

URBAN FARMER

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Growing and Harvesting in Massachusetts

Massachusetts' USDA Hardiness Zones are zone 5, 6 and 7. The zones progress across with state starting with zone 5 in the upper northwestern corner and the state stays in zone 5 until about midway through, where the eastern half is mostly comprised of zone 6. Zone 7 is present in the southeastern most tip of the state. First frost dates begin in mid-September in Greenfield, Massachusetts, and in some areas, like New Bedford, first frost dates aren't until the third week of October. Last frost dates are as early as mid-April and as late as the end of May.



[Massachusetts Planting Calendar on ufseeds.com](#)

What to plant and when:

Since frost dates and weather can vary drastically depending on what part of the state you reside in, pay attention to the following USDA Hardiness Zones so the vegetables are planted at the best times.

Zone 5:

- **March:** Begin broccoli inside.
- **April:** Begin beets, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, kale, lettuce, onions, peas, peppers, spinach and tomatoes inside. Plant broccoli outside.
- **May:** Begin beans, corn, cucumber and squash inside. Plant beets, broccoli, carrots, kale, lettuce, peas and spinach outside.
- **June:** Plant Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, onions, peppers and tomatoes outside.
- **July:** Plant corn, cucumbers and squash outside. Begin beets, broccoli, kale, lettuce, peas and spinach inside.
- **August:** Plant beets, broccoli, kale,

lettuce, peas and spinach outside. Begin carrots inside.

- **September:** Plant carrots outside.

Zone 6:

- **March:** Begin beets, broccoli, cauliflower, kale, lettuce, onions, peas, peppers, spinach and tomatoes inside.
- **April:** Plant beets, broccoli, cauliflower, kale lettuce, peas and spinach outside. Begin carrots outside.
- **May:** begin beans, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, corn, cucumbers and squash inside. Plant carrots, onions, peppers and tomatoes outside.
- **June:** Plant squash, beans, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, corn and cucumbers outside.
- **July:** Begin beets, broccoli and spinach inside.
- **August:** Plant beets, broccoli and spinach outside. Begin carrots, kale, lettuce and peas inside.
- **September:** Plant carrots, kale, lettuce



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and peas outside.

Zone 7:

- **February:** Begin broccoli, cauliflower and peas indoors.
- **March:** Begin beets, cabbage, carrots, kale, lettuce, onions, peppers, spinach and tomatoes indoors. Near the end of March, transplant broccoli, carrots, peas and cauliflower outdoors.
- **April:** Transplant kale, lettuce and spinach outdoors. Begin beans and Brussels sprouts indoors.
- **May:** Transplant onions, peppers and tomatoes outdoors. Begin corn, cucumbers and squash indoors.
- **June:** Transplant beans, Brussels sprouts, corn, cucumbers and squash outdoors.
- **July:** Begin cabbage indoors.
- **August:** Begin beets, broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, kale, lettuce, peas and squash outdoors.
- **September:** Transplant beets, broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, kale, lettuce, peas and spinach outdoors for the fall harvest.

Massachusetts' soil and how it affects agriculture:

Massachusetts' state soil is the Paxton Soil Series, which has main cleared areas throughout the state and is used for cultivating crops. Some areas of the soil are covered by trees. Certain vegetables grow better in Massachusetts because of the soil, such as corn, potatoes, beans, lettuce, peas and spinach.

In addition, there are three dominant soil orders in Massachusetts, including:

Entisols: These soils take up much of the eastern half of the state. Entisols are



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sometimes able to be used for crop growth, although some types of these soils are sandy or shallow and don't hold moisture well.

Inceptisols: These dominant soil orders are widespread throughout Massachusetts. Inceptisols are the most common soil across the earth, and they have decent drainage. They can grow crops decently well.

Spodosols: These soils are in the far western portion of the state. Spodosols are typically found in eastern gulf states, and they are more on the acidic side. These would be a good soil to grow plants in that prefer more acidic soil. Acidic soil would be soil with a pH less than 7.0, and plants to grow in these soils include radishes, sweet potatoes, parsley, broccoli and many others.

Average rainfall in Massachusetts:

Massachusetts receives its average annual precipitation in both snow and rainfall. In the Cape Cod area of the state as well as the islands, average yearly precipitation ranges



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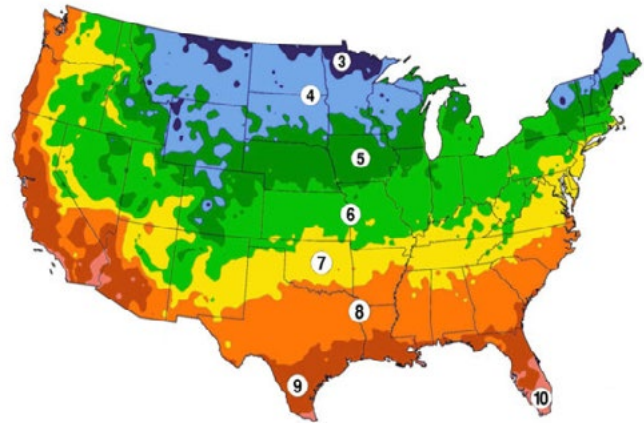
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from 43.3 inches a year in Hyannis to 47 inches a year in Chatham. In eastern Massachusetts, average annual precipitation varies from 43.8 inches a year in Boston to a slightly higher 52.3 inches a year in Plymouth. In central Massachusetts, average yearly precipitation varies from 46 inches a year in Amherst to 48.7 inches a year in Buffumville Lake. In western Massachusetts, average annual precipitation varies from 46.2 inches a year in Lanesboro to 53 inches a year in Worthington.

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[USDA Hardiness Gardening Zone Finder on ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)



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