

Sacramento, CA Vegetable Planting Calendar

When to plant 26 vegetables in Sacramento, for the 2027 season, based on 1991–2020 normals. The dates build on the 32°F frost odds at Sacramento 5 ESE (2.9 mi ESE), shifted by CSU Extension timing rules. You'll find each rule and its source below.

NOAA puts the yearly chance of at least one 32°F night at Sacramento 5 ESE at 81.4%. The dates below come from the frost odds for the years that do freeze.

The timing rules come from Colorado State University Extension (spring) and University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension (fall count-back), and were written for those states. We apply them to Sacramento's NOAA frost dates; California extension guidance may differ.

Frost anchors: typical last frost Jan 12 (50%), balanced Jan 22 (30%), safe Feb 8 (10%); typical first frost Dec 16. Station Sacramento 5 ESE (USW00023271), confidence High. USDA zone 9b (2023). Sacramento frost dates & growing zone.

Spring planting dates

“Plant out” means transplanting for crops started indoors and sowing or planting directly in the garden for the others. Each column applies CSU Extension's timing rule to a different last-frost anchor: **aggressive** = typical date (Jan 12, 50% risk), **balanced** = Jan 22 (30%), **safe** = Feb 8 (10%). For hardy crops the cell shows the CSU “as early as” window.

Sacramento spring planting (2027 season)

Crop	How	Start indoors	Plant out: aggressive (50%)	Balanced (30%)	Safe (10%)	Min. soil temp
Tomatoes Very tender (warm season)	transplant	Mar 17–31	May 5	May 5	May 5	50°F
Peppers Very tender (warm season)	transplant	Dec 11–25	Jan 26	Feb 5	Feb 22	60°F
Potatoes Semi-hardy (cool season)	plant (seed pieces)	–	Dec 29 – Jan 12	Jan 8–22	Jan 25 – Feb 8	45°F
Onions (dry, from sets) Hardy (cool season)	plant sets	–	Dec 15–29	Dec 25 – Jan 8	Jan 11–25	35°F
Peas Hardy (cool season)	direct sow	–	Dec 15–29	Dec 25 – Jan 8	Jan 11–25	40°F
Lettuce (leaf) Hardy (cool season)	direct sow	–	Dec 15–29	Dec 25 – Jan 8	Jan 11–25	35°F
Carrots Semi-hardy (cool season)	direct sow	–	Dec 29 – Jan 12	Jan 8–22	Jan 25 – Feb 8	40°F
Beans (snap) Tender (warm season)	direct sow	–	Jan 12	Jan 22	Feb 8	55°F
Summer squash Tender (warm season)	direct sow	–	Jan 12	Jan 22	Feb 8	60°F

Crop	How	Start indoors	Plant out: aggressive (50%)	Balanced (30%)	Safe (10%)	Min. soil temp
Broccoli Hardy (cool season)	transplant	Nov 6–20	Dec 15–29	Dec 25 – Jan 8	Jan 11–25	40°F
Cabbage Hardy (cool season)	transplant	Nov 6–20	Dec 15–29	Dec 25 – Jan 8	Jan 11–25	40°F
Cauliflower Semi-hardy (cool season)	transplant	Nov 20 – Dec 4	Dec 29 – Jan 12	Jan 8–22	Jan 25 – Feb 8	40°F
Kohlrabi Hardy (cool season)	direct sow	–	Dec 15–29	Dec 25 – Jan 8	Jan 11–25	40°F
Green onions Hardy (cool season)	direct sow	–	Dec 15–29	Dec 25 – Jan 8	Jan 11–25	35°F
Radishes Hardy (cool season)	direct sow	–	Dec 15–29	Dec 25 – Jan 8	Jan 11–25	40°F
Spinach Hardy (cool season)	direct sow	–	Dec 15–29	Dec 25 – Jan 8	Jan 11–25	40°F
Turnips Hardy (cool season)	direct sow	–	Dec 15–29	Dec 25 – Jan 8	Jan 11–25	40°F
Beets Semi-hardy (cool season)	direct sow	–	Dec 29 – Jan 12	Jan 8–22	Jan 25 – Feb 8	40°F
Swiss chard Semi-hardy (cool season)	direct sow	–	Dec 29 – Jan 12	Jan 8–22	Jan 25 – Feb 8	40°F

