



## Organic Gardening Plan

Sat, 01/15/2011 - 08:01 -- Farmer Dave

### [Gardening Plan](#)

[1]

Start your New Year gardening plan. Here in Northern California we are having a cold and stormy winter so there are plenty of days to stay inside by the fire and work on my gardening plan.

On the occasional sunny days I have been getting out and doing a little sheet composting and will soon be pruning our fruit trees. This is all part of the plan. As soon as things warm up a little I will also start some lettuce spinach and brassicas (broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage) in flats to plant out under cloches as soon as they are big enough.

So what goes into a good gardening plan?

First of all you need to think of what you like to eat most and what will grow well in your location.

#### **Every good plan will consist of:**

- List of garden vegetables and flowers- your favorites!
- Garden bed layout: Type, shape and placement of your garden beds and perennial plants:
- First and last frost dates
- Compost Area: Type and placement
- Water system: Overhead or drip
- Possibly a green house or cold frame

Think of how all these elements will interrelate and enhance each other, creating the beautiful garden of your dreams.

Draw out a plan and order your seeds!

Soon it will be time to prepare your beds and plant your garden. Although gardening is flexible and always growing, having a solid plan in place first will help you avoid frustration and give you a good start.

You can draw out your plans by hand or use some of the new on line [garden planning programs](#). [2]

These programs offer you an easy way to lay out your garden, make changes, and their fun to use. They also offer some good garden advice.

For more advanced garden planning you will also need to think about plant successions, crop rotations, cover crops, using a green house or cold frame and how best to utilize your garden area.

Plant successions will give you a continuous supply of garden veggies instead of having all your lettuce or

summer squash mature all at the same time.

Crop rotations will insure long term soil fertility and will help you avoid diseases and pests.

Cover crops also known as Green Manure are a great part of any garden plan. Cover crops are a way to enrich your soil by growing grain and legumes in the off season or unused garden areas and turning them in which will enrich your garden soil.

Green houses, cloches and cold frames are a great addition to any garden and will give you a place to grow your garden starts. These will also act as season extenders giving you a longer growing season so you can start and grow your vegies all year long.

Garden Journals are great tools for helping you with your future plans. Whenever I plant something turn in a bed or do a gardening experiment I always think it will be easy to remember what and when I did it. Now I have to admit that experience has proved me wrong and I usually can't remember at least one of the important factors in the what, when or how category. So write it down! Last year's timing, successes and failures will guide next year's garden planning.

### **Now for a few words of caution:**

Make sure to put your garden in a good location with lots of sun, available water and potential for good soil.

Start small if this is your first garden be reasonable and don't get overwhelmed. It is better to have a beautiful well maintained smaller garden than you can take care of than a big weed patch that is so overwhelming that you dread going in. You can get an amazing amount of great food out of a small productive garden.

Don't delay start your compost today! No matter how big your garden is and where you put it you will need to feed your soil and there is nothing that compares with rich compost for growing rich gardens.

See our Victory Garden ebook for more garden hints and a step by step guide that will make [starting a vegetable garden](#) [3] easy.

Image (optional):

