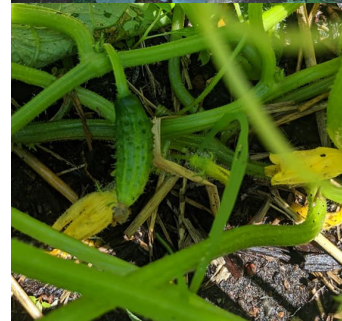



Tb	Turtletree Biodynamics turtletreeseed.org	10 White Birch Rd, Copake, NY 12516 1-518-329-3038
Te	Territorial Seeds www.territorialseed.com	PO Box 158, Cottage Grove, OR 97424-0061 Tel. 1-800-626-0866
Tg	Tomato Growers Supply Company www.tomatogrowers.com	P.O. Box 60015, Ft. Meyers, FL 33906 1-888-478-7333
Th	Thompson & Morgan Inc. www.thompson-morgan.com	PO Box 1308, Jackson, NJ 08527- 0308 Tel. 1-800-274-7333
Tt	Totally Tomatoes www.totallytomato.com	334 W. Stroud Street, Randolph, WI 53956 Tel. 1-800-345-5977
V	Vesey's Seeds, LTD www.veseys.com	York, Prince Edward Island, Canada 902-892-1048
Vi	Victory Seeds www.VictorySeeds.com	PO Box 192, Molalla, Or 97038
Vt	Vermont Bean Seed Co. www.vermontbean.com	334 W. Stroud St, Randolph, WI 53956 Tel. 1-800-349-1071



U of M Extension, Cook County

Vegetable Varieties for Northern Minnesota



www.co.cook.mn.us



2021
U of M Master
Gardeners
And
Experimental
Gardeners of
Cook County

We acknowledge and appreciate the assistance from all our Cook County gardeners who have met over the years and continue to meet and discuss the old and new vegetable varieties. Your input is extremely invaluable to new gardeners in our county.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!



Each variety listed will have the approximate days to maturity. Days to maturity should be used as a relative guide. It generally takes longer for crops to mature in Northern Minnesota unless you are using season extenders like a greenhouse, hoop house or caterpillar low plastic tunnel.

Each variety listed will also have some abbreviations for the catalogs listed at the back of the booklet where these seed varieties may be found. (This is not an inclusive list.)

At the end of this catalog you will find some mail order seed catalogs / web addresses mentioned where you might find some of the varieties listed. All catalog sources are not listed for each variety recommended, only a few. The recommended vegetable varieties we have listed are suggestions and the list is not intended to be all inclusive. The seed sources are listed as a convenience and no form of endorsement is implied.

Seed may be available from many other sources.

Happy gardening to all of you!

If you have horticulture questions, please feel free to stop by or call the Cook County Extension office:

**Cook County Extension
CC Community Center Building
317 W. 5th Street
Grand Marais, MN 55604
(218) 387-3015
diane.booth@co.cook.mn.us**

M	Main Potato Lady Www.maineopotatolady.com	P.O. Box 65, Guilford, ME 0443 1-207-717-5451
Ni	Nichol's Garden Nursery www.nicholsgardennursery.com	1190 Old Salem Road NE, Albany, Oregon 97321-4580 Tel. 1-800-422-3985
Pk	Park Seed Company www.parkseed.com	1 Parkton Ave., Greenwood, SC 29647 Tel. 1-800-213-0076
P	Pinetree Garden Seeds www.superseeds.com	PO Box 300, New Gloucester, ME 04260 Tel. (207) 926-3400
Pr	Prairie Road Organic Seed prairieroadorganic.co	9824 79th St. SE Fullerton, ND 58441 Tel. (701) 883-4416
R	Reimer Seeds www.reimerseeds.com	P.O. Box 206 Sainte Leonard, MD 20685-0206
Re	Renee's Garden Seeds www.reneesgarden.com	6060 Graham Hill Rd. Felton, CA 95018 Tel 1-888-880-7228
S	Stokes Seeds www.stokeseeds.com	Box 548, Buffalo, NY 14240-0548 Tel 1-800-396-9238
Sa	Sandhill Preservation Center www.sandhillpreservation.com	1878 230th St. Calamus, IA 52729 Tel. 1-563-246-2299
Sc	Seeds of Change www.seedsofchange.com	PO Box 15700, Santa Fe, NM 87592-1500 Tel. 1-888-762-7333
Sh	R.H. Shumway's www.rhshumway.com	334 W. Stroud Street, Ste. 1, Randolph, WI 53956-1274 Tel. 1-800-342-9461
Ss	Seed Savers www.seed savers.org	3094 North Winn Rd. Decorah, Iowa 52101 Tel. (563)-382-5990
St	Seed Treasures Seedtreasures.com	8533 Hwy 25 Angora, MN 55703

A	Annie's Heirloom Seeds www.AnniesHeirloomSeeds.com	P.O. Box 467 Beaver Island, MI 49782 1-800-313-9140
B	W. Atlee Burpee Company www.burpee.com	300 Park Ave., Warminster, PA 18974 Tel. 1-800-888-1447
Bc	Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds www.rareseeds.com	2278 Baker Creek Road Mansfield, MO 65704 Tel. (417) 924-8917
D	Dixondale Farms www.dixondalefarms.com	P.O. Box 129, Dept. WP07, Carrizo Springs, TX 78834-6129 Tel. (877) 367-1015
F	Fedco Seeds, Tubers www.fedcoseeds.com	P.O. Box 520-A, Waterville, ME 04903 Tel. (207) 873-7333
G	Gurney Seed & Nursery www.gurneys.com	P.O. Box 4178, Greendale, Indiana 47025-4178 Tel. (515) 354-1491
Ggg	Gourmet Garlic Gardens www.gourmetgarlicgardens.com	12300 FM1176, Bangs, TX 76823 1-325-348-3049
H	Joseph Harris Co, Inc. www.harriseseeds.com	355 Paul Rd., P.O. Box 24966, Rochester, NY 14624 1-877-892-9197
Hms	High Mowing Seeds www.highmowingseeds.com	76 Quarry Road, Wolcott, VT 05680 Tel. 802-472-6174
J	Jung Seed Company www.jungseed.com	335 S. High St., Randolph, WI 53957 Tel. 1-800-247-5864
Jn	Johnny's Selected Seeds www.johnnyseeds.com	1 Foss Hill Road, RR 1 Box 2580, Albion, Maine 04910 Tel. 1-877-564 -6697
Js	Jordan Seeds www.jordanseeds.com	6400 Afton Rd, Woodbury, MN 55125 Tel. (651) 738-3422
Jsc	John Scheepers www.kitchengardenseeds.com	23 Tulip Drive, P.O. Box 638, Bantam, CT 06750-0638 Tel. (860) 567-6086

Some accepted definitions used in this booklet:

Organic - This refers to the way plants and seeds are grown. Plants and seeds labeled as organic must be grown and processed in accordance with the United States Department of Agriculture National Organic Program (USDA's NOP) which prohibits the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, genetically engineered seeds and materials, sewage sludge (biosolids), and fresh manure. Organic growers and processors and the plants and seeds they produce, must be certified as organic by an inspection agency accredited by the USDA. Organically grown (**OG**)

Certified Naturally Grown (CNG) - This label is a non-profit eco-labeling program for small farmers that grow using USDA organic methods but are NOT a part of the USDA Certified National Organic Program.

Open-Pollinated -(OP) A seed which produces offspring just like the parent plants. Open-pollinated seed allows growers to harvest and save seed for the following year. These seeds are a result of either natural or human selection for specific traits, which are then reselected in every crop. **The seed is kept true to type through selection and isolation.** Seed varieties are pollinated by having bees or wind pollinate the flowers. Their traits are relatively fixed, within a range of variability.

Self-Pollinated - Plants that can self-fertilize themselves usually with the help of insects or wind.

Heirloom - (HL) The definition of heirloom seeds or plants varies depending upon who you talk to but we are going to use the following for the sake of this booklet. A plant or seed variety that has been preserved by local growers or gardeners in a specific area where the seed has been selected over numerous years and saved. A variety that was in existence before 1951 when vegetable hybridization become more prevalent.

Hybrid - A plant resulting from the cross mating of two distinctly different parental types.

F1 Hybrid - (F1) A more restrictive definition of hybridization is plant improvement designed to exploit the phenomenon of hybrid vigor (or heterosis, as it is scientifically termed) by crossing two inbred parents to form F1 hybrids. You probably do not want to save seeds from these plants as they are bred specifically for characteristics that do not come true from the seed they produce.

PVP - Protected plant variety. Breeders have rights to the plant varieties for 25 years from sexually or tuber propagated plants.

How Vegetables Are Pollinated

Air-borne Pollen Vegetables	Insect-borne Pollen Vegetables	Self-Pollinated Vegetables *	Biennial Vegetables
Beets Carrots Celery Corn Onions Spinach (M/F) Swiss Chard	Asparagus (M /F) Broccoli Brussels Sprouts Cabbage Cauliflower Celeriac Celery Chinese Cabbage Collards Cucumber (some M/F) Eggplant Kale Kohlrabi Melons Mustard Okra Onions Parsley Parsnips Pumpkin Squash Radish Rutabaga Turnip Watermelon	Beans Chicory Eggplant Endive Lettuce Peas Peppers Potatoes Tomatoes (most kinds but not all)	Beets Brussels Sprouts Cabbage Carrots Celeriac Celery Collards Kale Kohlrabi Leeks Onions Parsley Parsnips Radishes, winter Rutabaga Salsify Swiss Chard Turnips

- **Self-pollinated vegetables are the easiest kinds of open-pollinated vegetables to begin saving your garden seeds from year to year. Make sure you keep the 'best' plants for your seed saving.**

The drier the seeds, the longer they will store. For home gardening seed saving use, it helps to put your seed packets in tightly sealed glass jars with silica gel packets to reduce moisture and store them between 32 and 41 degrees F. The refrigerator can work quite nicely as a storage area.