Crop	How	Start indoors	Plant out: aggressive (50%)	Balanced (30%)	Safe (10%)	Min. soil temp
Parsnips Semi-hardy (cool season)	direct sow	–	Dec 29 – Jan 12	Jan 8–22	Jan 25 – Feb 8	35°F
Sweet corn Tender (warm season)	direct sow	–	Jan 12	Jan 22	Feb 8	50°F
Cucumbers Tender (warm season)	direct sow	–	Jan 12	Jan 22	Feb 8	60°F
Eggplant Very tender (warm season)	transplant	Dec 4–25	Jan 26	Feb 5	Feb 22	60°F
Cantaloupe Very tender (warm season)	direct sow	–	Jan 26	Feb 5	Feb 22	60°F
Watermelon Very tender (warm season)	direct sow	–	Jan 26	Feb 5	Feb 22	60°F
Winter squash Very tender (warm season)	direct sow	–	Jan 26	Feb 5	Feb 22	60°F

A soil thermometer helps here. CSU recommends checking soil temperature at 4 inches (6 inches for beans) before sowing. NOAA doesn't publish soil-temperature normals, so instead of a date, each crop shows CSU's minimum soil temperature.

Fall planting dates

Latest dates for a fall harvest, using the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension count-back formula: days to harvest (CSU) + 14-day fall factor + 14-day frost-tender factor for frost-sensitive crops, counted back from the first-frost date. For transplanted crops (CSU days are from transplant) the result is the latest transplant date; seeds go in CSU's transplant-age weeks earlier. We add no harvest period, so these dates give you a first harvest by the first frost, not a long harvest.

Sacramento fall planting

Crop	How	Days counted back	By (typical first frost Dec 16)	By (early first frost Nov 28)
Peas	sow	79	Sep 28	Sep 10
Lettuce (leaf)	sow	74	Oct 3	Sep 15
Carrots	sow	84	Sep 23	Sep 5
Beans (snap)	sow	88 (frost-tender)	Sep 19	Sep 1
Summer squash	sow	78 (frost-tender)	Sep 29	Sep 11
Broccoli	transplant (start seeds Aug 10–24)	79	Sep 28	Sep 10
Cabbage	transplant (start seeds Jul 21 – Aug 4)	99	Sep 8	Aug 21
Kohlrabi	sow	64	Oct 13	Sep 25
Green onions	sow	74	Oct 3	Sep 15
Radishes	sow	44	Nov 2	Oct 15
Spinach	sow	54	Oct 23	Oct 5
Turnips	sow	64	Oct 13	Sep 25
Beets	sow	74	Oct 3	Sep 15
Swiss chard	sow	74	Oct 3	Sep 15
Cucumbers	sow	83 (frost-tender)	Sep 24	Sep 6

Month-by-month: what to plant in Sacramento

What to plant in Sacramento in January

- Beans (snap): direct sow outdoors (Jan 12 – Feb 8)
- Summer squash: direct sow outdoors (Jan 12 – Feb 8)
- Sweet corn: direct sow outdoors (Jan 12 – Feb 8)

