

# plate method

## WHAT IS IT?

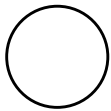
Everyday household plates are the perfect tools for visualizing the space different plants need in your kitchen garden. Using five common plate sizes, you can easily represent both seeds you'll sow directly and seedlings you'll transplant. Each plate mimics the mature footprint of a plant, helping you plan and space your garden efficiently, whether you're working with leafy greens, herbs, or larger vegetables.



### **EXTRA SMALL PLANTS**

Approx. 2.5- 2.7- inch diameter, but you could actually use something even smaller. 3-4 rows per square foot.

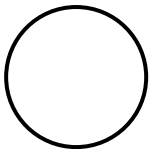
plants: radishes, carrots, beets, peas, cut lettuce, spring onions



### **SMALL PLANTS**

Approx 4-5 inches diameter. 6-9 plants per foot

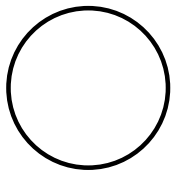
plants include: lettuce, spinach, chives, onions, garlic, arugula



### **MEDIUM PLANTS**

Approx. 8-9 inches diameter. 4-5 plants per foot.

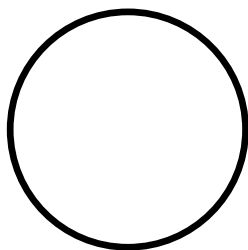
Silver beet, swisschard, basil, peppers, bush beans



### **LARGE PLANTS**

Approx. 12 inches in diameter. 1 plant per square foot.

Cabbage, kale, tomatoes, eggplants, cucumbers, broccolini



### **EXTRA LARGE PLANTS**

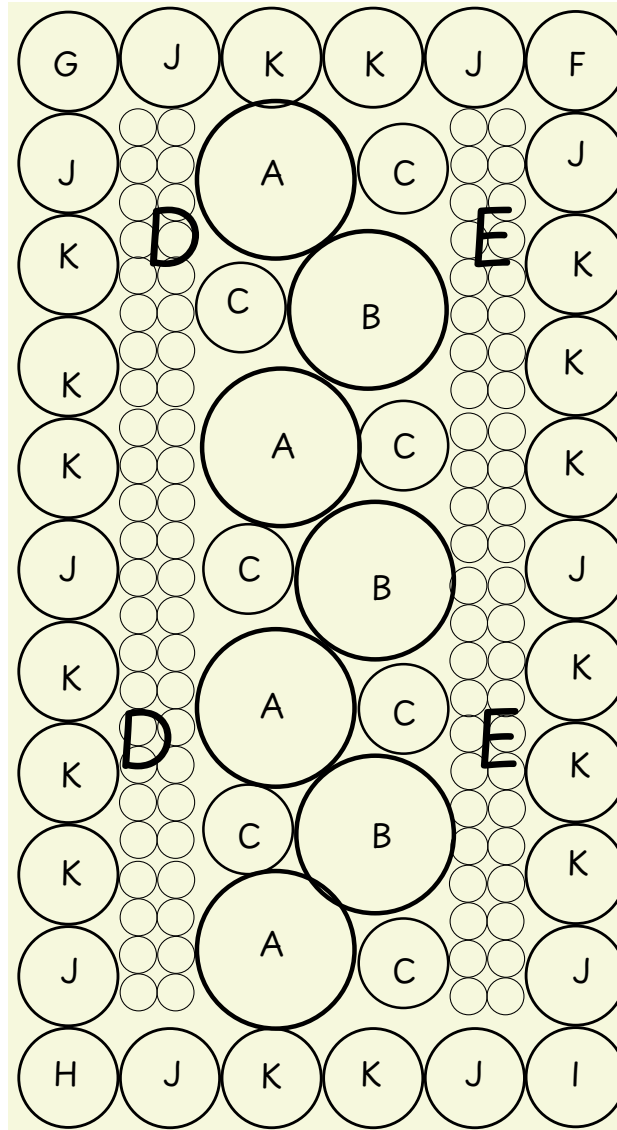
Approx. 16 inches plus in diameter. Up to several square feet per plant.