Tomatillos, Ground

Aunt Molly's (OP) 65-70 days (A,Bc,Bg,G,H,J,Ni,P,R,Ss,Te,Tg,Tt)

Sweet and fruity ground cherry that originated in Poland. When ripe, it turns a golden orange and drops to the ground. Makes a tasty jam or smoothies. Stores 3 months in the husk.

Toma Verde (OP) 60 days (Hms, Jn,Js,Jsc,R,Tg,Tt,Vi)

Early, green tomatillo that is extremely prolific in the outdoor garden. Fruit is ready to harvest when the husks split and fruit color changes from a yellow-green to a green. Great for making salsa or an addition to any Mexican dish. Will reseed itself . . .



Turnips

Gold Ball (OP) 45 days (A,Bc,F,P,R,Sa,Sh,Tb,Te,Th,Vi)

The skin is smooth and yellow with golden-yellow flesh. The best size to eat the globes is when they peak in sweetness at about 3" in diameter. Some folks prefer these to rutabagas. Excellent when roasted or great even eaten raw with dip!

Purple Top White Globe (OP) 50days (A,B,Bc,F,G,H,Hms,Jn,Js,Jsc,Ni,I)

Popular variety with purple tops and white bottoms. They can attain 6" in diameter that can be used to feed livestock or people. Great in salads or with greens when small globes and if larger work well in soups. Be sure to thin them well for good sized roots.



Watermelon

Sugar Baby (OP) 79 days (A,B,Bc,F,G,H,Hms,Ni,S,Sh,Jn,Js,Jsc,P,S,Tb,Te)

The only watermelon we have been able to grow and ripen in our county. They are 3– 8 lbs or so, but only do well where they get a lot of heat and sun. If you can find that location, you will have a good crop. Kids love growing these!



Tomatoes (Hoophouse)

Cherokee Purple (OP) 75-85 days (Bc,F,G,H,Hms,J,Jn,Js,Ni,P,Pk,R,Sa,Sc,Sh,Ss,Tg)

Great grape tomato that when fully ripe holds its quality and flavor. Prolific grower with a long season of fruit production and high resistance to disease and cracking. Best when fully ripe for exc. flavor.

Jet Star (F1) 72 days (F,H,Js,R,Tg,Tt)

Semi-indeterminate tomato that has good yields of firm, meaty, low-acid fruits that are crack resistant. Fruits are baseball to softball sized and perfect for most 'slicing' uses.

Opalka (OP) 75—85 days (A,F,J,R,Sa,Ss,Tg,Tt,Vi)

This indeterminate tomato is Polish in origin and has a thin, tender skin, deep red color both inside and out, sweeter tasting, few seeds and is a great paste tomato. It is about 5" long and 3" wide and they look like 'banana peppers' with a tip at the bottom.

Sakura (F1) 55 days (H,Hms,Jn,Pk,Te,V)

Indeterminate cherry tomato that is one of the first ones to ripen in the greenhouse— even along Lake Superior! Good tasting, disease resistant, bright red.

To Graft or Not to Graft Tomatoes...

Why do people graft tomatoes?

- To increase hardiness
- Manage the size of a plant
- Increase production and disease resistance

A lot of folks want to grow tomatoes that have great flavor. These are often indeterminate tomatoes and older, heirloom varieties that might be more susceptible to disease, lower production, may not do as well in cool or wet conditions. Grafting those heirlooms onto rootstocks may increase yields and reduce disease while keeping that heirloom flavor. Just like grafting apples or grapes, the rootstock is the root part of the plant (one variety of tomato) and the scion is the top part of the plant (a different variety of tomato). The type of tomatoes produced is reflected by the tomatoes from the scion, or top part of the plant. Some tomato rootstocks varieties encourage strong plant growth so you might want to match those rootstocks with scions that are already great at producing fruit. Other tomato rootstocks encourage more fruiting and you might want to select scions that are more vegetative for those rootstocks.

Locally, some folks have had great success with grafting heirloom tomatoes for better production.

Seed Storage J.E. Ellis, Colorado State University

Kind of Seed	Minimum Germination Percentage	Ave Number of Seeds per Ounce	Relative Longevity of the Seed in Years (varies due to storage conditions)
Asparagus	60	1,400	3
Beans	70	100	3
Beets	65	2,000	4
Broccoli	75	8,100	3
B. Sprouts	70	8,500	4
Cabbage	75	7,700	4
Carrot	55	22,000	3
Cauliflower	75	8,600	4
Chard, Swiss	65	1,500	4
Corn, sweet	75	140	2
Cucumber	80	1,100	5
Eggplant	60	7,200	4
Kohlrabi	75	9,200	3
Leek	60	9,900	2
Lettuce	80	26,000	1
Muskmelon	75	1,100	5
Onion	70	8,500	1
Parsley	60	18,000	1
Pea	80	200	3
Pepper	55	4,500	2
Pumpkin	75	200	4
Radish	75	3,100	4
Rutabaga	75	11,000	4
Spinach	60	2,900	3
Squash	75	300	4
Tomato	75	10,000	4
Watermelon	70	300	4



Asparagus

Jersey Supreme (F1) (B,F,G,J,Jn,P,Plk,Sh,V)

All male asparagus hybrid. Vigorous and highly productive. Resistant to rust and tolerant to fusarium crown and root rot. Best for high yield and fine flavor. Produces earlier than 'Knight'.

Millennium (F1) (J,Jn,R,Re,S,Te,Vt)

Cold-hardy asparagus adapted to heavier soils. Grows more vigorously than Jersey Supreme and over a longer period. Higher production of male plants.

Purple Passion (OP) (B,F,G,H, J,Jn,Jsc,N,P,Re,Te,V)

Purple asparagus from Europe that turns green when cooked. Cooks say this is the finest tasting asparagus. Spears are medium sized and very tender. Productivity may be less but spears are usually larger.

Asparagus needs to be put into a permanent bed with a pH of 7 – 7.5. Many Cook County soils are acidic so pick up a soil testing kit from the office before purchasing your lime. Soil tests can be sent to the University of Minnesota for a fee of \$17 for a basic test for organic matter, pH, phosphorus and potassium.



Beans, Green Bush

Blue Lake 274 (OP) 58 days (A,B,Bc,F,G,H,J,Js.Ni,P,Plk,R,S,Sc,Sh,Te,Vi,Vt)

Plump tender pods, 6 1/2" long, with white seeds. Good flavor, excellent for canning, freezing, long bearer. Probably one of the widest grown beans for the flavor.

Derby (OP) 55 days (J,Ni,Plk,R,Sh,Vt)

1990 All American Winner—7" beans are produced over a long period of time and remains tender due to extra slow seed growth.

Dragon's Tongue (OP) 57 days (A,Bc,H,Hms,Jn,Jsc,P,Ss,Te)

Flat pods are pale yellow with purple streaks. Best picked at 6–7" long, light brown seeds, prolific, purple color disappears when cooked. Not very good when frozen.

Empress (OP) 57 days (Pr,Ss)

Introduced by Gurney's as an experimental bean in 1979. It is a good green snap bean for fresh eating, freezing or processing. Pods are 5-6" and stringless. Good flavor.

Mr. Fumarole (F1) 65 days (F)

3-6" pinkish plum tomato with great flavor when used to make tomato sauce or soup. Some ripened in the field, and the rest ripened indoors after picking. Good roasted as well.

Taxi (F1) 65—70 days (Te,Tt)

Baseball-sized, lemon-yellow tomatoes that are attractive and determinate. These have been successfully grown in outdoor fields in Cook County.



Tomatoes (Cherry)

Cupid Hybrid 66 days (Js.Plk,R,S,Tt)

Great grape tomato that when fully ripe holds its quality and flavor. Prolific grower with a long season of fruit production and high resistance to disease and cracking. Best when fully ripe for exc. flavor.

Gardener's Delight (OP) 65 days (B,F,P,R,Tg,Th,Tt)

Old German heirloom that has clusters of large cherry tomatoes of 6 – 12 all summer long. Indeterminate, crack resistant and very prolific. Works well outdoors in the field in Cook County.

Sungold (F1) 65 days (B,F,G,J,Jn,Js.Jsc,Ni,P,Plk,Re,Te,Tg,Th,Tm,Tt)

Rapidly becoming one of the most popular cherry tomatoes. Sweet, tart, yellow / orange fruits. Flavor develops early to make this a great snacking tomato. They do have a tendency to crack.

Sweet Chelsea (F1) 67 days (F,R,Tg)

Large, sweet cherry tomato with a great flavor. It is disease resistant and provides a heavy yield. Great for salads and just plain eating. Bears the full season, indeterminate, low in acid.

Sweet Million (F1) 65 days (G,J,Plk,R,S,Sh,Te,Tg,Th,Tt,V)

The sweetest tomato in many trials. Indeterminate plants should be caged. Yields are terrific with a seemingly endless supply of 1" cherry fruits resistant to cracking.



Tomatoes

4th of July Hybrid 65 days (B,R)

Indeterminate tomato that does well in open field with nice 2" tomatoes. Big enough for slicing they remain firm but are also juicy. Very productive. Taste tests rated this variety higher than Early Girl. Not as early here as touted to be (not 49 days) w/ tough skins.

