

Fall Gardening at School

Fall gardening typically includes planting cold season vegetables and flowers. However, the back-to-school season is a busy time of year for teachers and planting a garden may not be feasible. Here are some ways to support gardening at school regardless of space, time constraints and funding restrictions.



If growing outdoors is possible but time is limited, consider a container garden. With appropriate spacing, most of the plants listed below can grow well in a container that is at least one-cubic foot.

If growing outdoors is not an option, but your classroom has space near a sunny window growing indoors is possible. Leafy greens including lettuce, arugula, mustard and many other varieties

are good candidates for a windowsill garden.

For in-ground school gardens this fall, begin by clearing weeds. Cultivate lightly to prepare for planting. Deep tilling and incorporating organic matter are not recommended for fall gardening. Doing this task during the heat of summer can dry out the soil. After planting, apply a thin layer of compost to help moderate the soil temperature and moisture.

Whether growing indoors or out, in containers or in the ground, well-drained soil is essential. Three to four hours of sunlight each day is ideal. Container gardens dry out more quickly than those in-ground so monitor daily for moisture.

Regardless of season, small-scale school gardens are often more effective learning laboratories because less time is required for maintenance. Involve students in the planning by reading seed packets/online seed catalogs to determine what can be planted in the garden space available.

If planting is not an option at your site, students can still interact with nature and beautify the school grounds.

- Start a compost pile. Gather leaves and green waste to add to the pile.
- “Adopt a Planter” - Weed planters around the school. Students can make a sign to display acknowledging their class’s effort to care for their school.
- Take a soil test to plan ahead for spring planting.
- Plant cover crops in bare garden beds.
- Take a plant walk and observe patterns in nature.



Resources for School Gardens

Fall Planting Guide

Mid-August through Early September

- leafy lettuce varieties
- beets
- mustard
- arugula
- Swiss chard

Mid-August through Mid-September

- kale
- turnips
- radishes
- green onions
- bok choy

Early September

- spinach
- carrots

Mid-September through Mid-October

- pansies
- garlic

October

- tulips
- daffodils



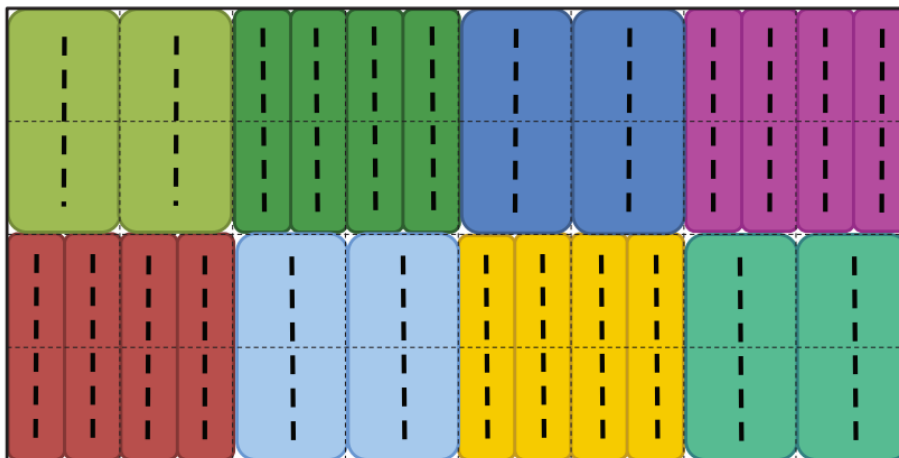
Fall In-Ground School Garden Template

F1-4

Simple

Planted in mid-August to early September, harvest by late fall

No pre-planting or preparation necessary



- Spring Radishes
- Chinese Cabbage
- Kohlrabi
- Lettuce
- Salad Turnips
- Kale
- Green Onions
- Mizuna
- Denotes planting location

Taken from: Garden Templates and Plant Choices for Kansas School Gardens.

Looking for inspiration to get your fall garden growing? K-State Research and Extension has a school gardening resource to support you no matter how big or small your site is.

[Garden Templates and Plant Choices for Kansas School Gardens](#)

Tell us about your school garden! Email cdom@ksu.edu if you have a garden story to tell.

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