Broccoli, cauliflower, squash, courgette, pumpkins, potatoes

# plant list

## AUTUMN VEGETABLE GARDEN

### 4FT X 8FT



#### KEY

**A. CAULIFLOWER X4**

**B. CABBAGE X3**

**C. SPINACH X7**

**D. CARROTS\***

**E. RADISHES\***

**F. THYME X1**

**G. SAGE X1**

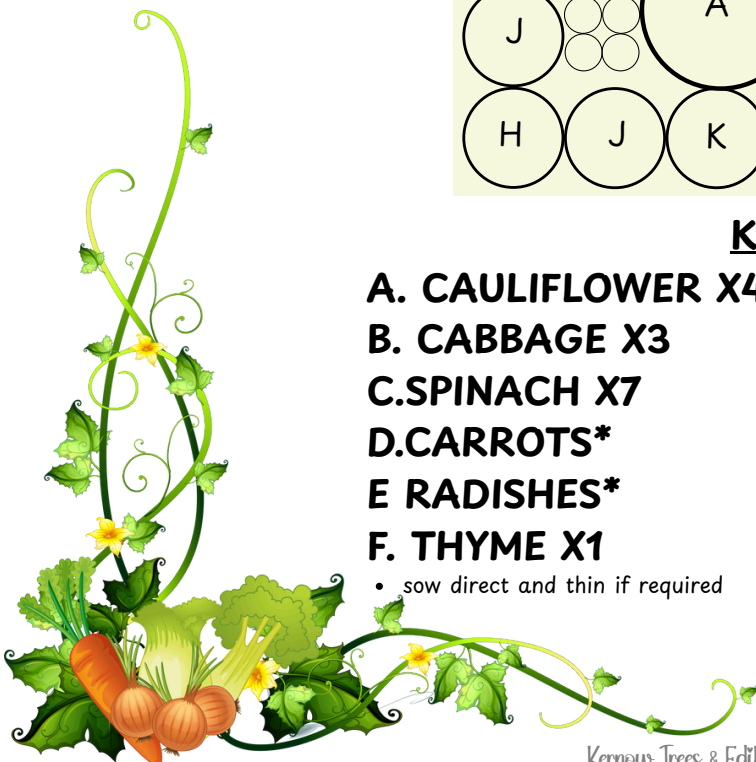
**H. CHIVES X1**

**I. PARSLEY X1**

**J. CALENDULA X10**

**K. LETTUCE X16**

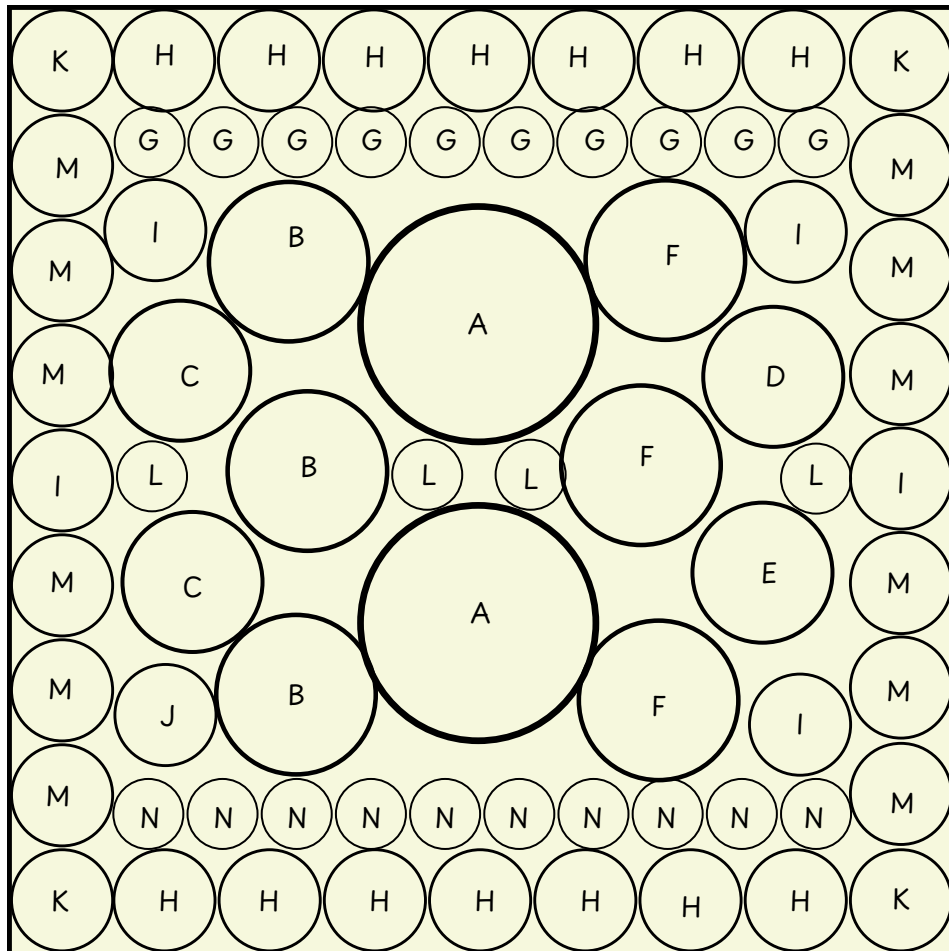
- sow direct and thin if required



# plant list

## AUTUMN VEGETABLE GARDEN

### 4FT X 4FT



### KEY

**A. BROCCOLI X2**  
**B. CABBAGE X3**  
**C. SILVERBEET X2**  
**D. BUSH BEANS X1**  
**E. SWISSCHARD X1**  
**F. KALE X3**  
**G. CARROTS\***

**H. LETTUCE X14**  
**I. CALENDULA X5**  
**J. THYME X1**  
**K. CHIVES X4**  
**L. VIOLA X4**  
**M. SPINACH X12**  
**N. RADISHES\***

\*sow direct and thin if required



## **Benefits of Planting Densely in a Vegetable Bed**

Planting densely in a small raised bed—like a 4x4 ft plot—offers a host of benefits for both plant health and productivity, especially when focusing on seasonal vegetables, herbs, and flowers. This approach mimics nature by maximizing space, improving biodiversity, and boosting the garden's overall resilience.

### **1. Maximizes Limited Space**

A dense planting layout ensures every inch of the bed is working for you. Instead of spacing rows widely, vegetables, herbs, and flowers are arranged in blocks or clusters, allowing:

- More plants per square foot

- Continuous harvests throughout the season

- Vertical and layered growing (tall, medium, ground cover)

### **2. Supports Pollinators and Beneficial Insects**

Incorporating flowering herbs (like dill, basil, and thyme) and edible blooms (like nasturtiums, calendula, or marigolds) attracts:

- Bees, butterflies, and hoverflies for better pollination

- Predatory insects like ladybugs and lacewings that help control pests

- Dense, diverse plantings create a mini-ecosystem that encourages natural balance.