- Cucumbers: direct sow outdoors (Jan 12 – Feb 8)
- Peppers: transplant outdoors (Jan 26 – Feb 22)
- Eggplant: transplant outdoors (Jan 26 – Feb 22)
- Cantaloupe: direct sow outdoors (Jan 26 – Feb 22)
- Watermelon: direct sow outdoors (Jan 26 – Feb 22)
- Winter squash: direct sow outdoors (Jan 26 – Feb 22)
- Onions (dry, from sets): plant sets outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Peas: direct sow outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Lettuce (leaf): direct sow outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Broccoli: transplant outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Cabbage: transplant outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Kohlrabi: direct sow outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Green onions: direct sow outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Radishes: direct sow outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Spinach: direct sow outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Turnips: direct sow outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Potatoes: plant (seed pieces) outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Carrots: direct sow outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Cauliflower: transplant outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Beets: direct sow outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Swiss chard: direct sow outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Parsnips: direct sow outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)

What to plant in Sacramento in February

- Potatoes: plant (seed pieces) outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Carrots: direct sow outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Cauliflower: transplant outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Beets: direct sow outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Swiss chard: direct sow outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Parsnips: direct sow outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Beans (snap): direct sow outdoors (Jan 12 – Feb 8)
- Summer squash: direct sow outdoors (Jan 12 – Feb 8)
- Sweet corn: direct sow outdoors (Jan 12 – Feb 8)
- Cucumbers: direct sow outdoors (Jan 12 – Feb 8)
- Peppers: transplant outdoors (Jan 26 – Feb 22)
- Eggplant: transplant outdoors (Jan 26 – Feb 22)
- Cantaloupe: direct sow outdoors (Jan 26 – Feb 22)
- Watermelon: direct sow outdoors (Jan 26 – Feb 22)
- Winter squash: direct sow outdoors (Jan 26 – Feb 22)

What to plant in Sacramento in March

- Start tomato seeds indoors (Mar 17–31)

What to plant in Sacramento in May

- Tomatoes: transplant outdoors (May 5)

What to plant in Sacramento in July

- Start cabbage seeds indoors for a fall crop (Jul 21 – Aug 4)

What to plant in Sacramento in August

- Start broccoli seeds indoors for a fall crop (Aug 10–24)
- Start cabbage seeds indoors for a fall crop (Jul 21 – Aug 4)

What to plant in Sacramento in September

- Last day to set out cabbage transplants for a fall harvest (by Sep 8)
- Last day to sow beans (snap) for a fall harvest (by Sep 19)
- Last day to sow carrots for a fall harvest (by Sep 23)
- Last day to sow cucumbers for a fall harvest (by Sep 24)
- Last day to sow peas for a fall harvest (by Sep 28)
- Last day to set out broccoli transplants for a fall harvest (by Sep 28)
- Last day to sow summer squash for a fall harvest (by Sep 29)

What to plant in Sacramento in October

- Last day to sow lettuce (leaf) for a fall harvest (by Oct 3)
- Last day to sow green onions for a fall harvest (by Oct 3)
- Last day to sow beets for a fall harvest (by Oct 3)
- Last day to sow swiss chard for a fall harvest (by Oct 3)
- Last day to sow kohlrabi for a fall harvest (by Oct 13)
- Last day to sow turnips for a fall harvest (by Oct 13)
- Last day to sow spinach for a fall harvest (by Oct 23)

What to plant in Sacramento in November

- Start broccoli seeds indoors (Nov 6–20)
- Start cabbage seeds indoors (Nov 6–20)
- Start cauliflower seeds indoors (Nov 20 – Dec 4)
- Last day to sow radishes for a fall harvest (by Nov 2)

What to plant in Sacramento in December

- Start eggplant seeds indoors (Dec 4–25)
- Start pepper seeds indoors (Dec 11–25)
- Onions (dry, from sets): plant sets outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Peas: direct sow outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Lettuce (leaf): direct sow outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Broccoli: transplant outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Cabbage: transplant outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Kohlrabi: direct sow outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Green onions: direct sow outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Radishes: direct sow outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Spinach: direct sow outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Turnips: direct sow outdoors (Dec 15 – Jan 25)
- Potatoes: plant (seed pieces) outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Carrots: direct sow outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Cauliflower: transplant outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Beets: direct sow outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Swiss chard: direct sow outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Parsnips: direct sow outdoors (Dec 29 – Feb 8)
- Start cauliflower seeds indoors (Nov 20 – Dec 4)

