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Thu, 05/15/2008 - 11:20 -- Kitchy

Question:

What roots crops I can plant in the spring?

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Answer::

Beets, radishes, parsnips, rutabagas, and turnips share a love for cool weather, and growing them when temperatures are cool is the secret to sweet, crisp roots. Start sowing spring radish seeds as soon as the soil can be worked, and plants will be ready for harvest in as little as 3 weeks. Fast, even growth is the secret to a good crop. Sow new crops every week or 10 days until daytime temperatures remain above about 65°F/18.3°C. After that, the roots will be bitter and tough, not spicy and crisp. Beets and turnips also can be grown in spring, but they take slightly longer than radishes--from seed, beets take 1 to 2 months, turnips 1 to

2 months. Beets germinate in 45°F/7.2°C soil, but you'll probably get better results if you wait a bit and sow both beets and turnips once the soil is at least 50°F/10°C. If you harvest turnips when they're still small, you can sow successive crops every 10 days until warm temperatures (daytime highs in the low 70s/21-23°C) arrive to spread out the harvest. Some long-season or winter radishes also can be sown at the same time as beets and turnips in spring. Look for bolt-resistant cultivars that mature in 40 or 50 days, and sow as soon as the soil can be worked. Parsnips are the slowpokes of this group. Sow them in early to mid-spring for fall harvest. Reprinted from *The Veggie Gardener's Answer Book* Copyright 2008 by Barbara W. Ellis, with permission from Storey Publishing. Creative Commons photo credit: Chantal Foster

Question Details (optional):

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