

# MAYDAY! Gardens

Growing and sharing vegetable seedlings to build stronger families, communities, and a resilient food system.

*By Laura Garber, Food and Farming Director and  
Founder of Cultivating Connections Montana*

You are invited to grow plant starts to share! Grow vegetable starts and tend and feed yourself and your family, to share with your friends and neighbors, and to plant in your area. It is easy and fun to grow food plant starts.



-First, pick the day you want to distribute or transplant your food plants.

-From that date, count weeks backwards to determine when to seed each type of plant. Your latest distribution date should be no less than 75 days before the anticipated first frost date in the area where they will be distributed.

-Find containers, dig up some soil, and get seeding!



## Timeline to distribution:

**11 weeks** before distribution: seed onions, peppers, parsley, celery

**8 weeks** before distribution: seed tomatoes, green onions, basil

**6 weeks** before distribution: seed swiss chard, lettuce

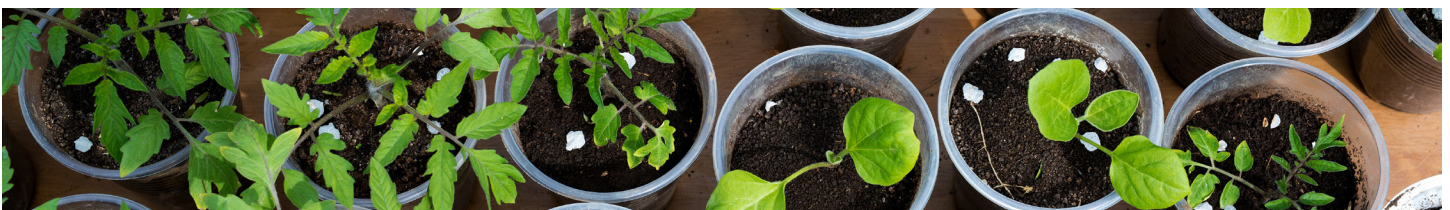
**5 weeks** before distribution: seed kale, cabbage, broccoli, kohlrabi, dill, and flowers like calendula and nasturtium

**4 weeks** before distribution: seed pac choi, Chinese cabbage, napa cabbage

**3 weeks** before distribution: seed winter squash, zucchini, cucumbers, and bush beans

**2 weeks** before distribution: transplant tomatoes into larger pots, transplant onions into clusters.  
Thin any starts to one plant per cell or container

**5 days** before distribution: Harden off the plants starts by bringing them outside and reducing the watering. Start with ½ day outside then either cover plants with row cover or move back inside. Then leave plants outside all day, cover with row cover at night. If the weather will be frost free, leave plants uncovered the last two nights before distribution or planting. Tomatoes, peppers, squashes, basil, and cucumbers may need to be covered every night, especially if temperatures will be in the 30s or low 40s at night.



Mayday! Mayday! Mayday! Gardens-the food, soil, and seeds need our attention now. Mayday! Mayday! Mayday! Gardens-growing together for local food and societal resilience.

This is a supported journey into small-plot agriculture, gardening, food, and seed saving. Free, ready-to-plant vegetable, herb, and flower starts selected for easy growing in Montana. Informative and fun videos will help you be successful. Everyone is invited to join Mayday! Gardens to plant, harvest, and eat together. No gardening experience necessary, Everyone can grow food!

We will grow food and we will release ourselves from the current system of Corporate-Industrial-polluting-Slave-driven-gene-manipulated-subsidized-unhealthy Agriculture-as-a-profit-driven-Big-Business. Who will feed the people you may ask? The people will feed the people!

We will create a food system that is abundant, fair, healthy for consumers, farmers, and the planet, and is locally focused. We will build our soils, our health, our community, and our future. "Change Your Food, Change Your World!"



How and where you plant Your Future Food is only limited by your imagination. A small, 4'X6' square will work, a 1'wide strip that is 24' long will work, planter boxes, large patio pots, and raised beds will work. Just plant your future food, please.

Mayday! Gardens can be in your front yard, along the driveway, in a community garden plot: anywhere with soil, sunlight, and a way to get water.

Preparing to grow Your Future Food is easy. All you need is a shovel, a garden fork, or a rototiller. Maintaining Your Future Food is fun and easy. All you need is access to clean water and a bucket, watering can, or hose. It will be rewarding to care for your plants, will give you a bit of exercise, and will not take a lot of time.

Harvesting Your Food will be the BEST FUN, and Your Food will taste INCREDIBLE! Preparing it into delicious and healthy meals will be easy.



## More Resources:

- Montana Agritourism Fellows: [www.montanaagritourism.com](http://www.montanaagritourism.com)
- Cultivating Connections Montana: <https://www.cultivatingconnectionsmt.org/>  
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