

Utilizing Shade Cloth



Beating the Heat with Shade Cloth

Hot summer days can be stressful for many plants, but especially challenging for cold-tolerant crops like lettuce, spinach, carrots, broccoli, and cabbage. Shade cloth can help protect plants from extreme heat by blocking the sun. We don't typically think of needing season extension tools during the summer, but shade cloth can help slow bolting in crops like lettuce and spinach, extending their harvest window and increase yield. Depending on level of shade cloth, the temperature under the shade cloth can be 5 degrees or more cooler than the regular temperature. Shade cloth can be easily removed for watering and harvest of the crop.



Top view of Shade Cloth in a crop of lettuce

Levels of Shade Cloth

Shade cloths vary from 20-90% of sun blocked and it is important to buy the correct level for the crop you are looking to protect. A general rule of thumb for vegetables in Wisconsin is a 30-50% shade cloth is sufficient to protect from the heat of the sun. Shade cloth can be purchased from online retailers or a garden store.

More Information

See Fact Sheet A.5, Low Tunnel Season Extension for building information or checkout our teaching video at Mohicanag.com



Under a 30% Shade Cloth in a crop of lettuce