Crop-by-crop notes

When to plant tomatoes in Sacramento

Very tender crop. CSU Extension says to transplant tomatoes at least 2 weeks after the average last frost, with nights above 52°F. The frost rule alone would put Sacramento at about Jan 26, but the average nightly low at Sacramento 5 ESE isn't above 52°F until May 5, so the transplant date is about May 5 for the typical, balanced and safer choices alike. Start seeds indoors Mar 17–31, 5–7 weeks before transplanting on May 5. Fruit set suffers when nights drop below 55°F (CSU). The normal low at Sacramento 5 ESE reaches 55°F on May 22. Using CSU's typical 65 days from transplant to harvest, tomato plants set out on May 5 would start producing around Jul 9. That's 160 days before the typical first frost (Dec 16).

When to plant peppers in Sacramento

Very tender crop. Following CSU Extension's rule (2+ weeks after the average last frost), set peppers out around Jan 26 with the typical date, Feb 5 for a balanced choice, or Feb 22 with the safer 10% date. Sow seeds indoors Dec 11–25, 6–8 weeks before transplanting on Feb 5. Below 55°F at night, fruit set suffers (CSU). At Sacramento 5 ESE, the normal low reaches 55°F on May 22. CSU's typical

time from transplant to harvest for pepper plants is 70 days. Set out on Feb 5, they would start producing around Apr 16, 244 days before the typical first frost (Dec 16).

When to plant potatoes in Sacramento

Semi-hardy crop. CSU says potatoes can be planted as early as 0–2 weeks before the average last frost, in soil of at least 45°F. In Sacramento, that's roughly Dec 29 – Jan 12 going by the typical date, or Jan 25 – Feb 8 going by the safer date.

When to plant onions (dry, from sets) in Sacramento

Hardy crop. Per CSU, onions (dry, from sets) can be planted as early as 2–4 weeks before the average last frost, as long as the soil is workable and at least 35°F. For Sacramento, that works out to roughly Dec 15–29 (typical date) or Jan 11–25 (safer date).

When to plant peas in Sacramento

Hardy crop. CSU says peas can go in as early as 2–4 weeks before the average last frost, once the soil can be worked and is at least 40°F. In Sacramento, that's roughly Dec 15–29 going by the typical date, or Jan 11–25 going by the safer date. For a fall crop, sow by Sep 28, or by Sep 10 to be safe. That's 79 days back from the first-frost date.

When to plant lettuce (leaf) in Sacramento

Hardy crop. CSU says lettuce (leaf) can go in as early as 2–4 weeks before the average last frost: roughly Dec 15–29 in Sacramento using the typical date, or Jan 11–25 using the safer one. Wait until the soil can be worked and is at least 35°F. For fall, count back 74 days from the first-frost date. That means sowing by Oct 3, or by Sep 15 to be safe.

When to plant carrots in Sacramento

Semi-hardy crop. Per CSU, carrots can go in as early as 0–2 weeks before the average last frost: roughly Dec 29 – Jan 12 in Sacramento (typical date) or Jan 25 – Feb 8 (safer date). The soil should be at least 40°F. For fall, sow by Sep 23 (Sep 5 to be safe), which is 84 days before the first-frost date.

When to plant beans (snap) in Sacramento

Tender crop. CSU's timing for beans (snap) is around the average last frost, which is about Jan 12 in Sacramento. For only a 1-in-10 chance of a later 32°F night, hold off until Feb 8. Seeds want soil at 55°F or warmer. For fall, sow by Sep 19 (Sep 1 to be safe), which is 88 days before the first-frost date.

