

In The Dirt: April NC

April in the NC Piedmont/Foothills is the transition month — last frost typically falls in mid-April for your area, so timing matters more this month than most. Early April is still cool-season territory; late April opens the door to warm-season crops.

Direct-seed all month — reliable cool-season crops:

- Lettuce
- Spinach
- Radishes
- Beets
- Carrots
- Swiss chard
- Turnips
- Peas (English/snap/snow — actually should've started in March, but early April can still work if you missed it)
- Arugula and other quick greens

Wait until after last frost (mid-to-late April) to direct-seed:

- Bush and pole beans
- Summer squash and zucchini
- Cucumbers
- Sweet corn
- Okra (actually prefers even warmer soil — late April at the earliest, May is safer)

Risky/not recommended even late April:

- Melons, winter squash, southern peas — soil often isn't warm enough yet; better to wait for May for reliable germination.

Also good this month:

- Sunflowers (late April)
- Potatoes (seed potatoes go in early-to-mid April, technically not "seed" but a classic April planting task)

Practical notes:

- Watch your local frost date closely — a late cold snap can still hit in early-to-mid April, so hold off on tender warm-season crops until you're confident it's passed.
- This is a great "two-phase" planting month: cool-season stuff goes in right away, then warm-season direct-seeding starts once soil has warmed (soil temp above 60°F is a good rule of thumb for beans/squash, above 65-70°F for cucumbers/corn).
- Succession-sow lettuce and radishes every couple weeks through April for a steady harvest before heat shuts them down.