Black Prince (OP) 75 days (A,Bc,F,Jn,R,Sa,Tb,Te,Tg,Tt)

A longer day variety that needs additional heat with plastic or micro-climate to ripen. Mahogany brown color with excellent flavor—about 2-3" diameter. Makes a sweet tomato sauce. Indeterminate.

Early Girl Hybrid 59—64 days (B,G,H,J,Jn,Js,Ni,Pk,R,Sh,Tg,Tt)

Excellent early slicing tomato. Produces a heavy crop of 4 – 6 oz fruit, bright red. Indeterminate plants need to be caged. This has consistently performed well in Cook County for years out in field. This is blander in flavor than later maturing tomatoes. There is also a bush Early Girl that is determinate.

Fresh Salsa Fl 65—75 days (B)

Chop this one into pieces and the pieces remain firm. Very nice for making salsa or bruchetta or canning for sauce or tomato cubes. Tried in open field in Cook County. Determinate.

Glacier (OP) 55 days (A,Hms,Jn,Jsc,Ni,R,Sa,St,Te,Tg,Vi)

Early semi-determinate tomato that produces orange-red, 2" tomatoes. Fairly sweet for an early producing tomato.

Juliet (Fl) 60 days (F,H,J,Jn,Jsc,P,Pk,R,Tg,Tt)

1999 AAS winner that is very prolific, very uniform fruit and is great for salsa, salads or tomato sauce. This variety looks ripe early on with great color but is best when left on until fully ripe for the best flavor. It has performed the best with the warmer summers Cook County is starting to experience. Indeterminate.

Determinate Tomatoes—Need no pruning other than removing suckers below the first branch that has pea-sized fruit on it.
Indeterminate Tomatoes—Recommend having only 1 to 4 stems, allow these to grow until they flower before tying to supports. Remove suckers. About 30 days before frost, top the plants to allow fruit that has set an opportunity to ripen.

Jade (OP) 53 days (Bc,G,Hms,Jn,Js,Jsc,P,Pk,Pr,R,S,Sa,Sc,Te,V)

Long, straight, stringless 6 1/2" pods held well above ground. Harvest continues over a long period regardless of heat or stress.

Provider (OP) 52 days (A,B,F,G,H,Hms,J,Jn,Js,Ni,P,Pk,R,Re,S,Sa,Sh,ss,StTb,V,Vi,Vt)

Germinates well in cool soils. Long, medium green fleshy round pods, 5—5 1/2 ". Disease resistant, flavor has been described as 'beanier'. Can also be eaten as a dry soup bean if allowed to mature.

Top Crop (OP) 52 days (G,J,Js.R,Sh,Vi,Vt)

One of the best beans for all around use. AAS winter in 1950.



Beans, Pole

Blue Lake (OP) 60 days (G,Hms,J,Js,Jsc,P,R,S,Sc,Sh,Te,Vi)

Great flavor and quality of this bean makes it a long-time favorite for freezing, canning, and fresh use. Begins bearing early and provides good yields of 6" smooth dark green pods.

Emerite (filet) (OP) 53 days (Jsc,P,St,Vt)

Growing over 11", the pods may be picked young at 7" length for extra-tender "filet" beans. Dark green, firm-textured bean are great at any size. Walnut brown seed. Very good frozen bean.

Fortex (OP) 60 days (B,J,Jn,Ni,P,Sa,Tb,Te,V)

Early dependable pole bean with an extended harvest. Pick at 7" for an slender bean or wait until they grow 11". This is a stringless bean with brown seeds. Very meaty nutty taste.

Kentucky Blue (OP) 62—65 days (A,B,G,H,Hms,J,Js,P,Pk,R,Sh,Te,V,Vt)

All American Winner that combines the best qualities of Kentucky Wonder and Blue Lake beans. Best harvested at 7" long. Unique sweet flavor when eaten raw.

Monte Gusto (OP) 58days (B,F,J,Jn,Jsc,P,Te,V,Vt)

Great yellow pole bean with great color and flavor. Bright color makes them easy to see and pick. Great flavor.

Northeast (OP) 56 days (A,Jn,F,Hms,P)

Delicious rich sweet flavor that stays tender and stringless. Good for freezing. Huge, flat, buttery pods.

Do not plant your beans in soil less than 50 degrees F or they will not germinate.
Best temps are 60 – 80 F.



Beans, Yellow Bush

Carson (OP) 52 days (F,H,Jn,Js,Te)

Very productive, flavorful 5—6" pods, good resistance to disease.

Gold Rush (OP) 55 days (H,Hms,Jsc,P,R,S,Te,Y)

5-6" pods, nice texture and flavor. 1980 AAS winner, white seeds.

RocDor (OP) 54 days (H,J,Jn,Jsc,Ni,Pk,R,Re,S)

Cold tolerant, early. Very productive with deep yellow color and black seeds. "Meaty" firm texture about 6 – 6 1/2 " long.



Beets

3 Root Grex (OP) 54 days (Sa,Tb)

Interbreeding mix of three heirlooms: Yellow Intermediate, Crosby Purple Egyptian and Lutz Saladleaf. Pinkish red, a bright yellow and a beautiful orange. Excellent vigor, taste, disease resistance.

Boldor (OP) 55 days (G,J,Jn,Te,Th,V)

Bright gold beet that keeps its color when cooked. Excellent flavor.

Chioggia (OP) 55—60 days (A,B,Bc,F,G,H,Jn,Js,Jsc,Ni,P,Pk,R,Re,S,Sc,Ss,Te,Th,Vi)

White and pink rings inside; scarlet skin. Sweet flavor. This Italian home garden variety is becoming well known in the U.S. Beautiful color when used raw in salads, good greens.

Cylindra (OP) 60 days (A,B,Bc,F,Hms,Jn,Js,Jsc,Ni,P,R,Sa,Sh,Ss,Te,Vi,Vt)

A unique long and cylindrical beet gives 3 – 4 times more uniform slices than round beets. Sweet, dark red roots are 8" long. Excellent

Dark Detroit Red (OP) 58 days (A,B,Bc,F,Hms,Js,Jsc,Ni,Pk,R,Sa,Ss,St,Tb,Tm,V,Vi)

Excellent for greens and canning. This is one of the standard varieties grown over and over again for its multi-use.

Moneta (FI) 47 days (Jn,Th,V)

Mono-germ variety—only one seed/plant. Easier for planting.

Nearly all beet varieties grow well in Cook County. Some of the white beets are also becoming more familiar once again like 'Albino'. Yellow beets are usually very sweet and don't bleed when canned.



Tomato Information

The tomato, *Lycopersicon esculentum*, is in the family Solanaceae. Other vegetables in this family include *L. pimpinellifolium* (current tomato), *Capsicum* spp. (peppers), *Physalis* spp. (husk tomatoes and relatives), *Cyphomandra betacea* (tamarillo), and other species in the genus *Solanum* that includes the potato, eggplant and garden huckleberry. Exactly where and how the tomato was domesticated really is unknown. They arrived in Europe in the 15th century thought to probably come from either Peru, Mexico, or both. The first recorded tomato grown in America was in the year 1710.

Because tomatoes don't naturally out-cross very often, by the end of the 19th century most tomato seed offspring resembled those of their parents. Farmers had already selected for specific traits that would locally do well in their soils and in their area. These varieties were often 'handed down' in families or communities and hence became known as 'heirlooms'.

Eventually as tomatoes became more popular, people were asking for tomatoes to be available year-round for consumption. This required that tomatoes be grown in southern climates and shipped to northern climates for year-round use. Breeding tomatoes with thicker, firmer skin with more uniform sizes for shipping became the goal in the mid 1950's. Plants that produced their fruit all at the same time became better for packing and shipping. By the 1980's disease resistance and the large quantity of tomato production allowed for tomatoes being made available year-round to families. Tomato flavor, texture or nutritional value became a lot less important. Recently, there has been a revolution in home gardening with heirloom tomatoes making a large comeback as people are looking again to have that great tomato taste and flavor that was lost through the hybridization process for a uniform packing tomato.

So what does that mean for the new home gardener who wishes to grow some of these older varieties and save their tomato seed?

Hybrid tomatoes will not come true from their seed. So, if you wish to save your tomato seed from year to year you will need to understand what types of heirloom tomatoes you are growing. Many of the older, heirloom tomato varieties will have flower pistils that extend beyond the stamens and are vulnerable to cross-pollination from other tomatoes. Ashworth in 'Seed to Seed' says, 'The extent of cross-pollination in tomatoes has been a controversy among seed savers for a long time. Some say the crossing is rampant, while others have not seen crossing after years of growing different varieties of tomatoes next to one another.' So, it depends upon what tomatoes you are growing together and whether your varieties have a retracted or protruding stigma. Varieties that have protruding stigmas and have insects hovering around them will be more subject to being crossed by insects and will need more isolation.

If you wish to hand-pollinate your tomatoes you must do so a day before the flower actually opens. Once the petals start to open, it is too late. You can remove the male parts of the flower early the morning of or up to two days in advance before pollination with the pollen you wish to cross with the female stigma. Outdoor crosses are most successful if done under cool and relatively wind-free conditions. Commercial hybrid tomato seed production uses hand pollination to cross and make the seed available.

With the growing trend towards heirloom tomatoes, every home gardener has the opportunity to experiment in their backyard and develop tomato varieties that work best for their location and soils. Have fun!

