

# December Vegetable and Herb Gardening Calendar for Cool & Alpine Climate Australia

December is the first month of summer, and with the warmer weather gardens explode into life, becoming lush, abundant and awesome to behold. With the days getting longer as we progress towards the longest day of the year, the summer solstice, there's more time to enjoy the garden and the great outdoors!

During this month of warm sunny days, temperatures can reach extremes, with the threat of bushfires arising during dry, windy periods.

Weather can be variable in December, and summer thunderstorms may bring wind, heavy rain and hail in some areas.

In Canberra, this is the windiest and sunniest month of the year, with Canberra averaging 9 hours of sun per day.

At this time of the year the risk of frosts has passed, though in Tasmania, the temperatures at Mount Wellington can fall to 0°C.

During the summer heat, gardens can get quite dry, so keeping up with the watering is important. Pests will also emerge with the warmer weather so keep an eye out for them!

'Chop & Drop' any broad beans or peas after harvesting - chop the tops at ground level, and drop them on top of the soil as mulch, leaving the roots in the ground to return any nitrogen in the root nodules to the soil. Cover with any mulch to keep things looking tidy.

It may seem unusual, but early summer is also the time to sow some winter brassicas such as broccoli, brussels sprouts, cauliflower and swedes, so they can be harvested in winter.

## Things to Do This Month:

- Top up or add extra mulch around fruit trees and plants to retain soil moisture and reduce water loss from evaporation. Keep mulch away from plant stems and tree trunks to prevent collar rot.
- Propagate climbers by layering, and propagate strawberries by pegging down runners onto the soil.
- Propagate plants by taking softwood (green) cuttings from now till January (after which they begin to harden off).
- Last chance to plant potted fruit trees and vines to beat the summer heat (having roots, they can be planted anytime, but best in spring & autumn). Pick a day when the weather is mild!
- Continue tying growing vines and brambleberries such as blackberries and their hybrids back to supports or wires.
- Thin out fruit on plum trees if there is a risk of branches breaking.
- Last chance to plant tomatoes and capsicum seedlings.
- This is an ideal time to add new fish to ponds or water gardens, as they acclimatise easier in the warmer weather.



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## Vegetables and Herbs to Grow in December (Cool & Alpine Climate)

December Seeds to Sow and Seedlings to Plant (Cool & Alpine Climate Australia)	Sow/Plant	Harvest (weeks)
Amaranth	dst	7-8
Angelica	t	18 months
Asparagus Pea	d	8-11
Basil	st	10-12
Beans (Climbing)	dst	9-11
Beans (Dwarf, Bush)	dst	7-10
Beetroot	dst	7-10
Borage	dst	8-10
Broccoli	st	10-16
Brussels Sprouts	st	14-28
Burdock	d	17-18
Cabbage	st	8-15
Carrot	d	12-18
Cauliflower	st	15-22
Celeriac	t	14-28
Celery	t	17-18
Chicory	st	16-24
Chinese Cabbage	st	8-10
Chives	dst	7-11
Collard Greens	dst	8-11
Coriander (Cilantro)	dst	30-45
Cucumber	dst	8-10
Daikon	d	8-10
Dill	dst	8-12
Endive	dst	10-11
Fennel (Florence)	dst	14-20
French Tarragon	t	30-40 days
Globe Artichokes	t	42-57
Horseradish	plant crowns	16-24
Jerusalem Artichokes	plant tubers	15-20
Kale	dst	7-9
Kohlrabi	dst	7-10
Leeks	dst	15-18
Lemon Balm	dst	8-10
Lettuce	dst	8-12
Luffa	dst	11-12
Marrow	dst	12-17
Mint	dt	8-12
NZ Spinach (Warrigal Greens)	dst	8-10
Oregano	dst	6-8



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Parsley	dst	9-19
Potato	plant seed potatoes	15-20
Pumpkin	t	15-20
Radish	d	5-7
Rocket	d	21-35 days
Rosemary	d	12 months
Sage	dt	18 months
Salsify	d	14-21
Silverbeet (Swiss Chard)	dst	7-12
Spring Onions (Bunching Onions)	dst	6-10
Squash	dst	7-8
Summer Savory	t	6-10
Sunflower	t	10-11
Swedes (Rutabaga)	s	10-14
Sweet Corn	st	11-14
Thyme	t	42-52
Tomatillo	dt	10-14
Tomato	t	8-17
Turnip	d	6-9
Winter Savory	t	6-10
Zucchini (Courgette, Marrow)	dst	6-9

**Key:**

d = sow seeds directly into ground

s = sow seeds into seed tray

ds = sow seeds directly into ground or seed tray

t = transplant seedlings (small plants) into larger pots or plant into ground

\*= frost tender

\*\*= sow after frost



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