

HARVEST GUIDE

BEANS (BUSH) – Look at seed packet when planting and use “days until maturity” as a good indication for when to start picking beans. Once harvesting begins, pick consistently to ensure continued supply. Full bean formation in pod is sign of over-maturity. At this stage, beans will be tough. To pick, pull beans off of plant gently. Consider holding plant’s stem in place carefully to prevent breaking branches or pulling roots up. Because varieties vary in size, research the variety you plant to find out what size beans should be at maturity.

BEETS will start to poke out of the soil as they reach harvest size (2-3 inches in diameter, or a little



bigger than a lime). You can also dig the edges to check their size. To harvest, firmly near the root and pull. The green tops are also



edible and very tasty!

BROCCOLI harvesting is a little tricky to figure out. There are a few signs to look for. First, a head in the center stalk of the plant should have formed, and it should be firm and tight. Though size can vary, usually head size should be about 4-7 inches in diameter. Pay attention to color – if you see even a hint of yellow, it’s about to bolt upwards. Using a knife, cut the broccoli head off the plant stalk about 5 inches below the head. After harvesting the main head, you can continue to harvest side shoots which will grow from where the main head was.

Harvest when it looks like this:



If it looks like this, it's about to bolt. Harvest immediately!



Bolted broccoli; will taste bitter



CHARD is ready to harvest when leaves reach a suitable size, or about 6-9 inches in length. Gently break off outer leaves where the stem meets the stalk – be careful not to leave a stub as this makes the plant susceptible to disease! Inner leaves will keep growing for a continued harvest, so be sure to pick regularly.



CILANTRO is ready to harvest once it is 6 inches tall; at this stage, clip or break off outer leaves and leave the central growing point in place for new growth. You should get 2-3 harvests before it bolts so harvest weekly (and it's best to plant new cilantro every 2-3 weeks for continuous supply). For 2nd and 3rd harvests, use clean scissors to cut cilantro about 1/3 of the way down the plant's stalk. Make sure to keep some leaves on the plant, which will help it make new growth for another harvest. You can also wait until plant is larger, and harvest all at once by pulling plant up from its roots. As cilantro bolts, its leaves will start to look different.

Cilantro ready to harvest:



Bolted Cilantro:



Collards and other **Greens** are harvested much like chard. Gently break off outer leaves where the stem meets the stalk, being careful not to leave a stub.



HEAD LETTUCE – as soon as the plant is big enough to eat, pull the entire plant out of the ground, cut off the roots, dip into cold water, and refrigerate until eating. This will keep lettuce fresh and crisp. Watch out for heads that begin to bolt, or elongate in the middle- this means there will be a central stem beginning to grow upwards, and the lettuce will be very bitter.

BOLTING



Ready to harvest:





RADISHES are ready to harvest when you can see the radishes poking through the soil. They should be between $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to 1 inch in diameter, or slightly smaller than a lime. Pull up the entire plant and trim the tops. Smaller-sized radishes taste the sweetest, and once they get too big, they will split and taste tough and bitter.

SALAD MIX & ARUGULA is ready to harvest when it is 4-5 inches tall. Hold a cluster of leaves in one hand and use your other hand to cut at the base of the plants, about $1 \frac{1}{2}$ inches above soil level. Salad mix will keep growing for another harvest or two.



SNAP PEAS are sweetest and most tender when you pick them on the smaller side. When peas get plump and swell, they are tough and cause the plant to stop producing, so right) will be To pick, hold avoid holding the actual plant to prevent damage.



SUMMER SQUASH and **ZUCHINNI** are at their most flavorful and tender when they are small.



Harvest when the fruits are about 6 inches long by cutting the stem or gently twisting the fruit off the plant. During the height of summer, you will have to harvest 2 or 3 times per week to avoid squash that are too large.