Deppe, Carol. 2000 'Breed Your Own Vegetable Varieties' and Ashworth, Suzanne. 1991 'Seed to Seed: Saving Techniques for the Vegetable Gardener'

Gold Nugget (OP) 85 days (Jn,P,R,Sa,Sc,Te)

This one can be direct seeded in our county and still produce fruit. This was originally developed as an alternative to sweet potatoes in short-season areas. Compact bushes yield up to 10 golden orange fruit that are 1—1.5 lbs. Beautiful golden flesh. This is an AAS winter. Does not store as long as some squashes. C. maxima

Lakota (OP)?? 85 days (B,Bc,Sc,St)

Once prized by the Sioux but lost to civilization, this is a beautiful squash with the fine baking quality of Hubbard. Fine grained orange flesh is sweet & nutty. 8" x 9" fruit. If you can only grow one variety, grow this one as it is well worth the effort and space. C. maxima

REBA, Sweet (OP) 90 days (F,Hms,Vi)

A great bush acorn squash very resistant to disease and insect damage. Very sweet, flesh dry & substantial with good yields. Resists powdery mildew allowing sugars to develop. C. pepo

Red Kuri (OP) 92 days (Bc,F,Hms,Jn,P,R,Sa,Sh,Tb,Te,V)

Flashy scarlet fruits, this squash weights 4 – 7 lbs. Also known as orange hokkaido or baby red hubbard. 2 –3 fruits per plant. C. maxima

Sweet Mama (F1) 88 days (F,J,Js,P,R,S,Te,V)

A cup less butternut hybrid. Medium sized 4' vines show tolerance to fusarium. Green-gray fruit average 2 1/2 lbs. AAS winner. Has been a long-time standard for Cook County. C. maxima

Uncle David's Dakota Dessert (OP) 95 days (F,Pr,St)

"The original buttercup" has been selected for over 40 years primarily for color, taste, sweetness, vigor and hardiness. Has small seed cavities and high productivity. C. maxima

Acorn squash, Delicata, Red Kuri can be eaten right from the field and can be stored 3– 4 months at 50 deg. Buttercups, Kabochas, Butternuts and Hubbards are better after being hardened off at 80 deg. for at least 10 days and then stored at 50 deg. These will keep at least 3—6 months. Eat the smallest fruit first for best flavor and storage.

**Broccoli****Arcadia (F1) 69 days (Jn,Js,P,V)**

Very stress tolerant broccoli when we have cold and hot temperatures. Heavy, firm 8" heads. Excellent for fresh, freezing and processing. This one is recommended by market gardeners selling their product.

Fiesta (F1) 65 Days (F,Hms,Sc,Te,Th)

Tolerates warm and cold temperatures, has good disease resistance and has uniform 6-7" bright green heads.

Gypsy (F1) 60 Days (B,F,H,Jn,Js,P,S,Sc,Te,Th,V)

Medium to small heads, good heat tolerance, good side-shoot production for mid-summer. Up to 8" heads.

Packman (F1) 50—52 days (J,R,Sh,Tm,Vt)

Favorite extra-early broccoli. Not as heavy, 7" heads with good side shoot production. Very tender, mild flavor, good raw or frozen.

Premium Crop (F1) 55—65 days (G,R,Sh,T,Tt)

Large, firm dark heads with fine beads. This hybrid holds its quality longer on the plant than most varieties. Good for freezing for home gardeners.

**Broccoli Raab****Spring OP 42 -55 days (A,B,Hms,Jn,Ni,R,Sc,Vi)**

Tolerates warm and cold temperatures, has good disease resistance and has uniform 6-7" bright green heads.

**Brussels Sprouts****Gustus (F1) 99 days (F,Js,S)**

Quality excellent, sweet, large sprouts that if topped will grow large further up the stalk than some other Brussels Sprouts.

Jade Cross E (F1) 85 days (G,H,Js,P,R,S,Sh,V,Vt)

Sprouts are borne all the way up the stalk and are good sized. Flavor is excellent and yield very good. More compact than other varieties. Freezes well.



Cabbage

Early Jersey Wakefield OP 70 days (B,F,Js,Ni,P,R,Sa,c,Sh,Ss,Th,Vi)

Introduced in the 1840's, this heirloom variety is still grown. The heads range from 2—4 lbs that are conical and flavorful. It lasts pretty long in the garden.

Famosa (F1) 75 days (H,Jn,Hms,Sc)

This is a mid-season savoy cabbage w/ deep green-blue heads. It is great in cooked dishes with very good flavor.

Katarina (F1) 45 days (P,Te)

Single-serving mini-cabbage. These can be closely planted together down to 8-12" spacing. Heads are 4-5" inches in diameter and they hold well in the garden. Perfect for a meal or two. Tiara is similar.

Megaton 105 days (G,J,P,Pk,Sh)

This cabbage has enormous heads that local folks use for making sauerkraut in the county. 16" dia + size. Mild, sweet flavor.

Red Express 62 days (Bc,J,Jn,P,R)

Heads up quickly into small 2– 4 lb cabbages. Great red color and due to smaller size can be planted about 8" apart. Perfect for the smaller gardens and short season.

Ruby Perfection (F1) 85 days (F,Jn,Js,P,Tt)

Red hybrid cabbage produces solid, flavorful 7-8" heads with purple-red exterior and interior color. Heavy yielding cabbage that is one of the best for storing.

Stonehead (F1) 65 – 67 days (G,H,J,Js,R,Sh,V,Vt)

An early cabbage with very round, solid heads. Excellent for fresh eating or kraut making. Averages 4 lbs about 6" across. Heads stand a long time before bursting. This has been grown here for yrs.

Grow your broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage under a floating row cover to reduce the chance of infestation from cabbage butterflies. Make sure you put several layers of newspaper collars around the transplants you set out to prevent cutworms from cutting the young transplants off at the soil line. Red cabbage when planted next to green cabbage appears to be less desirable so some pests.

Giant Winter (OP) 45 days (A,Bc,F,Hms,Jsc,P,Te,Vi)

A great variety for late fall crops or early spring crops as it handles the cold very well. Great for season extenders and cold frames.

Palco (F1) 38 days (P,Pk,Te,Th)

Spinach that is adaptable to planting in both cool and warm seasons. Harvest as baby greens or allow to attain full size. Holds well in the field without flowering or having mildew issues.

Space (F1) 39 days (B,F,Hms,J,Jn,P,Pk,Te,V)

Popular, high yielding smooth leaf spinach. Upright growth for clean leaves. Delicious in salads or cooked. Slow bolting.

Winter Bloomsdale (OP) 45days (F,Hms,Ni,P,Tb,Te)

Fall, winter or early spring spinach.



Squash, Summer

Most summer squash does well here.



Squash, Winter

Burpee's Butterbush (F1) 75—87 days (B,F,J,R,Th)

One of the best of the butternuts for our northern season. Fruits are about 1.5 lbs, perfect for one person, and very sweet. Small seed cavities combined with determinate vines makes this variety good for the backyard gardener. Stores a long time. *C. moschata*

Delicata JS / Honeyboat (OP) 82-95 (A,B,Bc,H,Jn,Sa,Ss,Th)

There are many strains of this open-pollinated squash. A number have been tried over the years and this strain seems to be one of the best. squash are 7—9" long, 3" wide, 1.5—2 lbs. Beautiful cream colored fruits with dark green stripes and very sweet, orange flesh. They don't need to be cured but can be stored after harvest at 50—55 deg. F. Shorter storage period. *C. pepo*

Early Butternut Hybrid (F1) 82-95 (J,Js,P,Pk,R,Re,S,V)

Grows on compact vines and does well when started indoors 4—6 weeks and planted out under hot caps until acclimated. *C. moschata*



Radishes

Cherry Belle (OP) 22 days (A,B,F,G,H,Hms,J,Js,Jsc.Ni,P,R,S,Sa,Sc,Sh,Ss,Te,Vi)

Intense red roots achieve a 2 inch size in an incredibly short time. All American winner with delicious flavor and a smooth, round form.

French Breakfast (OP) 28 days (A,Bc,F,G,H,Hms,J,Js.P,R,Re,S,Sh,Ss,Te,Th,Vi)

A 3–4" oblong root that is scarlet with a white tip. Not only lovely but also has a very delicate flavor.

Purple Plum (OP) 26 days (A,Bc,F,Hms,Jsc,Ni,P,R,Sa,Ss,Tb,Vi)

Kids liked this one with skin being purple and crisp white flesh. They were able to raise it and collect the seed in our growing season.

Sparkler (OP) 25 days (A,J,Js,Pk,R,Sa,St,Vi)

One of the most popular of the white tipped varieties as it combines handsome appearance, quality, and extreme earliness. Very crisp, tender, and sweet.



Rutabaga

Joan (OP) 90—100 days (Hms,Ni,Sa,Ss,Te)

Joan is one of the sweetest and best textured rutabagas. Yellow-fleshed roots have purple tops and good resistance to club root. Great with mashed potatoes or mashed and frozen for later use.

Laurentian (OP) 90 days (F,G,Jn,P,R,S,Sa,St,V,Vi)

A very popular Swede turnip or rutabaga grown today. It has a deep purplish top and smooth root, yellow flesh. Not club root resistant but stores well for winter.



Spinach

Butterfly (OP) 45 days (A,Hms,Tb,Te)

Productive variety with large, glossy dark green leaves. Great vigor and emergence in cold weather, slow to bolt, good for early spring.