When to plant summer squash in Sacramento

Tender crop. CSU's timing for summer squash is around the average last frost, which is about Jan 12 in Sacramento. For only a 1-in-10 chance of a later 32°F night, hold off until Feb 8. Seeds want soil at 60°F or warmer. For a fall crop, sow by Sep 29, or by Sep 11 to be safe. That's 78 days back from the first-frost date.

When to plant broccoli in Sacramento

Hardy crop. CSU says broccoli can go in as early as 2–4 weeks before the average last frost, once the soil can be worked and is at least 40°F. In Sacramento, that's roughly Dec 15–29 going by the typical date, or Jan 11–25 going by the safer date. Using CSU's typical 65 days from transplant to harvest, broccoli plants set out on Dec 25 would start producing around Feb 28. That's 291 days before the typical first frost (Dec 16). Fall broccoli: set transplants out by Sep 28. The date counts back from the typical first frost (Dec 16) by UNL Extension's method, using CSU's 65 days from transplant to harvest. Home-grown transplants need seeds started Aug 10–24 (CSU: 5–7 weeks).

When to plant cabbage in Sacramento

Hardy crop. CSU says cabbage can go in as early as 2–4 weeks before the average last frost: roughly Dec 15–29 in Sacramento using the typical date, or Jan 11–25 using the safer one. Wait until the soil can be worked and is at least 40°F. CSU's typical time from transplant to harvest for cabbage plants is 85 days. Set out on Dec 25, they would start producing around Mar 20, 271 days before the typical first frost (Dec 16). For a fall crop, set cabbage transplants out by Sep 8. That's UNL Extension's count-back from the typical first frost (Dec 16), using CSU's 85 days from transplant to harvest. If you grow your own transplants, start seeds Jul 21 – Aug 4 (CSU: 5–7 weeks to transplant size).

When to plant cauliflower in Sacramento

Semi-hardy crop. CSU says cauliflower can be planted as early as 0–2 weeks before the average last frost, in soil of at least 40°F. In Sacramento, that's roughly Dec 29 – Jan 12 going by the typical date, or Jan 25 – Feb 8 going by the safer date.

When to plant kohlrabi in Sacramento

Hardy crop. CSU says kohlrabi can go in as early as 2–4 weeks before the average last frost: roughly Dec 15–29 in Sacramento using the typical date, or Jan 11–25 using the safer one. Wait until the soil can be worked and is at least 40°F. For fall, count back 64 days from the first-frost date. That means sowing by Oct 13, or by Sep 25 to be safe.

When to plant green onions in Sacramento

Hardy crop. CSU says green onions can go in as early as 2–4 weeks before the average last frost, once the soil can be worked and is at least 35°F. In Sacramento, that's roughly Dec 15–29 going by

the typical date, or Jan 11–25 going by the safer date. For fall, count back 74 days from the first-frost date. That means sowing by Oct 3, or by Sep 15 to be safe.

When to plant radishes in Sacramento

Hardy crop. Per CSU, radishes can be planted as early as 2–4 weeks before the average last frost, as long as the soil is workable and at least 40°F. For Sacramento, that works out to roughly Dec 15–29 (typical date) or Jan 11–25 (safer date). For fall, sow by Nov 2 (Oct 15 to be safe), which is 44 days before the first-frost date.

When to plant spinach in Sacramento

Hardy crop. CSU says spinach can go in as early as 2–4 weeks before the average last frost: roughly Dec 15–29 in Sacramento using the typical date, or Jan 11–25 using the safer one. Wait until the soil can be worked and is at least 40°F. For fall, count back 54 days from the first-frost date. That means sowing by Oct 23, or by Oct 5 to be safe.

When to plant turnips in Sacramento

Hardy crop. Per CSU, turnips can be planted as early as 2–4 weeks before the average last frost, as long as the soil is workable and at least 40°F. For Sacramento, that works out to roughly Dec 15–29 (typical date) or Jan 11–25 (safer date). For fall, sow by Oct 13 (Sep 25 to be safe), which is 64 days before the first-frost date.

