



PHS Community Gardens

Variety Guide: 2026 Spring Distribution

A note on where we source our seeds:

We are fortunate to have a long-standing relationship with Johnny's Selected Seeds, an employee-owned company based out of Maine. They are our primary seed vendor. They specialize in plant breeding (non-GMO), research, and seed production using both conventional and organic methods. Johnny's has a wealth of helpful educational resources in their Grower's Library, and you can type variety names into the search bar on their website to find more growing information.

We are excited to source a significant number of varieties from local seed company Truelove Seeds. Truelove offers rare, open pollinated, and culturally important vegetable, herb, and flower seeds grown by more than 20 small-scale urban and rural farmers committed to community food sovereignty, cultural preservation, and sustainable agriculture – many of them are based in Philadelphia and the surrounding area. Through this collaboration, growers share their own seeds and stories and bring in extra financial support for the important work they do building community sovereignty through agroecology.

Tomato Grower's supply is an industry favorite for sourcing reliable open pollinated and hybrid hot crops.

We have also expanded our sourcing to Sistah Seeds, a local small-scale seed operation, Kitazawa seeds, the industry leader in Asian and specialty-type vegetable seed, as well as Uprising Seeds, Southern Exposure Seed Exchange and The Cucumber Shop.



Why source locally? From small-scale growers?

We care about investing in our community of folks growing with intentional practices and making an impact through growing, including gardens that take part in City Harvest. Buying and saving seeds from this region means developing plants that are adapted to the specific conditions of Philadelphia as they shift over time. Truelove teaches us that seeds contain stories. Tracing their legacies reminds us of cultures of exchange and sharing, seeds' unique relationships with place, and of our own roots.

*Note: Photo credits go to Johnny's, Tomato Growers Supply Company, and the growers of Truelove Seeds. The descriptions in this guide are derived from the suppliers' online catalogues.



Spring Reminders

Hardening Off Seedlings:

To ensure your seedlings grow stronger and adapt more easily to transplanting, it's important to "harden them off" after they've been in a greenhouse. Gradually acclimate them by placing them in a semi-sheltered outdoor area for a few days before transplanting them into the ground. We recommend using row covers to help them transition into the elements.

Tips for Brassicas:

- **Plant in the Evening or on Overcast Days:** Plant your spring transplants during the evening or on cloudy/rainy days. This allows them time to adjust to their new environment before facing direct sunlight.
- **Use Row Covers:** As soon as your brassicas are in the ground, cover them with row covers. This will help protect them from pests and provide warmth during unpredictable spring temperatures.
- **Rotate Planting Locations:** If possible, plant brassicas in an area where they weren't grown last year. This makes it harder for pests to find them and also helps improve soil health.
- **Amend the Soil:** Brassicas are heavy feeders, so add fresh compost to your raised beds to boost soil health. If compost is limited, simply place it in the holes you dig for each transplant.
- **Mulch to Maintain Soil Conditions:** Apply light-colored mulch around your brassicas to keep the soil cool and maintain consistent moisture as the weather warms up.

Potatoes:

To increase your harvest, cut your seed potatoes in half before planting. Allow the cut surfaces to dry overnight before planting them.

Allium Pest Alert:

In the northeastern U.S., the Allium leaf miner has two generations annually: one in spring (mid-April to mid-May) and one in fall (mid-September to October). Allium crops with green foliage during these periods are particularly vulnerable to infestations.

- **Row Covers:** Install row covers early in the season, before adults emerge, and keep them in place throughout the growing season to protect your crops.
- **Spinosad Treatment:** Cornell researchers suggest that Spinosad, when applied as a plug drench or bare-root dip, significantly reduces allium leaf miner damage on onion transplants. Note, however, that while effective, this application method is not yet approved by the manufacturer's label.



Alliums



Leeks: King Richard

- Days to maturity: 75
- Beautiful full-sized leeks, over a foot long to the first leaf.
- Medium-green leaves with full habit.
- For baby leeks, plant closely (40 seeds/ft.) and harvest at finger size.
- While not hardy enough for overwintering, they will withstand medium-heavy frost (32° to 20°F/0° to -7°C) without losing their healthy appearance.