Carrots

Bolero (F1) 75 days (J,Jn,Js,Re,S,Te,V,Vt)

A heavy Nantes type, this is a favorite for fall and winter. The taste is among the best fresh and tops the charts for long term storage. 7–8" roots are uniform, thick, and blunt.

Mokum (F1) 56 days (F,Jn,P,Te,Th,V,Vt)

Great for fresh eating—kids will eat this one and love carrots! Only about 6" long, brittle, delicate, you end up digging them up but

Carrots are slow germinators. Starting 3-4 days before sowing, soak seeds in water for an hour and then transfer them to a damp paper towel. Enclose the seeds in the wet paper towel and put inside an airtight container at about 75 deg. F. Plant them out and keep moist.

Rainbow (F1) 67 days (G,J,Jn,Js,Jsc,Ni,P,Pk,R,Sh,Th,Tt,V)

Colored carrot mix with different flavors based upon the root colors. Very sweet, strong tops with 7—9" carrots. Single variety with color variability.

Rodelika (OP) 72 days (Tb,Te)

Grown especially for carrot juice but very sweet, juicy and works well in heavier soils. It also overwinters very well in sand so you can extend your season.

Scarlet Nantes (OP) 68 days (A,B,F,G,H,Hms,Js,Jsc,Ni,Pk,R,Sa,Ss,St,Tb,Vi,Vt)

Long-time quality standard. Roots are bright orange, cylindrical to slightly tapered and average 6" long. Sweet, crisp flavor. Thicker roots do better in clay to clay-loam soils.

YaYa (F1) 68 days (B,F,G,H,Hms,J,Jn,Jsc,Ni,Sc,Sh,Te,V,Vt)

This carrot is similar to Nelson but a little smoother and a bit more uniform. Not quite as sweet as Nelson, an early Nantes type with 5—6 1/2" roots.



Cauliflower

Amazing OP 58—75 days (Bc,J,Jn,Jsc,P,Pk,St,Te,Vt)

Great for late summer or early fall production. This is a nice self-blanching variety that is tolerant of both heat and cold.

Bishop (FI) 65 days (Jn)

Improved Fremont type that we used to recommend. Great for summer and fall crops. The self-wrapped leaves are great and protect the heads as they grow.

Candid Charm (FI) 65 days + (F,Js,Pk,Te)

Nice size heads of cauliflower that are sometimes later than other cauliflower here. It has consistently produced nice heads with excellent curds and flavor.

Minuteman (FI) 47—65 days (Js,S,V)

Early hybrid cauliflower that is great for an early variety. It is consistent and produces a well-wrapped head. Heads are usually over 2 lbs. 8" size with good heat tolerance.



Celery

Tango 85 days (B,F,H,Hms,J,Jn,Jsc,P,Pk,Sc,Te,Th,V)

This hybrid delivers better yields and flavor than more of the older varieties. Tolerance of Fusariums makes a big difference in yields. If you haven't had luck with celery before, give this one a try.

Utah or Utah 52-70 (OP) 98 days (A,B,Bc,H,Hms,Js,P,R,S,Sa,Ss,Tg,Vi)

Start indoors around mid to late February. Transplant outdoors once temperatures are warm to prevent bolting. Heavy feeder and heavy drinker.

If you don't want to grow celery, but would like celery flavor—consider growing the perennial herb lovage or cutting celery.



Pumpkins

Autumn Gold (FI) 90 days (J,Js,R,Re,)

A unique pumpkin that turns golden weeks before other pumpkins, even when immature. A great variety for northern gardens as the fruits can be harvested early. Great for cooking as well. C. pepo

Casper (OP) 100 days (Hms,Js,P,R,Te,Tg)

If you want to grow a white pumpkin, this is the one. It yields a sweet flavor for baking as well as making a great Halloween Jack-o lantern. 10—15 lbs and resistant to powdery mildew. C. pepo

Neon (FI) 80 days (H,Js,Te,V)

Beautifully-shaped, medium orange pumpkin with a strong, dark-green handle. Weighs up to 8—10 lbs and is a semi-bush plant so takes up less space. Recommended by market gardeners. C. pepo

Orange Smoothie (FI) 90 days (Jn,Js,R,Tg)

Small 5—8" semi-bush pumpkin with a very smooth surface for painting. This pumpkin can also be used to make pies with sweet meat. Great for kids to decorate with paint as well. AAS winner. C. pepo and PVP

Racer (FI) 85 days (J,Jn,V)

Blocky, heavy mid-size pumpkin with a nice large, dark green handle. Typically weight between 10—15 lbs. Vines are semi-bush and productive. Perfect for jack-o-lanterns! C. pepo

Small Sugar (OP) 100-105 days (B,Bc,F,H,Js,Ni,P,R,S,Sa,Sh,Ss,Te,Vi)

The standard for pumpkin pie that will be very prolific when summers are fairly warm. Production reduces with cooler weather. Great for seed saving. C. pepo



Radicchio

Indigo Hybrid (FI) 65 days (F,Jn,Jsc,Pk)

This variety has done well even along Lake Superior. Firm, 4-5" diameter heads are a beautiful burgundy color with good flavor. Very reliable production with a nutty, bitter taste that blends well in salads.

German Butterball Late Season, Yellow (B,F,G,Hms,J,M,Pk,Re,Sh,Ss,Te)

Tubers are oval with shallow eyes, lightly netted, golden skin, deep golden flesh. Great for boiling but all-purpose. Good keeper.

Gold Rush Russet Mid Season, White (F,G,J,Jn,M)

Best early russet potato developed by North Dakota. Medium sized tubers, uniform, keep well, and are excellent for everything but best for oven fries and baked potatoes. Good keeper. PVP

Kennebec Late-Mid Season, White (B,F,G,H,J,Jn,Js,Jsc,M,P,Pk,Re,Sh,Vt)

Well known for taste and yield. Perhaps the most nearly perfect potato for the home gardener. To keep them from growing gigantic, plant them 8 – 10" apart. Good keeper.

Pinto Gold Mid Season, Gold (H,J,Jn,Js,Jsc,M,P,Sh)

New variety released from Main in 2015. Very prolific and an up and coming potato for Cook County. Tubers set far from plant.

Purple Viking Mid-Season , White

Beautiful potato with deep purple skin dappled with pink splashes and stripes. Bright white flesh that bakes or mashes perfectly. Plant close 8—10" apart to prevent 'lunker potatoes'. Good keeper.

Sangre Early to mid-season, Red (Sh,Ss,Te)

Tubers are oval with shallow eyes, red skin and white flesh. They are early to main season variety that works well for both boiling and baking. Keeps well for an earlier potato variety.

Satina Mid-season, Yellow (F,Jn,M,Sh)

Yellow skin and yellow flesh, even sized tubers on gorgeous plants. Fabulous for mashing and boiling but works well for moist baking potatoes as well. Perfect for growing from seed. Good keeper. PVP

Superior Early, White (J,M,P,Sh)

Good sized, smooth, oval tubers with buff skin and white flesh. Heat and drought tolerant, scab resistant for successful spring or fall crops. Long storing, excellent eating quality for any cooking style.

Potatoes do very well in Cook County. They like acidic soil, a pH of 5.5 is optimum to prevent scab. If you are using eyes, make sure you callus them over and dust with sulfur first before planting . Rotate.

**Chard****Bright Lights (OP) 55– 60 day (B,F,G,H,J,Jn,P,Pk,R,Re,S,Sh,St,Te,Tm,Vt)**

All chard does well in Cook county, this variety was an AAS winner in 1998. Bright colored stocks make the taste milder and different for each color. Ornamental.

Fordhook Giant (OP) 50—60 days (A,B,Bc,F,Hms,Jn,Js,R,Sa,Te)

The standard green Swiss chard. The leaves are medium green and savoyed with white veins and broad white stems.

**Corn Types****Dent Corn (Zea mays indenata)**

Often used for livestock feed or to make processed foods. "Field corn"

Flint Corn (Zea mays indurata)

Hard outer shell and kernels with a range of colors. "Indian corn"

Flour Corn (Zea mays amylacea)

Soft starch-filled kernels that are easy to grind. Primarily white but can blue. One of the oldest types of corn grown by Native Americans.

Popcorn (Zea mays everta)

Type of flint corn that when heated, pops from moisture turning to steam.

Ornamental Corn

Different corn types that have been chosen for color tones, mini ears, etc.

Sweet Corn

Standard sugary corn that is eaten by people in immature milk stage.

(su) 'Normal Sugary' Sugars convert to starch rapidly after harvest. Traditional corn flavor.
 (se) (se+) 'Sugary Enhanced' Increased sweetness and conversion from sugar to starch slowed.
 (sh2) 'Shrunken' Greatly heightened sweetness and slow conversion to starch after harvest. (supersweets) Isolate up to 1/4 mile to prevent cross pollination.
 (sy) 'Synergistic' Ears are comprised of 75% se kernels and 25% sh2 kernels.
 (triple sweets) Combines tenderness with Increased sugar. It does better in cold soils than supersweets and does not need to be isolated from (sh2 types)
 (SSW) SuperSeedWare This is an improvement on Super Sweets. Larger, fuller kernels that germinate better in cool, wet soils. Isolate.



Corn

Bear Island Flint Corn (OP) 85-90 days (St)

Named after an island in Canada where it originated, it is associated with the Anishinaabe. When picked in green or milk stage, you can eat it like sweet corn. Grind it once seeds harden for flour, etc.

Café (Sy) FI 68 days (F,H,S,Sc,Te,V)

Nice yellow sweet corn that fills 8" ears. One Cook County grower says, "This is the only corn I've grown here that I really liked!"

