

Column Name- The Heartland Minute

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“Please tell me that spring is on its way”

I am not a fan of winter, let that be known ahead of time. While I don't have to spend nearly as much time out in the elements as some folks, it still just seems to make everything a bit more difficult. I tend to get a very sarcastic response from my husband who is a rancher when I complain about the cold, something to the effect of “Yeah, that heated office must be terrible this time of year”- but I digress.

This winter has really thrown us all for a loop here in Kansas, with one day's temperatures feeling like spring could be here next week. Followed by the next day with subzero temperatures, makes for a very long winter. But I am assured spring is on the way, when it decides to actually show up is another topic all together.

One way we can prepare for spring time is by thinking ahead to our summer gardens. Do you have a game plan in place? If your game plan includes starting vegetable plants indoors, it's time to start getting ready.

Utilizing a planting calendar can save a lot of time and energy when beginning plants indoors. Take the time to figure out when you would like to be transplanting your plants into the garden, and from that figure out when you need to be starting those plants from seeds. For example, cabbage, broccoli, and cauliflower are usually transplanted in late March to early April. It takes 8 weeks from seeding to transplant size. Therefore, plants should be seeded in early February.

Below are examples of some common vegetables grown for transplants and a recommended date for seeding. Dates are Saturdays as this is when many homeowners have the most free time. The dates are not set in stone, and a week earlier or later will not ruin the plants. Also, you may want to seed a week or two earlier if you are in southern Kansas and possibly a week later if you are in northern Kansas. Calendars can be reused year after year by a slight reset of the dates. Also keep notes on how well the transplants did so you can tweak the planting schedule. Your conditions may result in plants that need a bit more or a bit less time.

<u>Crop</u>	<u>Seeding Date</u>	<u>Transplant Date</u>
Cabbage, Broccoli & Cauliflower	February 2	March 30
Lettuce (if you grow transplants)	February 2	March 30
Peppers	March 16	May 11
Tomatoes	March 23	May 4

For more information regarding Agriculture and Natural Resources, 4-H Youth Development, or K-State Research and Extension call the office at 620-583-7455, email me, Lindsay Shorter, at lindsayshorter@ksu.edu, or stop by the office which is located inside the courthouse. Be sure to follow

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