



Photo: Bill Swantner

In the Vegetable Garden: October

Cole season crops and cool season crops

When I first heard gardeners speak about “Cole crops,” my ears kept hearing “cold crops.” It took a while before I came to understand that the word was “Cole,” not “cold”.

A Cole crop is one that belongs to the *Brassica* family. “Cole” is from the Latin *caulis*, or stem. Cole crops include: Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collard, kale, kohlrabi, mustard, broccoli, turnip, and watercress.

Cool season crops: The definition is self-explanatory and this category would include Cole crops as well as beans, beets, carrots, Swiss Chard, cucumber, garlic, lettuce, onion, parsley, spinach, and turnip.

It seems as though the heat of summer is ending. Watering Cole crops and cool season crops can be a challenge because of the temptation to overwater. Dr. Larry Stein recommends that, before watering these crops, the gardener should feel the soil, not just the surface which can dry out because of sun and wind. Dig a couple of inches down and feel whether the soil is moist or dry.

Sun can be an issue. It’s getting darker earlier. The days of September are shortening in length but the sun of September is still blazing hot. Both Cole and cool crops need protection from the afternoon sun but, with cooler temperatures, these fall vegetables will start needing as much sun as they can get.

When planting fall vegetables, Dr. Stein suggests planting vegetables in two groups: frost-tolerant and frost-susceptible.

Frost-tolerant vegetables include: beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, chard, collard, garlic, kale, lettuce, mustard, onion, parsley, spinach and turnips.

Frost-susceptible vegetables include: beans, cantaloupe, corn, cucumber, eggplant, okra, pea, peppers, Irish potato, sweet potato, squash, tomato, and watermelon.

[Fall Vegetable Gardening Guide For Texas](#)

[Cool Season vs Warm Season Vegetables](#)

[Cool Season Vegetable Crops.](#)

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