Dakota Black (OP) 100 days (Bc,F,Hms,Pr,Sc,St,Te)

The only popcorn that has matured in Cook County trials in the past several years. Short 4.5' tall plants have dark maroon-black ears that are also very ornamental.

Northern Xtra-Sweet (sh2) FI 67 days (B,G,J,Js,Sh,Th)

One of the earliest yellow super sweet corn. High yielder of big 8-9" ears on short, 5' plants. Good cool soil germination. Very sweet but must be isolated. There is also a bi-colored version of this corn.

Painted Mountain (OP) 85 days (Bc,F,G,Hms,J,Jn,S,St,Te,Vi)

Short 5' plants with 6—7" multi-colored corn. This is an ornamental corn but can also be used for grinding, roasting or grits. Makes a nutritious flour.

Quickie FI (se) FI 64 day (P,R,Te)

Hybrid, bi-color, 4-5' tall, ears are about 7 1/2". Good for cold soil and tastes great!

Sugar Buns (se+) FI 65—72 days (J,Jn,Js,P,Pk,R,Te)

The sweetest, most tender early corn. This will remain tender up to two weeks in the garden for the longest harvest period of many early corn varieties. 7" ears, 5-6' plants.

Trinity (se+) FI 70 days (J,Jn,Js,S,Sh,)

Great bi-color with ears very large, about 8" long and 2" in diameter. These are grown on 6' tall stalks and a great variety for the home garden.



Peppers, Hot

Anaheim (OP) 90 days (B,Bc,F,G,Js,Ni,Pk,R,Sa,Tb,Tt,Vi)

Mildly hot pepper that is popular for roasting, frying, and stuffing. Fruits up to 8" long—grow under plastic or in greenhouse.

Czech Black (OP) 58 + days (F,Sa)

The 2.5" fruits are blackish-purple when immature but ripen to a garnet red. Flesh has similar heat to a Jalapeno with a rich flavor. Plants have purplish colored leaves and purple flowers. Mildly hot.

Early Jalapeno (OP) 66 days (B,F,H,Hms,J,Jn,Js,P,Pk,Pr,St,Tt,V)

Jalapenos are hottest when they turn red. These short, 2-3" peppers are thick-walled and juicy. Set fruit under cooler conditions.

Ho Chi Minh (OP) 68 days (F,H,Pk,B,)

Came to Minnesota via Immigrant Vietnamese in 1980's. 4-5" long, cayenne peppers that ripen to a gold yellow. Very hot! Dries well either being strung or flaked into a jar for storage.

Mariachi (FI) 66 days (H,J,Pk,B,Tg,Tt)

Mildly hot pepper that is awesome for salsa and has grown well under adverse field conditions. Stress increases the heat.



Potatoes

Bintje Late Mid-season Yellow (Jsc,M)

Oblong tubers with smooth yellow skin and creamy golden flesh. Produces a large tuber but can be susceptible to scab and late blight. Known best as the potato for delicious, golden fries Good keeper.

Carola Mid Season Yellow (F,G,M,P,G,Ss)

Tubers are oval with smooth, yellow skin and yellow flesh. Good for boiling, mashing and are moist when baked. Tuber dormancy is medium and storability good.

Dark Red Norland Early, Red (F,Hms,Jn,Js,M,Re,)

One of the best summer varieties for early digging and it stores well. Smooth red skin and white flesh. Plant 6 – 8" apart for small potatoes and 12" apart for larger ones. Red Pontiac is a nice red variety for later in the season.



Peas, Pea Shoots

Dwarf Gray Sugar (OP) 10 days (Hms,Jn,Pr,R,Sa,Ss,Vi)

Shoots are great for garnishes and salad mixes. Other varieties can be used but these are very tender and have great flavor.



Peppers, Sweet

Ace, New Ace (FI) 60 - 70 days (H,Jn,R,Tt,V)

Extra—early, highly productive. Small to medium-sized bell peppers. This hybrid resists blossom drop in adverse weather. A good one to try if you have not had success. New Ace is about 5 days earlier with less production and a bit larger peppers.

Carmen (FI) 60—80 days (F,H,Hms,J,Jn,P,Pk,R,S,Tg,Tt,V)

Best tasting sweet Italian frying pepper. AAS winner. Wait for the darkest red hue before picking and they will be the sweetest in flavor.

Gypsy (FI) 60 days (B,J,Js,R,Tg,Th,Tm,Tt)

AAS winner with great vigor, heavy producer with thick walls. Very reliable producer.

Jimmy Nardello (OP) 80—90 days (B,Bc,F,H,Jsc.Ni,P,R,Sa,Ss,St,Tb,Te,Tg,Tt)

Delicious sweet pepper from Italy that is being grown in hoopouses in our county. Produces loads of thin, long peppers up to 10" long. Great cooked or raw, they work well in salsas, salads or grilled. This is also perfect for pickling or drying.

King of the North (OP) 68 -70 days (Bc,F,H,Hms,J,Ni,P,R,Sa,St,Tb,Tg,Tt,Vt)

The huge, blocky shape of these thick walled, bright fruits make them a popular choice for stuffing. Mild tasting regardless of maturity.

Lipstick (OP) 53-73 days (Bc,R,Sa,St,Tb,Tt)

Great sweet pepper for salads, cooking, salsa. Very reliable at green or red stage with heavy yields even out in the open field.

Peacework (OP) 65 days (F,Tb,)

Early red pepper that did well in field trials in Cook County. Green and yellow in the field. Heavy producer.



Cucumber Information

Cucumbers (*Cucumis sativus*) belong to the cucurbitae family along with watermelon, melon, gourds, squash and pumpkins. The cucumber is thought to originate in India, where it is found wild with small, bitter fruit.

Cucumbers are monoecious plants which have separate male and female flowers on the same plant. The male flowers appear first and female flowers shortly later. The female flowers have small immature fruit at the base of the flower and male flower do not have any- that is how you can tell what flower is female and male. Pollen is transferred from male to female flower by bees or other insects. When pollinated properly, female flower develops into fruit.

There are different types of cucumber hybrids such as gynoeocious varieties that produce predominantly female flowers, and seeds of monoecious varieties are mixed with it for pollination. They are very productive when a pollinizer (male flower) is present and more disease resistant than the monoecious varieties. There are also cucumber hybrids that produce fruits without pollination called parthenocarpic varieties resulting into fruits that contain no seeds. Such varieties need to be isolated from standard varieties to prevent cross-pollination and development of fruits with seeds inside. These are often the 'greenhouse cucumbers' grown because they don't need to have any insects for pollination. Cucumber varieties can cross pollinate with one another but not with squash, pumpkins, muskmelons, or watermelons.

Dutch type cucumbers or English/ European cucumbers are the long (11 – 16") thin skinned cucumbers wrapped in plastic that you commonly find in grocery stores. They require temperature growing conditions between 65 – 90 degrees, lose moisture rapidly, and are easily damaged with their thin skin – hence, the reason for being plastic wrapped at the market. These cucumbers have a tendency to produce all at once – not a great trait for the home gardener. They also need to be isolated from monoecious and gynoeocious cucumbers to prevent cross-pollination.

The parthenocarpic Beit Alpha cucumbers from the Middle East are similar to the Dutch type cucumbers except they are shorter, blockier, and less susceptible to damage after being grown. They are also more tolerant of both high and low temperatures (50- 100F) You can still eat the skin but they don't need to be wrapped in plastic for protection or water retention.

American slicing cucumber examples would be –Marketmore 76 – uniform, dark green fruit that is monoecious and include Sweet Slice and Sweet Burpless. Newer slicers are touted as bitter-free when they have less cucurbitacins (bitter compounds) in their parentage.

American pickling or smaller cucumbers- County Fair – seedless if isolated from other cucumbers; Calypso – gynoeocious, early maturing; SMR Wisconsin 58 and National Pickling – monoecious. Pickling cucumbers may or may not have West Indian gherkin parentage (*Cucumis anguria*) along with *Cucuris sativus*.

Burpless – Diva – gynoeocious, parthenocarpic; Sweet Slice – monoecious slicing; Bush – Salad Bush – slicing; Spacemaster – slicing; Bush Pickle – pickling. Burpless cucumbers usually refer to the fact they have an oriental heritage and are grown on a trellis. That may or may not indicate that they have less cucurbitacins as bitterness can also be caused by heat and drought. If they are listed as bitter-free, then they have no cucurbitacins. Studies have shown the question of burpiness or less seems to hinge on the variety you are growing and the burping susceptibility of each person, rather on the name of 'burpless'.



Cucumbers, Pickling

Boothby's Blonde (OP) 63 days (A,F,Hms,Ni,P,R,Sa,Ss,Tb)

This is a crisp, heirloom cucumber that when used at 4" long makes great bread & butter pickles. You can let it grow and when 6-8" long use it as a slicer. It is a nice versatile cucumber.

Calypso 52 days (F,Hms,Js,P,Sh,Tg,V)

Heavy-yielding gynocious hybrid with very high yields of pickling cucumbers.

Little Leaf 57 days (F,Hms,J,Jn,P,R,Sh,Tg)

Very resistant to disease and tolerant to stress. 3-5" fruits that are great for fresh eating and pickling. Parthenocarpic with white spines.



Cucumbers, Slicing

Corinto (Fi) 48 days (Jn)

Earliest, most productive slicer. These cucumbers grow 7—8" long and have a very small seed cavity. The cucumbers are gynocious and parthenocarpic. Good for both the field and greenhouse.

