

In The Dirt: June NC

June in the NC Piedmont/Foothills is full summer planting season — soil is warm, frost is long gone (last frost typically mid-April), and it's prime time for heat-loving crops.

Direct-seed all month — warm-season staples:

- Bush and pole snap beans
- Lima beans
- Southern peas (cowpeas/black-eyed peas)
- Okra
- Summer squash and zucchini
- Winter squash and pumpkins (June is ideal timing for a fall harvest)
- Cucumbers
- Sweet corn (good succession planting window — plant every 2 weeks for staggered harvests)
- Melons (cantaloupe, watermelon) — need the long warm season ahead

Still fine to direct-seed early June:

- Basil and other warm-weather herbs
- Sunflowers
- Zinnias and other heat-tolerant cut flowers

Getting risky by late June (bolts in heat):

- Lettuce, spinach — only worth trying with heavy shade cloth and consistent moisture; otherwise wait until fall
- Carrots — germination struggles in hot soil; better to wait until August

Not a seeding month, but worth doing:

- Succession planting — June is a great month to start second and third rounds of beans, squash, and cucumbers so you have continuous harvest through summer.
- Mulching — critical this month to conserve moisture and keep soil temps down for germination.

Practical notes:

- Water newly seeded beds daily in June heat until germination — soil dries out fast.
- Shade cloth over seedbeds helps a lot with tricky germinators like carrots or any cool-season crop you're pushing the limits with.
- This is peak "plant it and it'll take off" month for the classic warm-season garden.