



Planting Calendar Tool

Created by International Rescue Committee – Charlottesville VA

Summary

This tool aids gardeners in working with a calendar and knowing the planting dates for various crops. A large format (3'x 4'), laminated 2-month blank calendar is used (purchased from office supply store). Throughout the season, the months and dates are filled in with whiteboard marker. Laminated pieces are taped onto the calendar to show last and first frost dates, last and first dates to plant different crops, last dates to plant winter cover crops, etc.

Who made this guide?

This teaching resource was developed by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Charlottesville VA, and enhanced in collaboration with the Institute for Social and Economic Development (ISED). From 2015-2017, ISED partnered with refugee farmer training programs throughout the country to support the design of new and shareable teaching resources for culturally and linguistically diverse farmers. To access the whole list of newly developed teaching resources for refugee farmer training program, follow this link to New Entry's ['New American Resource Library'](#). For more in-depth explanations of the teaching approaches and activities used in these materials, you can refer to this [Refugee Farmer Teaching Handbook](#).

Audience (TA Or Tot)	TA
Language and Literacy Level	Low literacy/language (must read “last” and first”)
Farmer Experience	All levels
Pre-Requisites	Know how to read a calendar
Region or Climate	Any
Program Structure	Any (or even just for non-marketing gardeners)
Season	Any
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printing/laminating—1 hour • Teaching the tool—10-20 minutes • Updating the calendar—20 minutes/month
Staff and Interpreters	One staff, interpreters for LEP
Additional Supplies Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large format laminated blank calendar • Laminated cards that fit into calendar • Tape • Whiteboard marker
Background Material	Knowledge of first and last planting dates for different crops for your region.

TEACHING MATERIALS INCLUDED

1. Farm calendar pieces



CORE SKILLS IN THIS LESSON

- Reading a calendar
- Reading dates
- Vegetable seasonality identification
- Cover crop use

SUGGESTED TEACHING METHODS

Peer teaching

- If there are second year farmers in the class, you can use peer teaching to have them teach new farmers how to use the tool.

Reflection questions

- Staff can ask farmers how they might use this tool/how they think it would be helpful. This can also help gauge for understanding the purpose of the tool

Sorting, categorizing, & matching

- Farmers can manipulate the different pictures in response to prompts from staff to demonstrate their understanding of reading a calendar and understanding the associated vocabulary (first, last, frost, plant, seed, date, transplant).

TEACHING TIPS

- Trainers may want to teach the tool at the very beginning of the season with first year gardeners, but it will be used throughout the season as a check-in resource that farmers can take a glance at and check for dates. This tool is better used for farmers/gardeners who do not have a specific planting calendar already set. For instance, in our farming program each farmer has a different planting calendar so produce is staggered through the season. This diversity cannot be represented in this tool, so they each have their own calendars on a sheet of paper. But, this large calendar is useful for the gardeners on the same property who have more freedom, as well as the farmers for more general things like first and last frost and last date to plant cover crop.
- The calendar is also used to write in events, meetings, workshops, etc.
- A program could use this tool in many ways by filling in other information that might be relevant for them—irrigation recordkeeping, temperature recordkeeping, etc.