Diva 58 (FI) 58 days (G,H,J,Jn,Ni,P,Pk,R,Sh,Tg,Th,Tt,Vt)

Great all-female cucumber that is seedless, burpless and produce well. They are 6—8" long with good disease resistance. They taste better when the end becomes a little discolored at larger sizes.

Marketmore 76 (OP) 65 days (A,B,Bc,F,G,H,Hms,J,Jn,Js,Ni,P,Pk,Pr,R,S,Ss,V,Vi)

Old standard open-pollinated variety that is highly disease resistant.

Shintokiwa (OP) 62 days (F,Hms,Tb)

This is one of my best cucumbers! I grow it on hog panels and it gets about 9—10" long, beautiful, dark green and great crisp flavor.

Sweet Slice (FI) 45—62 days (H,J,R,S,Sh,Te,Tg,Tt,Vt)

Continues to be a popular burpless hybrid cucumber. Mild flavor and no bitterness. 10 – 12" fruit with skin so thin doesn't need to be peeled. A favorite with local gardeners.



Peas, Shelling

Big, Mr. (OP) 58 days (Pk,R,S,Sh,V,Vt)

Huge peas! This is a fun one to grow with children or if you really like big peas. It is an All-American winner and a great producer.

Green Arrow (OP) 75 days (A,H,Hms,J,Js,Ni,P,Pk,R,Sa,Sc,Sh,Ss,St,Te,V,Vi)

Open pollinated pea with 4" pods with 9—11 sweet peas. Excellent for freezing and pods are borne in pairs—easy to pick.

Knight (OP) 56 days (H,Js,P,R,S,Vi)

Earliest large podded pea. Double podded 4" pods, with about 8 peas. Short 24" vines. Tolerance to common wilt, several mosaics.

Maxigolt (OP) 62 days (Jn)

Outstanding late variety with excellent flavor. Can be grown with or without support as they are 3—4 ft. tall.

Wando (OP) 70 days (A,B,J,R,Sa,Sh,Js,Jsc,Vi,Vt)

More resistant to the effects of heat and can be used for later sowings of pea crops, it also pollinates well under cooler conditions. It grows about 30" tall and is high yielding.



Peas, Edible Pods

Cascadia (OP) 62 day (F,Hms,J,Js,Ni,P,R,S,Sc,Sh,Tb,Te,Tm,V,Vt)

A short, 32" vine that has an all-purpose pea. It can be used like a snap pea, a snap pea and a shelling pea later. Sweet variety.

Oregon Giant (OP) 60—68 days (J,Jn,Js,Ni,P,R,Re,S,Sa,Sc,Sh,Tb,Te,V,Vi)

A lovely snow pea with tender pods that are great fresh or frozen.

Sugar Ann (OP) 52 days (Bc,G,Hms,J,Jn,Js,Jsc,R,Te,Th,Tm,Vi,Vt)

Still a very good extra-early short vined snap pea. Sweet crisp 1 1/2" pods. Average 2' vines do not need support. 1984 AAS.

Super Sugar Snap (OP) 64-66 day (B,H,J,Jn,Js,Jsc,P,Pk,R,Re,Sh,Te,V,Vt)

All the great qualities of the original sugar snap with even thicker pods for extra sweet crisp flavor. Bears several days earlier and has added resistance to powdery mildew.



Onions (Storage)

Candy (F1) 85+ day (B,D,G,H,J,Jn,Js,P,Pk,R,Re,S,Sh,Te,Tt)

Day-neutral onion that is big and sweet. You can sow in late fall for over wintering or go ahead and start from seed indoors and transplant out in early spring. Has kept well for some folks in the county.

Copra (F1) 104 days (D,J,P)

Uniform, rock hard storage onion. They dry quickly due to thin necks and have remained in good condition until spring in the root cellar. Start early from seed indoors and transplant outdoors. Early long day onion.

Red Wing (F1) 116 days (D,F,Hms,J,Jn,M,Ni,P,Pk,Sc,Te)

Best long day red onion for keeping but may not always grow well if we have a long cool season. They like cool springs with warmer

Short Day Onions are varieties that require 10–12 hours of daylength. They are best for southern states. **Intermediate Day Onions** require 12–14 hours of daylength and do best in the mid-section of the country. **Long Day Onions** require 14–16 hours of daylength. They work best in our northern climate. **Unique Onions** will do well in both northern climates and the intermediate part of the country. **Growing from seed:** Start about 12 wks. before setting out, try: Patterson (as good as Copra), Borettana cipollini, Clear Dawn, Dakota Tears, Red Wethersfield.



Parsnips

Lancer (OP) 120 days (Hms)

High germinating seeds. Long slender roots, very sweet. You can leave this one in the ground over winter and harvest roots in the spring. Grows well here. Try this as a new vegetable!

Turga (OP) 100–110 days (Bc,Bg,Sa,Tb,)

Vigorous and productive variety that has extra wide roots that are sweet, crisp and nutty tasting. It is very smooth and uniform.



Eggplant

Casper (OP) 70 days (Bc,R,Sa,Ss,Tg)

An old white variety that has been dependable in cold climates. It is becoming popular once again with 6" fruit.

Galine (F1) 65 days (F,Jn,)

High-yielding black bell type that are 6-7" long, 3-4" in diameter. They do quite well even in our northern climate. One to try.

Orient Express (F1) 58 days (Jn,Tg)

Dark purple, long 8–10" fruits. This eggplant can set fruit in cold weather and under heat stress.



Garlic

Bavarian Purple (stiff neck type) (Te)

Best variety grown over 10 years with no disease or loss. in Cook County. A good variety to start with when growing garlic.

German Extra-Hardy (stiff neck type) (Ggg,H,Jn,M,P,Ss,)

Planted in the fall, this garlic is rated very highly for northern climates. Flavor is very good and it stores very well.

Music (stiff neck type) (B,G,Ggg,H,Hms,Jn,Jsc,P,Pr,Re,Ss,Te)

Planted in the fall, this garlic has out-produced other varieties in trials. White skinned with a blush of pink, medium hot flavor, lasts up to 9 months. Very cold tolerant.



Greens

Arugula (OP) 21 baby—40 days (Bc,F,G, J,Jn,Js,Jsc,Ni,P,Pk,Ss,Tb,V)

Standard salad green with long dark leaves that adds spice and flavor to salads. Flea beetles love this one so cover with reemay...

Bull's Blood Beet Greens (OP) 21 baby—50 days (Bc,H,Jn,Hms,P)

Beautiful tops and stalks are perfect to add to your greens mix either in salads or eaten alone. Beets remain small so grow for leaves.

Early Wonder Beet Green (OP) (F,Hms, Jn,Js,P)

Quick growing tops are perfect for early beet greens while roots size up for baby beets.

Georgia Southern Collards (OP) (B,Bc,Bg,Hms,Js,Ni,r,Ss)

Old heirloom that has good resistance to both heat and cold. Great up north for eating raw, steamed and stir fried. Protect collards from cabbage moths by growing under a floating row cover.

Natacha Escarole (OP) (Jn)

Wider and more tender than endive with a milder more delicate flavor. This variety has grown well for folks along Lake Superior. It can be used as a salad base in place of lettuce or mixed in a salad.

Red Giant Mustard Green (OP) 20-40 days (B,Bc,F,H,Hms,Jn,Js,P,Pk,Sc)

This is a beautiful ornamental Japanese plant with large, purple-tinted leaves. They have a mild mustard flavor that can be added to salad for fresh flavor.

Vates Collards (OP) 75 days (Bc,F,Jn,Js,P,R,S,Sc,Sh,Ss)

Long-standing and heat resistant, these greens produce a crop into the cold Autumn weather. Excellent for boiling and slow cooking, also good braised with cider vinegar or soil sauce & sesame oil.

Microgreens: Sow last years mizuna, cabbage, kale, kohlrabi, lettuce, collards, beet greens, spinach seeds indoors in seed trays under lights and enjoy micro-greens in your sandwiches all winter. Much safer and easier to do than growing sprouts with much of the same nutritious value.

**Herbs****Basil, Genovese 70 days (A,B,Bc,F,H,Hms,Jn,Js,Jsc,Ni,R,Re,S,Sc,Sh,Ss,St)**

One of the best basil for making pesto. This has smaller leaves but more potency than Sweet Basil.

Basil, Sweet 70 days (B,F,G,H,J,Js,Jsc,Re,S,Sc,Sh,St,V,Vi)

Heaviest yielding variety, recommended for drying and all-around great eating. Works well for pesto also.

Simpson Elite (OP) 30 – 53 days (J,R,S,Tg,Vi)

Extra slow bolting leaf lettuce. This one has been grown in the county in full sun all summer and never bolted. A nice green leaf lettuce that doesn't get bitter.

Sweet Valentine (OP) 56 days (F,Jsc,)

Starts as a Butterhead that matures into a Romaine type. Slow to bolt in hot, dry conditions. Flavor very delicate and less bitter. Good lettuce for mixtures with red and slightly savoyed leaves.

Tom Thumb (OP) 45 – 65 days (A,B,Bc,F,Ni,P,Sc,Te,Tg,Th,Tm,Vi)

Petite delicious solid heads. Early and fast, ideal for close planting and small gardens. You can begin eating outer leaves as leaf lettuce and then cut entire head for one salad. This old heirloom can rot quickly from the bottom, so watch for bottom rot.

**Melons****Halona (FI) 73—79 days (F,Jn,Js,P,S,Te,V,)**

A cantaloupe that produced even during adverse conditions with cool June temperatures. Fruit is 4—5 lbs with a small seed cavity and very sweet.

