moderate; do not keep soggy

Feed: Herbs do not need heavy feeding. Too much fertilizer can make them grow quickly but taste weaker. Add compost at planting and feed lightly once a month if needed. Herbs grown in containers may need a little more regular feeding because nutrients wash out faster.

Plant Biology: Herbs store fragrant oils in their leaves and stems. Those oils are what give them flavor and aroma. Regular trimming tells the plant to branch out and grow fuller. Some herbs, like oregano and thyme, are perennial and can return year after year. Others, like parsley, are usually grown as annuals or biennials.

Harvest: Snip in the morning when flavor is strongest.

Use: Herb butter, dressings, marinades, roasted vegetables, sauces, soups, grilled meats, and herb salt.

Mrs. Farmer Jones Tip: Keep herbs close to the kitchen if you can. The easier they are to reach, the more likely they are to become part of supper.

Kale

2 kale plants

Plant: 18–24 inches apart

Sun: Full sun to part sun

Water: Steady moisture

Feed: Kale is a leafy green and appreciates nitrogen. Add compost at planting and feed every 3–4 weeks with a balanced organic fertilizer or compost tea. Healthy soil makes tender leaves.

Plant Biology: Kale grows leaves from a central stem. Unlike fruiting plants, the part we eat is the leaf, so the goal is steady leafy growth. When harvested from the outside, the center keeps producing new leaves.

Harvest: Pick outer leaves first, leaving the center to keep growing.

Use: Kale chips, soups, smoothies, sautéed greens, chopped salads, egg scrambles, and grain bowls.

Mrs. Farmer Jones Tip: Smaller kale leaves are tender and sweet. Big leaves are wonderful cooked.

Spinach

2 spinach plants

Plant: 8–12 inches apart

Sun: Full sun in cool weather, part shade as it warms

Water: Keep evenly moist

Feed: Spinach is a leafy green and likes nitrogen-rich soil. Add compost before planting and feed lightly every 2–3 weeks. If leaves begin to pale, it may need a gentle boost from compost tea or organic fertilizer.

Plant Biology: Spinach is a cool-season plant. It grows best in spring and fall. When days get long and hot, spinach may “bolt,” which means it sends up a flower stalk and the leaves become stronger or bitter. Harvesting often can help extend the season.

Harvest: Pick outer leaves while tender.

Use: Salads, smoothies, omelets, pasta, soups, sandwiches, and quick sautés.

Mrs. Farmer Jones Tip: Spinach teaches us timing. Enjoy it early and often before summer heat takes over.

Summer Squash

2 squash plants

Zucchini or patty pan.

Plant: 24–36 inches apart

Sun: Full sun

Water: Deep, steady watering

Space: Give room to spread

Feed: Squash are heavy feeders. Add compost generously at planting and feed every 2–3 weeks once the plant begins growing quickly. A balanced vegetable fertilizer works well. When flowering and fruiting, consistent water and nutrients help keep production strong.

Plant Biology: Squash plants produce large leaves that gather lots of sunlight for fast growth. Like cucumbers, squash produce male and female flowers. The female flowers have a tiny squash behind the blossom. Pollinators are very important. If baby squash shrivel and fall off, it may be due to poor pollination.

Harvest: Pick zucchini when small to medium. Pick patty pan when tender and palm-sized.

Use: Grilled squash, fritters, zucchini bread, roasted vegetables, pasta, stir-fry, casseroles, and summer soups.

Mrs. Farmer Jones Tip: Check squash often. They can go from perfect to baseball bat overnight.

Cut Flowers

2 cut flower plants

Zinnias or other specialty blooms.

Plant: 12–18 inches apart

Sun: Full sun

Water: Regular water at the base

Feed: Flowers enjoy compost and a gentle monthly feeding. Avoid too much nitrogen, which can grow leaves instead of blooms. A bloom-supporting fertilizer can help encourage more flowers.

Plant Biology: Flowers bloom to attract pollinators and make seeds. When you cut flowers or remove old blooms, the plant often responds by making more flowers. This is called deadheading, and it keeps the plant focused on blooming instead of seed-making.

Harvest: Cut flowers in the morning and place stems directly into water.

Use: Kitchen table bouquets, porch jars, neighbor gifts, birthday flowers, and everyday beauty.

Mrs. Farmer Jones Tip: Do not save flowers only for company. Put them where your own people will see them.

Snap Peas

2 snap pea plants

Plant: 4–6 inches apart

Sun: Full sun in cool weather

Support: Trellis, fence, or small teepee

Water: Keep evenly moist

Feed: Peas are light feeders. Like beans, peas can help fix nitrogen in the soil, so they do not need heavy fertilizer. Compost at planting is usually enough. Too much nitrogen may grow vines instead of pods.

Plant Biology: Snap peas are cool-season climbing plants. They use tendrils to grab onto support. Their flowers become pods, and the pods are sweetest when picked young and crisp.

Harvest: Pick when pods are plump, crisp, and bright green.

Use: Eat fresh from the vine, add to salads, stir-fry, lunchboxes, or serve with dip.

Mrs. Farmer Jones Tip: Peas are garden candy. Kids usually understand this before adults do.

Simple Feeding Guide

A garden does not need constant fussing, but it does need nourishment.

At planting:

Add compost or a gentle organic vegetable fertilizer to the soil.

Every 2–3 weeks:

Feed heavy feeders like tomatoes, cucumbers, and squash.

Every 3–4 weeks:

Feed peppers, kale, and spinach as needed.

Lightly or rarely:

Feed herbs, beans, and peas. They do best without too much fertilizer.

Best beginner options:

Compost, worm castings, compost tea, fish emulsion, kelp meal, or an organic vegetable fertilizer.

Important:

Always water before or after feeding. Never fertilize a very dry or stressed plant.

A Little Garden Biology

Plants need four basic things to grow well:

Sunlight gives plants energy through photosynthesis.

Roots take up water and nutrients from the soil.

Leaves act like solar panels, turning sunlight into food for the plant.

Flowers are the beginning of fruit for crops like tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, squash, beans, and peas.

When a plant is healthy below the soil, you will usually see it above the soil.

Strong roots make strong plants.

Healthy leaves feed the harvest.

Flowers become fruit.

Pollinators help make food possible.

Soil is alive, and when we care for it, it cares for us.

Your Weekly Garden Rhythm

Water deeply.

Most plants prefer a deep soaking a few times a week instead of a shallow sprinkle every day.

Look closely.

Check leaves for yellowing, holes, pests, wilting, or spots.

Harvest often.

Many plants produce more when you pick regularly.

Mulch the soil.

Mulch keeps roots cool, holds moisture, and helps prevent weeds.

Feed gently.

A little steady nourishment is better than too much all at once.

Notice what is changing.

The garden will tell you what it needs if you slow down enough to look.

From Garden to Table

A Victory Garden is not just about growing food. It is about slowing down long enough to notice what is alive, what is ready, and what can be made from what is right in front of you.

Make a tomato sandwich.

Snip herbs into butter.

Grill zucchini beside supper.

Let the kids eat peas off the vine.

Put flowers on the table for no reason at all.

Make refrigerator pickles with cucumbers.

Turn tomatoes, peppers, and herbs into one beautiful summer sauce.

Happy planting,

Mrs. Farmer Jones