**How-To Create a Garden Plan**

Plans are useful for fully utilizing the space and managing nutrient depletion. For teachers, they are a concise and understandable overview of their year in the garden. They allow teachers to plan for curriculum integration and garden activities.

Below are explanations of all the components of the plans and how to create your own. A sample garden plan can be found at the end of this document.

We began making garden plans in February & March for 2018. Certain schools may want plans earlier if they have season extension capabilities.

1. **Garden Information & Date:** just your basic garden info, such as site name, location, and year. Feel free to include anything else that seems relevant.
2. **Garden Bed Layout:** the graphic was created using the Garden Planner tool from Gardener’s Supply Company. Bed numbers and names can be edited in using Microsoft Paint or Piktochart.
   1. Garden Planner: https://www.gardeners.com/on/demandware.store/Sites-Gardeners-Site/default/KGP-Design
   2. Piktochart: <https://piktochart.com/>
3. **Bed Explanations:** all of the beds are strategically planned, taking four main things into consideration.
   1. **What Schools Want to Grow**: Schools are welcome to grow whatever they would like, regardless of whether it can be reimbursed through GTC. However, if schools do not have ideas about what to grow, we recommend produce that can easily be used on school salad bars, or processed at the CPK.

**Primary Suggestions:**

* + 1. Cherry Tomatoes
    2. Cucumber
    3. Lettuce/Greens
    4. Carrots
    5. Summer Squash
    6. Green Beans
    7. Herbs
    8. Pumpkins (Halloween)

**Secondary Suggestions:**

* + 1. Popcorn
    2. Garlic
    3. Watermelon
    4. Other Melons
    5. Radishes
    6. Large Tomatoes
    7. Onions
    8. Potatoes
  1. **Compatible/Combative Plant Characteristics**: certain plants benefit each other when grown nearby, but others can be detrimental to growth & soil health. It is far more important to pay attention to what is combative than what is compatible.
     1. Urban Farmer – Vegetable Companion Planting Chart: this resource will tell you which plants grow well with one another.
        1. https://www.ufseeds.com/learning/companion-planting/
  2. **Soil Nutrient Depletion:** plants take and leave certain nutrients from the soil, therefore planting the same thing year after year in the same bed can deplete nutrients and make it difficult for anything to grow. This is an advanced factor to consider and can make planning tricky.
     1. Helpful article that explains soil health and rotation groups: <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/home/gardening/a20706531/crop-rotation-how-to/>
  3. **(Optional)** **When Plants Reach Maturity:** plants have varying maturity rates, and therefore some can be planted in the same bed to save space. For instance, lettuce takes 4-5 weeks to reach maturity and prefers cold weather. Tomatoes cannot be transplanted outside until after last frost, and will not get huge until at least July. By this time, all of the lettuce will bolt and be pulled out. Using this technique can increase production in a garden with limited space, but is not necessary to consider.

1. **Planting/Harvesting Calendar:** all planting, transplanting, and projected harvest dates are determined either from the back of seed packets or from the Gardener’s Supply Garden Planner. If possible, list number of plants needed for each planting event.
   1. All dates are dependent on last frost, which varies from year to year. You can use the average last frost date, but understand that plans may need to be shifted to accommodate weather.
      1. Greeley Average Last Frost: May 5
   2. Planting/Transplanting dates are listed on Sunday of every week, but can be done at any time during the week. This gives teachers the flexibility to do garden activities when it fits with their schedule and when weather permits.
   3. Harvest dates are wild estimations. They will give a general idea of when to expect produce, but there are too many uncontrollable factors to be certain.
   4. The calendar was created using tables on Word.

**WARNING:** Gardens are incredibly unpredictable environments! No garden plan is followed perfectly, Mother Nature makes sure of it. These plans can be thought of more as guidelines, so do not stress if nothing seems to go as planned.