Petit Gris de Rennes (OP) 85 days (Bc,G,Jsc,Sa,Ss)

Not for production growing—great for homeowners. Very sweet, great taste, quite small but the flavor is worth it!

Sarah's Choice (FI) 76 days (G,Jn,Ss,V)

A great 3 lb cantaloupe that was chosen for its flavor. Nice oval shape.

Sweet Granite (OP) 78 days (Jn,Ss,St,Tt)

Early ripening cantaloupe that was developed for northern and mountain climates. Melons are about 3 lbs., orange-fleshed, harvest at full-slip. Released in 1966 from U of Hampshire.



Lettuce

Anuenue (OP) 50—72 days (F,Ni,Tb)

Compact, crispy, and non-bitter. This Summer Crisp lettuce has bright glossy leaves surrounding a round well-packed heart. Slow growing to keep it from getting bitter.

Blushed Butter Cos (OP) 49 days (F,Jsc,Tb)

Combination butterhead-romaine with both red & green leaves. Crisp with a great flavor. Rapidly becoming a favorite variety here.

Freckles (OP) 28—55 days (A,H,Hms,Js,Ni,P,R,Vi,Sa,Sc,Ss,Tb)

Great for both baby leaf and full-sized heads. Heat tolerant and has reseeded itself in our county. Nice green romain with red splashes of color.

Merveille des Quatre Saisons (OP) 40+ days (Bc,Ni,P,R,Vi,Jsc,Sa,Sc,Ss,Tb)

French heirloom Butterhead lettuce also known as 'Marvel of Four Seasons' for its ability to withstand heat and cold. Leaves are tinged with red making it nice for inclusion in salads.

Nancy (OP) 58 days (F,Jn,Tb)

Nice butterhead that has been around a long time. It is usually slow to bottom rot, but some years is worse than others. Flavor & texture makes up for it.

Northpole (OP) 51 days (Sa,Tb,Te)

Cold-hardy Butterhead lettuce that can be set out early under cover before a first frost. Lime-green 6–8" heads are sweet and tasty. Not for the summer—early spring or late fall.

Red Sails (OP) 29 – 55 days (F,Hms,Jn,Js,Ni,P,Plk,Te)

Slowest bolting red leaf lettuce. Attractive, compact heads with ruffled, fringed leaves. Bright green background overlaid with burgundy red. Nice and crisp, resists sunburn.

Most lettuce does very well in Cook County. Start transplants early indoors for lettuce in June. Plant some seeds later in June behind your peas or pole beans to keep from bolting early if we have warm weather. You can also use 30% shade cloth to reduce bolting in many varieties. Mixtures are becoming more common instead of separate varieties.

Caraway (Perennial) (A,Bc,F,Jn,Js,Ni,P,V,Vi)

Biennial plant that is hardy here and will self-sow. Primarily its seeds are used for soups, stews, breads and pastries. Likes full sun and sandy soil.

Chives (Perennial) (A,B,Bc,F,G,H,Hms,J,Jn,Js,Jsc,Ni,P,R,Re,S,Sc,Ss,St,V)

Hardy perennial with lilac-colored flowers in mid-summer. Leaves and flowers can be used dried or fresh for a slight oniony flavor. It is a nearly indestructible plant in our county. Garlic chives has white flowers and a 'garlicky' flavor. Seems to be a little less hardy here.

Cilantro , Caribe 55 days (F,Hms,Jsc,P)

Lots of excellent foliage that can be dried and used throughout the winter. Fresh herb can also be used during the summer. One of the better flavored strains.

Dill, Bouquet, Fernleaf, Goldkroner, Super Dukat 40 + days

All of these dill varieties have done well in Cook County.

Epazote 55 days (A,Ni,P,R,Ss)

Used in traditional Mexican cooking that does well and can be dried and harvested for use year-round. It prevents gas when cooking with a lot of spicy bean dishes while imparting great flavor.

Lovage 90 days (A,B,Bc,F,Jn,Jsc,Ni,P,R,Ss,Vi)

Perennial in Cook County that can be used in place of celery. The leaves impart the same flavor and easier to grow than celery. It can grow 6' tall here.

Oregano, Greek 80 days (A,B,F,Hms,J,Jn,Jsc,Ni,R,Re,S,Ss)

Dark leaves great for Italian and Greek cooking. Very strong flavor that is traditional for pizza and tomato sauces. Dries well.

Parsley, Giant Italian 70 days (A,B,Bc,G,Hms,J,Jn,Jsc,Re,S,Sc,Sh,Ss)

Very high yielding variety with huge, dark green leaves having awesome flavor. Very upright stems and great for drying.

Rosemary (A,B,Bc,F,G,H,J,Jn,Jsc,Ni,P,R,Re,S,Sh,Ss,V)

Rosemary is propagated easiest with cuttings and only about 30% germination for seeds. You can overwinter this plant indoors and place it outdoors in the summer where it will receive lots of heat.

Sage, Broadleaf (A,B, Bc,F,J,Js,Ni,P,Re,S,Sh)

This can be used fresh or dried. It has been overwintered in Cook County but will need protection with either straw and balsam boughs or very good snow coverage. If they become too woody over time, they can be cut back or new plants started.

Tarragon, French (B,J,Sh,Vt)

There are 3 main tarragons: French, Russian and Mexican. The French Tarragon has probably the strongest flavor and is the one most often grown in our area. It is usually grown from cuttings rather than seed. Overwinter here with protection.

Thyme, German (F,G,J,Jn,R,V)

Grows well in well-drained soils and can overwinter in Cook County if carefully covered during the winter. Great for soups, casseroles and gravies. You can also dry the leaves and use them through the winter.

**Kale****Beedy's Camden 60 days (Annapolis Seeds)**

Open —pollinated variety of green kale that overwinters in zone 5. Abundant wavy blue-green leaves can grow enormous but still remain tender. Slow to bolt.

Red Russian 60 days (A,B,Bc,F,H,Hms,Jn,Js,Jsc,Ni,P,R,S,Sa,Sc,Ss,Tb,Te,Vi)

A Siberian heirloom kale that is very tender with a delicate flavor. This variety is also very good for micro-greens. Tolerant to low temperatures that will extend your 'greens' season.

**Kohlrabi****Kolibri (F1) 45 days (F,H,Hms,J,Jn,Js,Jsc,P,R,Te,Th,)**

An excellent purple variety. Easy to grow excellent in salads or 'slaw'. Nearly fiberless white flesh.

Kossak (F1) 80 days (G,Hms,J,Jn,Js,P,R,Sh,Th,V,Vt)

Giant variety for storage. Up to 8" dia. this variety remains sweet and tender. You can keep in cold storage for 3-4 months.

**Leeks****King Richard (OP) 75 days (A,C,F,Hms,Jn,R,Sc,Sh,Tb,Th,Tm)**

Remarkable earliness and length. In favorable soil and culture, the white stems are over a foot long to the first leaf. Not winter hardy.

Lancelot (OP) 75 days (B,C,D,F,H,Hms,J,Pk,Sc,Sh,Te,Tm)

Leeks are not daylight sensitive, this variety does very well as long as you keep blanching them. Great flavor!

**Lettuce Information**

Iceberg or Crisphead: Lettuce that has a tight head of crisp leaves. Doesn't like hot summer temperatures or water stress. One of the more difficult types of lettuce to grow. This one usually found in the local salad bar. Some varieties include Crispino, Ithaca, Summertime, etc. all of which mature in 70—80 days.

Summer Crisp, French Crisp or Batavian: This variety fits between the Iceberg and Looseleaf lettuce types. It has crisp, thick outer leaves that can be harvested as a looseleaf until the head forms. The heart of the lettuce is sweet, juicy and a bit nutty. Some varieties include Anuenue, Nevada, Magendat, etc. all of which mature around 55–60 days.

Butterhead, Boston or Bibb: One of the more delicate varieties of lettuce, Butterhead is creamy to light green on the inside with loose, soft and ruffled green leaves on the exterior. These types of lettuces may be harvested by removing the entire head or just the outside leaves. They are easier to grow than Iceberg lettuces and more tolerant of conditions. They are less likely to bolt and rarely bitter. Some varieties include Blushed Butter Oak, Pirat, Tom Thumb, etc. and all are mature in about 55–75 days. (Some categorize 'Buttercrunch Lettuces' as crosses between Butterhead and Romaine and put them in a separate category. These would include Buttercrunch, Winter Density, etc.)

Romaine or Cos: These varieties are typically 8—10" tall and upright with spoon-shaped, tightly folded leaves with thick ribs. Outside leaves are typically green with the inside leaves being greenish white. The outer leaves sometimes can be tougher with the interior leaves being very tender having a sweet taste combined with a nice crisp crunch. They usually have a stronger flavor than looseleaf lettuce varieties. They can also withstand some summer heat. Some varieties include Blushed Butter Cos, Jericho, Rouge d'Hiver etc. and they mature around 70 days.

Looseleaf, Leaf, Cutting or Bunching: These are one of the easiest types of lettuce to grow. They don't form a head or heart. You can harvest these varieties by the leaf as they mature or wait a bit and harvest the whole. Looseleaf varieties are usually slow bolting and fairly heat resistant. A number of varieties include Black Seeded Simpson, Cracoviensis, Merlot, Red Sails, etc. and they all mature within a 40—45 day time period. You can cut these about 1" off the ground with a pair of scissors and they will re-sprout in a couple of weeks to give you a second cutting.