

CSU Extension's Colorado Master Gardeners
(by Valerie Belding)

A gardener new to Teller County from a warmer climate might be already planting. Seasoned Teller County gardeners might still be holding back- it's just not always safe to put tender plants in the ground (without protection) before June 15. Although our days have finally warmed our nights are still cool and we stand a chance of freezing. No matter your garden flair, there's a way to shortcut your learning curve!

For vegetables here's a very short recap of what grows in the Teller County region.

	Easy	Additional Protection	Buy/grow transplants
Asparagus			x
Beans		x	
Beets			
Broccoli	x		x
Cabbage	x		x
Carrots	x		
Cauliflower	x		x
Horseradish	x		x
Kale	x		x
Kohlrabi	x		x
Lettuce	x		
Onions	x		
Peas	x		
Potatoes		x	x
Radishes	x		
Rhubarb	x		x
Spinach	x		
Swiss Chard	x		
Tomatoes		x	x
Turnips			
Zucchini		x	x

Heat loving vegetables like beans, tomatoes and squash may benefit from protection from the cold at both ends of the season. Any plant needing to bloom for production would benefit from 6-8 hours direct sun. All produce will taste better grown in fertile, well-drained organic soils- probably not your native soil.

Perennial crops are asparagus, horseradish, rhubarb and strawberries. Thoroughly work in two to four inches of well-composted and aged organic matter through the soil to a 12 inch depth. Before planting asparagus, soak roots in warm water for a couple of hours. Dig a trench four to five inches deep and wide enough to accommodate the spread-out roots. Space roots, typically 18 inches apart, covering with only two inches of soil. Add

additional soil during the growing season, as plants grow. Asparagus roots are easily smothered if planted too deep initially.

Garlic, onions and potatoes are easy root crops. Onions' "sets" are generally scallions. Sweet Spanish onion type can be bought as starter or grown by seed but may not achieve slicing size. Bunching type onions are easy by seed.

Garlic bought from the store can be divided into cloves and planted just below the soil line. Mature garlic will be harvested the following fall. Any perennial plant needs winter moisture if we have above average temperatures without precipitation.

Potatoes from the store can be planted and successfully grown. There's really no "right side up" on these guys. You can divide the potato by slicing in halves or quarters. Some gardeners allow them to air dry for a day so they don't rot below ground. Make sure you have well drained soil. Growing potatoes in stacked tires is easy and makes it possible to check on maturity. Otherwise, dig around gently to inspect potato size or harvest at first freeze.

We can grow a great salad up here! Good news is there are fewer bugs, bad news is after the freeze, there's hail! Whatever doesn't grow we can buy locally from Colorado farmers.

For questions regarding produce, landscape, and horticulture questions; please contact the Teller County, Colorado Master Gardeners at 686-7961, visit our website at <https://teller.extension.colostate.edu/programs/gardening-horticulture/> or visit our booth at the Woodland Park farmers' market.