

May 14, 2018
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

What To Plant in May

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Finally warm temperatures are here to stay and you don't have to worry about that frost, right? Depending on where you live of course. Ferry County has a very diverse growing season because of all the different terrains we live in, ranging from high altitudes up to 4000', down to narrow valleys and heavily wooded areas where sunlight is more limited, and everything in between. You may think it's too late to grow all your favorite vegetables from seed, but warm May temperatures have made the soil perfect for sowing seeds. Warm soil will allow for fast germination and growing plants. Good choices are summertime kitchen garden staples like squash, beans, cucumbers and melons.

What zone am I in? The USDA lists Ferry County as [Zone 5a: -20F to -15F](#). I think this holds true to some of Ferry County, but for instance, I live right above Curlew Lake and last winter my coldest temperature was -12°, but there were people within a few miles of me in the -20-25° range. Talk to Ferry County natives and you will hear stories of much colder temperatures in years past.

Zone 4a is -30 °F to -25°F, and 4b is -20 to -25

When looking at plants, you will find that they are labeled with descriptions such as "hardy to Zone 5" or "hardy in Zone 4". This description is a guide to the minimum cold temperature range that the plant can survive in given normal conditions. For example, a plant label may state that the plant is "Hardy to Zone 5". This means that on average the lowest temperature the plant is likely to survive is **-20°F (-28.8°C)**. However, the plant should survive anything higher than these temperatures.

For your vegetable gardens, remember, soil is the key. Gardeners apply organic soil amendments to improve soil and raise healthy plants. Compost is the most common organic soil amendment. Composting transforms fresh organic materials (known as feedstocks) into stable forms that release nutrients slowly. Examples of compost feedstocks include yard debris, food waste, animal manure, wastewater biosolids, and woody materials.

Start planting both bush and pole beans now that the soil and air are warmed up. Try a continual 7-10 day sowing of different varieties. This will give you continual bean crops and not one large harvest.

Beets: Sow beets now for a fast, early summer treat.

Cabbage: One of the easier plants to grow in the garden. Select a variety that is right for your location (size and maturity length). Be sure to fertilize and water when cabbage head begins to form.

Carrots: Planting carrots by mid-July yields a fall crop that will keep in the garden until used.

Corn: One of the most rewarding and fast growing crops to grow. Corn is delicious when cooked only minutes after being pulled off the stalk. Try a small plot of corn to see if your microclimate can sustain it.

Cucumbers: Fast growing vine or bush cucumber plants can produce an abundance of cucumber fruits. Be

careful to pick a variety for the space you have in your garden.

Herbs: Plant heat-loving herbs like basil, oregano, thyme and sage.

Melons: Some of the most rewarding plants to grow. Great for hot, long summers. A staple for summer picnics and family fun.

Peppers: come small, big, hot, mild, and an array of different colors. Peppers take up little space and can produce high yields when planted close together. Plant as many different varieties as possible.

Summer Squash: Yum! Summer squash sowing in June will lead to fresh squash and zucchini in July.

Tomatoes: The most popular garden vegetable. Growing tomatoes is not only fun but treats you to some of the best tasting fruits in the world. Tomatoes come in many colors, shapes, taste, and sizes. Grow a few varieties every year to find your favorites! You may want to think about buying transplants in May.

Visit the WSU website for all the gardening information you will ever want to know:

<http://gardening.wsu.edu/vegetable-gardens/>

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