

## 6 Tips for a Southern California Edible Garden in the Summer

Information by Emily Folk. Found at <https://babybirdsfarm.com/6-tips-southern-california-edible-garden-summer/>

### Tip 1: Choose Plants that Take Heat

The harsh summer sun cooks delicate plants. In the summer, focus on plants that withstand heat, such as sunflowers, beans and corn. There are some additional things you can do to help these plants withstand dry conditions, such as regular watering and installing an irrigation system in your garden. Make sure you water early in the morning or early in the evening, so the water doesn't heat up and further cook your plants.

### Tip 2: Shade Transplants

When first moving plants to a new edible garden, they are particularly vulnerable. Use screens or taller plants to create shade for these transplants until they fully take root in the soil. Remember that the sun is harsher from June until August, so anything you can do to reduce the intensity a bit, without completely taking it away, will help your new plants. The key to planting in the summer is to do it in the morning or evening when temps are cooler.

### Tip 3: Plant Melons

Melons tend to love the heat and absorb the sun. While they do need some water, they do okay in drier conditions as long as you give them water occasionally. To see if they need watering, pay attention to the vines and make sure they aren't drying out too much. The first thing to suffer if the plant gets too dry is the edible part of the plant, or the melon. You can also purchase water stakes that deliver water to the roots of the plant throughout the day.

### Tip 4: Pick Heat-Tolerant Greens

Wouldn't it be wonderful to grow your own organic salad? Unfortunately, many varieties of lettuce or vulnerable to heat and wilt in the summer sun. There are some heat hardy varieties, such as magenta spreen and calaloo amaranth. Choose varieties that do better in the sun both for garden décor and to make a salad for your next dinner.

### Tip 5: Start Your Winter Vegetables

In August, start your winter vegetables. Some varieties that do well in the area include cabbage, broccoli, kale, leeks, onions and fava beans. If you're worried cool weather will arrive sooner rather than later, plant in pots or above ground gardens, so you can easily cover and protect from the cooler nights.

### Tip 6: Choose Everbearing Strawberries

Southern California grows about 80 percent of the strawberries in America thanks to the perfectly suited soil that drains quickly. Even though it is ideal to plant in cool weather, so that the blooms develop properly, everbearing plants will bear fruit all summer long, giving you fresh berries to enjoy during the warmest days of summer.