When to plant beets in Sacramento

Semi-hardy crop. CSU allows planting beets as early as 0–2 weeks before the average last frost, in soil at 40°F or warmer. For Sacramento, that's roughly Dec 29 – Jan 12 by the typical date or Jan 25 – Feb 8 by the safer date. For fall, count back 74 days from the first-frost date. That means sowing by Oct 3, or by Sep 15 to be safe.

When to plant swiss chard in Sacramento

Semi-hardy crop. CSU allows planting swiss chard as early as 0–2 weeks before the average last frost, in soil at 40°F or warmer. For Sacramento, that's roughly Dec 29 – Jan 12 by the typical date or Jan 25 – Feb 8 by the safer date. For a fall crop, sow by Oct 3, or by Sep 15 to be safe. That's 74 days back from the first-frost date.

When to plant parsnips in Sacramento

Semi-hardy crop. CSU says parsnips can be planted as early as 0–2 weeks before the average last frost, in soil of at least 35°F. In Sacramento, that's roughly Dec 29 – Jan 12 going by the typical date,

or Jan 25 – Feb 8 going by the safer date.

When to plant sweet corn in Sacramento

Tender crop. CSU's timing for sweet corn is around the average last frost, which is about Jan 12 in Sacramento. For only a 1-in-10 chance of a later 32°F night, hold off until Feb 8. Seeds want soil at 50°F or warmer.

When to plant cucumbers in Sacramento

Tender crop. CSU's timing for cucumbers is around the average last frost, which is about Jan 12 in Sacramento. For only a 1-in-10 chance of a later 32°F night, hold off until Feb 8. Seeds want soil at 60°F or warmer. For fall, count back 83 days from the first-frost date. That means sowing by Sep 24, or by Sep 6 to be safe.

When to plant eggplant in Sacramento

Very tender crop. Following CSU Extension's rule (2+ weeks after the average last frost), set eggplant out around Jan 26 with the typical date, Feb 5 for a balanced choice, or Feb 22 with the safer 10% date. Sow seeds indoors Dec 4–25, 6–9 weeks before transplanting on Feb 5. Using CSU's typical 60 days from transplant to harvest, eggplant plants set out on Feb 5 would start producing around Apr 6. That's 254 days before the typical first frost (Dec 16).

When to plant cantaloupe in Sacramento

Very tender crop. Following CSU Extension's rule of 2+ weeks after the average last frost, plant cantaloupe around Jan 26 at the earliest, Feb 5 as a balanced choice, or Feb 22 to be safe. CSU's minimum soil temperature is 60°F.

When to plant watermelon in Sacramento

Very tender crop. CSU Extension says to plant watermelon 2+ weeks after the average last frost: about Jan 26 (typical date), Feb 5 (balanced) or Feb 22 (safer 10% date). Wait for soil of at least 60°F.

When to plant winter squash in Sacramento

Very tender crop. Following CSU Extension's rule of 2+ weeks after the average last frost, plant winter squash around Jan 26 at the earliest, Feb 5 as a balanced choice, or Feb 22 to be safe. CSU's minimum soil temperature is 60°F.

