Plant vegetables soon for autumn salad

*K-State’s Upham says next few weeks are prime for planting fall garden*

MANHATTAN, Kan. – Got salad?

If growing vegetables was not in your summer gardening plans, Kansas State University horticulture expert Ward Upham says the time is right to build a nice set of greens this fall.

“The middle of August and early September is a good time to plant such salad crops as lettuce, radishes, spinach, turnips, mustard and other greens for a fall harvest,” Upham said.

Compared to summer, fall crops should be planted slightly deeper, he said. “This will keep the seed cooler, though still warm, and the soil should retain moisture longer.”

Additional tips for fall vegetables include:

- Water frequently until seedlings start to emerge, “which should be soon with our warmer soils,” Upham said.
- Apply a light sprinkling of peat moss, vermiculite or compost directly over the row to prevent a crust from forming when watering heavy soils.
- Reduce watering after plants emerge.
- Build fencing or other deterrents to keep rabbits and insects away from the plants.

Upham and his colleagues in K-State’s Department of Horticulture and Natural Resources produce a weekly Horticulture Newsletter with tips for maintaining gardens and home landscapes. The newsletter is available to view online or can be delivered by email each week.

Interested persons can also send their garden- and yard-related questions to Upham at wupham@ksu.edu, or contact your local K-State Research and Extension office.

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**Sidebar**

Composting: Turning waste into treasure

Home gardeners can save a lot of money – and benefit the environment – by keeping their own compost pile. Among its benefits, compost enriches soil, helps retain moisture and suppresses plant diseases and pests.

And it’s all done with what some would consider…waste!

Kansas State University horticulture expert Ward Upham said a simple compost pile can be built by recycling garden waste and kitchen scraps.

“Microorganisms – such as bacteria, actinomycetes and fungi – drive this process,” said Upham, noting that each works in concert at various temperatures to decompose waste and produce nutrient-rich soil that acts as fertilizer for garden crops.

Learn more about making a compost pile in the K-State Research and Extension publication, **Making Compost: A Beginner’s Guide**.

**FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS:** Links used in this story

K-State Horticulture Newsletter, [https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/information-center/newsletters/index.html](https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/information-center/newsletters/index.html)

K-State Research and Extension local offices, [www.ksre.k-state.edu/about/stateandareamaps.html](http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/about/stateandareamaps.html)


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