Onion: Patterson

- Days to maturity: 75
- Extremely long storage yellow onion.
- Medium-large, blocky bulbs with dark yellow skin and thin necks that dry quickly.



Onion: Red Wing

- Days to maturity: 118
- Red onion
- Uniform, large onions with deep red color. Thick skin, very hard bulbs for long storage.

Alliums



Onion: Walla Walla Sweet

- The famous, mild yellow variety from Walla Walla, WA.
- Days to maturity: 125
- Walla Walla may be spring planted using seeds or plants in colder regions where winter survival is hit or miss. It is not as big or sweet as the winteredover crop, but still milder and juicier than others from spring planting.
- Nice as a "green top" onion. Not for storage.



Scallions: Yago

- Days to maturity: 55
- Johnny's replacement for Nabechan.
- Upright blue-green leaves.
- Roots clean up easily at harvest.
- Productive and fast-growing in any kind of weather.

Cole Crops



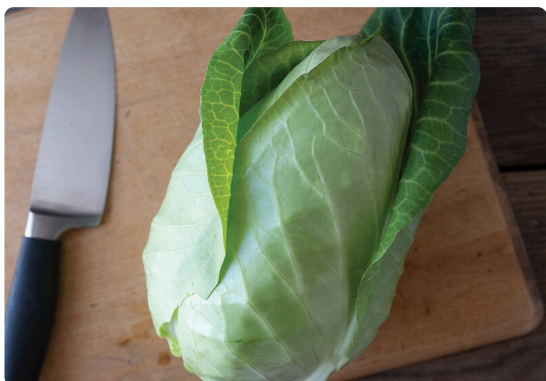
Bok Choy: Mei Qing Choy

- Days to maturity: 45
- F-1 Hybrid
- For full or medium-size heads.
- Flat, pale, misty-green stems form a thick, heavy base with broad, oval, rich green leaves. The compact, vase-shaped plant at full size is about 8–10" tall. Good bolt, heat, and cold tolerance.



Broccoli: Monty

- Days to maturity: 56
- New! Superior heat tolerance.
- F1 Hybrid
- An attractive broccoli with well-domed, bright green heads.



Cabbage: Picadilly

- Days to maturity: 63
- Extra-early pointed-type.
- Sweet, tender, & flavorful.
- Suitable for standard or compact transplant spacing.



Cabbage: Omero

- Days to maturity: 73
- Midseason red with good flavor.
- The avg. 3 lb. heads are a vibrant red and are round to slightly oval. Good, slightly sweet and peppery flavor.
- Suitable for planting at close spacing to produce mini heads.



Cabbage: Primo Vantage

- Days to maturity: 73
- F-1 Hybrid
- Mid-early with great flavor.
- Heads avg. 4–4 1/2 lb., have a very short core, and are very juicy, tender, and sweet. Holds well in the field.



Napa Cabbage: Minuet

- Days to maturity: 48
- Best mini variety. Space 12" apart for high yields of upright, dense heads.
- 9" tall heads with dark green outer leaves and an attractive yellow interior.
- Light, sweet taste. Slow to bolt.
- High resistance to downy mildew. Tolerant to bottom rot and black speck.



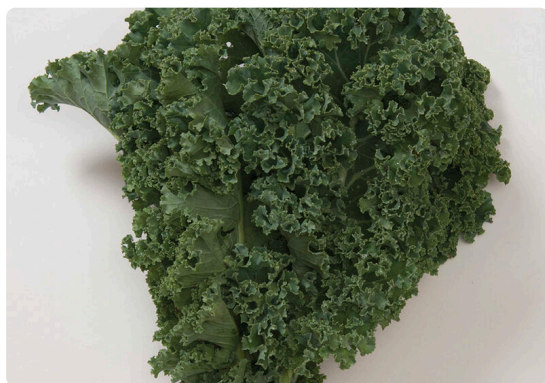
Collards: Flash

- Days to maturity: 50
- F-1 Hybrid • Very slow to bolt. Flash offers repeated harvests of dark green, smooth leaves.
- Very high yielding.