How these dates are calculated

Timing rules, their sources and where each source applies

Rule	Applies to	Source (scope)
Hardy (cool season): "As early as 2-4 weeks before the date of the average last spring frost."	Onions (dry, from sets), Peas, Lettuce (leaf), Broccoli, Cabbage, Kohlrabi, Green onions, Radishes, Spinach, Turnips	Colorado State University Extension, Vegetable Planting Guide (CMG GardenNotes #720) (written for Colorado; its frost-relative rules are applied to other states' NOAA frost dates and labelled as CSU (Colorado) rules)
Semi-hardy (cool season): "As early as 0-2 weeks before the date of the average last spring frost."	Potatoes, Carrots, Cauliflower, Beets, Swiss chard, Parsnips	Colorado State University Extension, Vegetable Planting Guide (CMG GardenNotes #720) (written for Colorado; its frost-relative rules are applied to other states' NOAA frost dates and labelled as CSU (Colorado) rules)
Tender (warm season): "From seed: around the date of the average last spring frost"	Beans (snap), Summer squash, Sweet corn, Cucumbers	Colorado State University Extension, Vegetable Planting Guide (CMG GardenNotes #720) (written for Colorado; its frost-relative rules are applied to other states' NOAA frost dates and labelled as CSU (Colorado) rules)
Very tender (warm season): "Typically 2+ weeks after the average last spring frost date."	Tomatoes, Peppers, Eggplant, Cantaloupe, Watermelon, Winter squash	Colorado State University Extension, Vegetable Planting Guide (CMG GardenNotes #720) (written for Colorado; its frost-relative rules are applied to other states' NOAA frost dates and labelled as CSU (Colorado) rules)
Start indoors = transplant age (weeks) before the balanced transplant date; days to harvest; minimum soil temperature	Crops with those values in CSU's table	CSU Extension, Vegetable Planting Guide (CMG GardenNotes #720) (written for Colorado; its frost-relative rules are applied to other states' NOAA frost dates and labelled as CSU (Colorado) rules)

Rule	Applies to	Source (scope)
Night-temperature dates: first day the NOAA 1991–2020 daily normal low (DLY-TMIN-NORMAL) is above the CSU transplant threshold or reaches the fruit-set threshold	Tomatoes (above 52°F at transplant, 55°F fruit set), peppers (55°F fruit set)	CSU Growing Tomatoes, CSU Peppers and Eggplants (written for Colorado; generic temperature thresholds applied nationwide with attribution)
Fall count-back: days to harvest + fall factor (14) + frost-tender factor (14)	Peas, Lettuce (leaf), Carrots, Beans (snap), Summer squash, Broccoli, Cabbage, Kohlrabi, Green onions, Radishes, Spinach, Turnips, Beets, Swiss chard, Cucumbers	UNL Extension, Fall Vegetable Gardening (G1343) (written for Nebraska; the count-back formula is applied nationwide with attribution)

CSU states its spring rules relative to “the average last spring frost.” We use the 50% date as that average and also show the 30% and 10% anchors. See the methodology for details and limitations.

FAQ

When should I start seeds indoors in Sacramento?

Sow tomatoes indoors Mar 17–31 and peppers Dec 11–25. We work back from a balanced (30%-risk) transplant date using CSU's transplant ages.

When should I plant tomatoes outside in Sacramento?

About May 5, at every risk level. CSU wants tomatoes out 2+ weeks after the average last frost (that rule alone gives about Jan 26 here) and nights above 52°F. At Sacramento 5 ESE, the average nightly low first rises above 52°F on May 5, later than the frost-rule date, so the night rule sets the date.

What can I plant in Sacramento in the fall?

Based on UNL Extension's count-back from the typical first frost (Dec 16), the deadlines are: peas by Sep 28; lettuce (leaf) by Oct 3; carrots by Sep 23; beans (snap) by Sep 19; summer squash by Sep 29; broccoli by Sep 28 (transplants); cabbage by Sep 8 (transplants); kohlrabi by Oct 13; green onions by Oct 3; radishes by Nov 2; spinach by Oct 23; turnips by Oct 13; beets by Oct 3; swiss chard by Oct 3; cucumbers by Sep 24.

Download

- Calendar file (.ics) with frost dates and planting windows for 2027
- Printable PDF of this calendar
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Frost odds: NOAA NCEI U.S. Climate Normals 1991–2020. Hardiness zones: PRISM Group, Oregon State University, <https://prism.oregonstate.edu>, accessed 2026-10-08. Not the official USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map. How we calculate.

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