

Low Tunnel Season Extension



Benefits of a Low Tunnel

Weather is unpredictable and varies drastically from one day to the next across the upper Midwest. Low tunnels provide extra protection for crops when the weather is cold and can be a cost-effective alternative to larger, permanent structures like a high tunnel or greenhouse. Tunnels can be covered with greenhouse plastic or fabric, depending on the crop and level of protection desired. Using low tunnels can help farmers start cold tolerant crops earlier in the spring and provide protection for growing plants through the fall and winter.



Placing row covers over hoops



Bending EMT posts into hoops with the Hoop Bender



Securing row cover with snap clamps

Low Tunnel Construction

Supplies

1. 10-foot EMT posts, 1 post per 5 feet
2. 1 Low Tunnel Hoop Bender
3. 10-foot wide greenhouse plastic or fabric row cover
4. ½" Snap Clamps, 3-4 clamps per hoop
5. Sandbags to secure ends and sides, about 1 per 10 feet and 2 for each end

Building

1. Bend EMT posts into half circles, to create 6-foot wide hoops
2. Press end of hoop directly into the ground over the growing space you wish to cover, repeat across growing space, 1 per 5 feet
3. Measure and cut row cover to the length of the growing area, plus 6 feet to cover the ends
4. Lay row on one side of posts, leaving 3 extra feet of cover on each end
5. Pull row cover over the posts and secure with snap clamps
6. Place sandbags on ends and sides of low tunnel to secure the row cover



Low tunnels in a fall garden