Collards: Georgia Southern Creole

- Days to maturity: 50
- Historic Georgia-type, with the variety being recorded since the mid-1800s.
- Resistant to heat & frost, grows well even in poor soils.



Kale: Winterbor

- Days to maturity: 60
- F-1 Hybrid
- Standard green curly kale.
- Vigorous plants will continue growing to produce leaves for successive harvests as the lower leaves are harvested.



Kale: Black Magic

- Days to maturity: 65
- Lacinato or "dinosaur" type kale with long, narrow leaves for attractive and tall, straight bunches.



Kale: Red Russian

- Days to maturity: 29 baby/50 full size
- Smooth green, purple-veined leaves for baby leaf and bunching.
- The plants mature medium-tall and leaves are tender compared to other kales.
- Great for salads and light cooking



Mustard: Green Wave

- Days to maturity: 21 baby/45 full size
- Spiciest mustard
- Bright green, broad leaves with a tightly scalloped margin and hot, mustardy flavor.



Mustard: Scarlet Frills

- Days to maturity: 21 baby/37 full size
- Red, ruffled leaves for beautiful color and texture.
- Spicy green and red, intricately lobed and ruffled leaves.
- Slow-bolting. Darker red in cooler weather.

Herbs



Parsley: Giant of Italy

- Days to maturity: 75
- Huge, dark green leaves with great flavor.
- Strong, upright stems; one of the best parsley varieties for fresh market sales.
- Very high yielding. Ht. 18-20"

Lettuce & Endive



Benefine (Endive)

- Days to maturity: 48
- Fancy blanched leaves for salad mixes.
- Ruffled head of light green leaves that are deeply cut and toothed. At maturity, its heart blanches to reveal creamy, sweet leaves.
- More tipburn tolerant and slower to bolt than other chicories of this type.
- Suitable for warm-season production.
- Also known as frisée.



Salanova Green Oakleaf

- Days to maturity: 55
- Fine-lobed saladbowl-type oakleaf.
- Darker green, and more upright growth habit, than previous Green Oakleaf, making it less sensitive to bottom rot.
- Compact heads are great as a whole head or in salad mix.



Salanova Red Oakleaf

- Days to maturity: 57
- Fine-lobed saladbowl-type oakleaf.
- Denser heads with deeper, shinier red than previous Red Oakleaf.
- Compact heads are great as a whole head or in salad mix



Tropicana

- Days to maturity: 52
- Standard heat-tolerant green leaf.
- Plants produce full heads with heavy leaves. Tolerant to tipburn. Intermediate resistance to corky root.



New Red Fire

- Days to maturity: 55
- Red leaf lettuce with heat tolerance.
- New Red Fire is relatively slow, but produces uniform, heavy heads of brightly colored, frilly leaves.



Green Forest

- Days to maturity: 56
- Early, tall, and dark green romaine.
- Slow-bolting and has smooth ribs so it packs and handles with little damage.
- Tolerant to tipburn.

Fruit



Strawberry: Seascape

- Productive day-neutral variety.
- Highly successful for Northeastern growers for summer and fall production. Seascape will flower and fruit all season. The berries are large, prolific, and have good flavor when picked ripe from the plant.
- First-season fruiting.

Blueberries

Blueberries require very acidic soil, soil with pH above 5.0 is too high! Blueberries will be accompanied by a acidifying amendment. Because blueberries are partially self sterile, we are giving two plants of different varieties to encourage more abundant harvests in the future. These fruits require some attention the first few years- please remove flowers and prevent the plants from fruiting for the first two years to encourage adequate root and plant development. The plants will fruit for nearly a decade after this.



Blueberries: Duke

- Perennial.
- Early-season high yielding blueberry.
- Large, firm, slightly tart fruits.
- Blooms late & ripens early, making it less prone to early spring frost damage.
- Requires regular pruning.



