## **BEANS**

Beans are a tender warm-season crop that is popular in Kansas gardens as either a spring crop or a fall crop. Snap or green beans are grown for their tender immature pods. Some beans can be allowed to fill, and the bean seeds can be harvested for later use. Some beans are "pole" types that require a large trellis to climb.



### **Varieties**

Common green-podded varieties include Contender, Provider, Strike, Tendercrop, and Blue Lake types. Yellow varieties include Resistant Cherokee Wax, Goldrush, Sungold, Kinghorn Wax, Majestic, and Goldcrop. Pole-type green beans include Kentucky Wonder and McCaslan. Broad flat-podded green beans are often called Italian or romano beans, and varieties include Roma, Greencrop, and Bush Romano.

Lima beans are difficult to grow in Kansas because they require a longer period to develop and tend to drop blossoms in hot dry weather. Choose an early variety such as Baby Bush, Fordhook, Henderson, Thorogreen, or a similar early maturing variety. Other types of beans grown primarily for their seeds include French horticultural types, cranberry, pinto, great northern, red kidney and similar varieties.

# When to plant

Beans are sensitive to cold temperatures. Soil temperatures should be 55-60° F with danger of freezes well past before planting. Fall beans can be planted in early August. You can have a continuous supply by planting at intervals several weeks apart. However, beans planted to bloom in hot dry weather frequently will be of poor quality.

## **Spacing**

Plant seeds about an inch deep in rows that are 18 inches apart. A plant every 3-5 inches is desirable, so drop seed about every 2-4 inches. Plant pole beans 6-12 inches apart.

### Care

Do not soak bean seed prior to planting. Moisten the soil to provide moisture for germination, but do not water to form a tight crust. Beans have a shallow root system and require careful cultivation, good weed control, and water in dry periods. Beans are sensitive to soil salts; avoid alkali spots or "salty" locations.

### Harvesting

Harvest snap beans when the pod is crisp and before the seeds enlarge significantly. Do not harvest in early morning when dew is on the plants as this may spread bacterial blight. Most newer varieties of beans are developed to set a large number of pods at one time for a more concentrated harvest. Harvest lima beans and horticultural beans when the pods are fully formed and seeds have enlarged to the degree you desire.

### **Common concerns**

Bacterial blight
Bean leaf beetle (black/yellow spotted beetle)
Poor stands from salt injury or soil crusting

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