

# Garden with Harvest of the Month!

Incorporate these monthly gardening activities with your class and grow some of your own HOTM items.

Here's the HOTM schedule for 2019-2020:

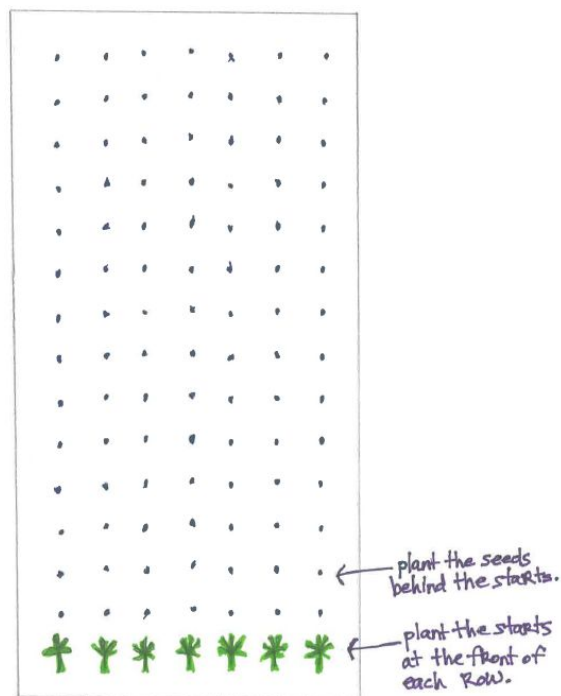
October - Plums	February - Oranges
November - Sweet Peppers	March - Carrots
December - Apples	April - Spinach
January - Celery	May - Strawberries

## August/September

- Prep garden beds, amend soil.
- Invite students & families to have a Fall Garden Work Party!
  - Remove old plants.
  - Adjust irrigation as needed.
  - Amend soil (add organic matter = feed the soil so your plants will grow!).
- For a traditional 8' x 4' garden bed, add the following amendments:
  - Compost -
    - add 3-4 bags
    - approx. \$6/bag at local nursery
  - Worm castings -
    - add about 10 quarts (½ bag)
    - make your own or purchase bag (approx. \$20/bag)
  - Balanced fertilizer (N, P, K = Nitrogen, Phosphorous, Iron)
    - 6 cups Dr. Earth All Purpose 4/4/4 Organic Fertilizer

## October

- Plant winter crops:
  - Celery (January)
  - Carrots (March)
  - Spinach (April)
  - Strawberries (May)
- If space allows, we recommend getting starts *and* seeds to plant in your garden.
- The starts will serve as a “preview of coming attractions” for the students as they watch the seeds begin to sprout and grow.



## November/December

- Continue regular garden maintenance:
  - Water regularly.
    - Watering is important. Vegetables are not drought tolerant and need to be watered when the top inch of soil dries out. For some gardens this means daily or every other day as the plant roots grow deeper.
  - Remove weeds.
  - Inspect for pests.
  - Want to extend the garden harvest? Try successive planting of winter vegetables by planting more seeds every 2-4 weeks.

## January

- Harvest celery!
  - Want to decrease the bitterness of your celery stalks so they taste more like the celery we find at the store? Try “blanching” the plant 2-3 weeks before harvest. Read this [article](#) to learn more.
  - Harvest celery by removing the outside stalks allowing the center to continue growing. Or harvest by removing the entire plant.
- Continue regular garden maintenance:
  - Water regularly.
  - Remove weeds.
  - Inspect for pests.
- Want an apple tree in your garden? January through spring is the best time to buy & plant a bare root apple tree so the tree can become established before the summer heat. Anna and Dorset Golden apples are best varieties for the Vista climate.

## February

- Continue regular garden maintenance:
  - Water regularly.
  - Remove weeds.
  - Inspect for pests.
- Has plant growth slowed down? Apply a granular fertilizer or fish emulsion liquid to keep your plants growing.

## March

- Harvest carrots!
- Continue regular garden maintenance:
  - Water regularly.
  - Remove weeds.

- Inspect for pests.
- Time to plant tomatoes! Cherry or grape tomatoes are more likely to allow a harvest before school lets out for summer.
- Plant sunflower seeds, a beautiful addition to your garden!

## April

- Harvest spinach!
- Continue regular garden maintenance:
  - Water regularly.
  - Remove weeds.
  - Inspect for pests.
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## May

- Harvest strawberries!
- Continue regular garden maintenance:
  - Water regularly.
  - Remove weeds.
  - Inspect for pests.
- Plant seeds for Fall crops if garden will be active over summer break.
  - Make a plan for summer break irrigation & care of the garden.
- If garden will be dormant over summer break, remove old plants.

## Resources

- The UCCE Master Gardeners of San Diego County are available to support your growing efforts no matter how big or small your garden! Container gardening is gardening, get creative and get growing! [Request a garden consultant.](#)
- [Plant a Seed, Watch it Grow](#) - a web guide for school gardens in San Diego County
- The Growing Classroom:  
<https://lifelab.z2systems.com/np/clients/lifelab/product.jsp?product=1&>. This is a great book with growing guides and lessons in the middle. \$40
- [School Garden Planner for San Diego](#)