

To get bumper harvests, keep your garden in continuous production. When a cool-season crop, such as lettuce, spinach, radishes, or peas, is done, replant the space with green or wax beans, beets, turnips, Chinese cabbage, or a fast-maturing variety of sweet corn.

Tendergreen mustard, for example, which matures in just 35 days, can replace early cabbage. Peas or lettuce can also be used if mustard isn't the family's favorite.

In some cases, it's wise to sow short rows of crops at one-week intervals, instead of a long row that's planted just once. Leaf lettuces, mustard, radishes, and spinach can be used effectively following this plan. Plus, when a short row matures, you aren't swamped with more produce than you need. And by the time you've used the first planting, the second row is ready to be harvested.

In most areas of the country, start seeds of mid-season replacement crops, such as Chinese cabbage, Brussels sprouts, and cauliflower, around the first week of July. Sow the seeds where the plants are to remain in the garden, or start them in an out-of-the-way corner and transplant them to the main garden later, after they've developed their second true set of leaves. Thin or transplant the young seedlings so they stand 12 to 18 inches apart. Then mulch with several inches of straw to keep down weeds and to increase soil moisture.

Give crops such as corn a head start by planting them indoors in peat pots sometime in June. Then, as the earlier crops die down, the corn can take over immediately.