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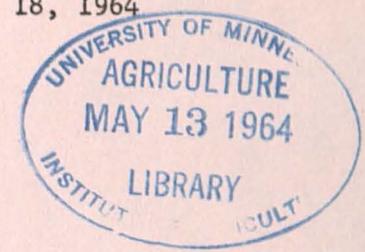
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TIME TO PLANT WARM-SEASON VEGETABLES

Most vegetable crops can be planted in the garden as soon as the soil is prepared in spring. Seeds of some vegetables, however, have difficulty germinating when the soil is still cold. These crops include sweet corn, beans, cucumbers, melons and pumpkins. They should not be planted until after mid-May.

Some special practices are often used to warm the soil so these crops can be planted earlier. For example, black plastic mulch may be used directly over the soil. The seeds may be planted in cuts through the plastic. The plastic not only warms the soil but smothers weeds as well. Hot caps too, are often used to warm the soil and make earlier planting possible.

Cucumbers and melons can be planted between rows of early crops like peas and lettuce to conserve space. After the early crops are harvested, the space can be taken over by the later-maturing vine crops.

Make three or four plantings of snap beans and sweet corn to insure a longer harvest of good quality produce. Plant corn in three or four short rows instead of one or two long continuous rows to assure better pollination and better developed ears of corn.

Cucumbers, melons and squash can be planted as close together as you want them in the garden without fear of crossing. There is very little evidence that they will cross and affect quality of the fruits.

Tomatoes, eggplant and peppers are also warm-season crops, but they should not be transplanted into the garden until after Memorial Day because they are very tender and extremely sensitive to cold soil and cold air temperature.

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