Blueberries: Jersey

- Perennial.
- Widely adapted heirloom blueberry.
- Small to medium sized berries that are firm & sweet.
- A beloved blueberry that is a stand-out in baking, preserves, & fresh eating.

Potatoes



Adirondack Blue

- Matures early midseason
- Large oblong tubers with deep purple skin and solid purple flesh that hold their color when cooked.
- High in antioxidants



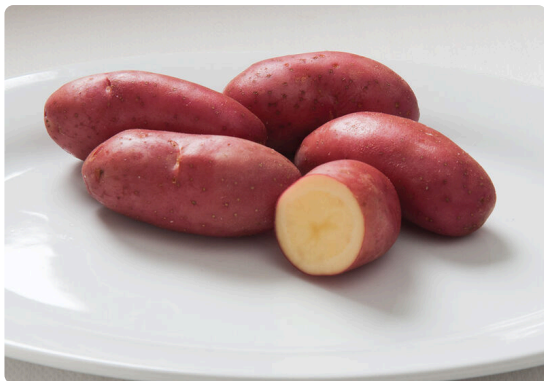
Dark Norland

- Matures early
- Productive, disease resistant, and early variety with red skin and white flesh.
- Store well and are excellent for roasting and boiling.
- Plant at closer spacing (6-8 inches) for small "new" potatoes.



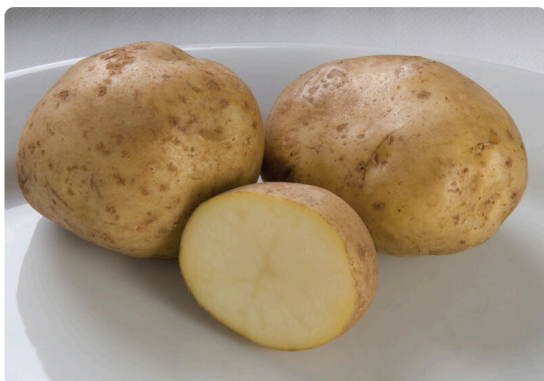
Yukon Gold

- Matures early midseason.
- Round-oval tubers with smooth, thin skin and famously delicious, light yellow flesh.
- Suitable for any cooking style and stores well.
- Resistant to Potato Virus A; moderately resistant to leaf roll.



French Fingerling

- Matures late midseason.
- Pink fingerling with pink skin and yellow, red-flecked flesh.
- This variety is known for its gourmet flavor and is best boiled or roasted.
- Tubers are larger and more oval in shape than Russian Banana. Resistant to common scab.



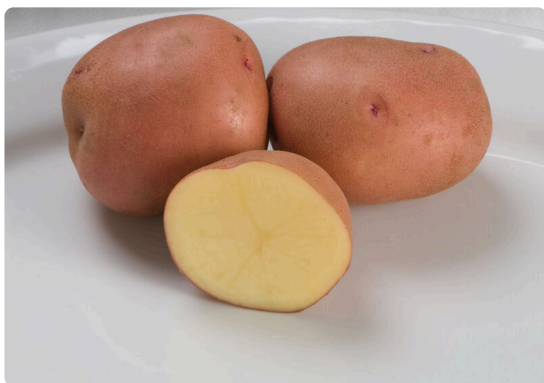
Kennebec

- Excellent all-purpose potato.
- High yields of round-to-oblond tubers with buff skin and white flesh that store well. Widely adapted, fast-growing plants do best when planted at 8– 10" spacing to avoid overly large tubers.
- Resistant to Potato Virus A and Potato Virus Y; moderate resistance to Potato Virus S, Potato Virus X, blackleg, and foliage late blight.



Magic Molly

- Matures late midseason.
- Purple through and through, Magic Molly retains its rich color when boiled.
- Large tubers have an excellent earthy flavor, especially when roasted.
- Can be dug as new potatoes for smaller fingerlings.



Red Gold

- Renowned for "new" potatoes. Not recommended for long storage.
- Early variety with high yields of round tubers with light red skin and delicious yellow flesh. Excellent for roasting and boiling.
- Resistant to leaf roll and Potato Virus Y; moderate resistance to common scab.