### **3. Improves Soil Health**

Dense planting shades the soil, reducing erosion and drying out. Combined with regular organic mulch or compost:

- Soil stays moist and cool, encouraging microbial life

- Roots help hold structure and prevent compaction

- Diverse root systems contribute different nutrients and improve structure

- For example, shallow-rooted lettuce complements deeper-rooted carrots or parsnips.

### **4. Suppresses Weeds Naturally**

A closely planted bed leaves little room for weeds to take hold. The plant canopy:

- Blocks sunlight from reaching weed seeds

- Reduces the need for hand-weeding or mulching

- Encourages stronger crops to outcompete intruders

### **5. Discourages Pests and Disease Spread**

Mixed planting of seasonal veggies, herbs, and flowers confuses pests and interrupts their feeding patterns:

- Companion herbs like rosemary and mint repel cabbage moths and aphids

- Flowers like marigolds deter nematodes and whiteflies

- No single crop dominates the bed, which prevents disease from spreading rapidly

### **6. Boosts Biodiversity and Resilience**

A dense, diverse planting plan promotes ecological balance:

- Different plants support different organisms (from fungi to bees)

- Diversity makes the garden less vulnerable to weather swings, pests, or poor yields from a single crop

- Encourages year-round garden interest by rotating cool- and warm-season crops

## **7. Encourages Succession and Seasonal Planting**

With high turnover in a small space, gardeners naturally adopt:

Succession planting (e.g., follow spring radishes with summer basil)

Seasonal awareness, using what grows best in each part of the year

Better yield per square foot over the course of a full growing season



### **In Summary:**

Dense planting in a 4x4 ft vegetable bed isn't just efficient—it creates a vibrant, living system. With thoughtful combinations of seasonal vegetables, pollinator-friendly flowers, and fragrant herbs, you'll grow more food, reduce weeds and pests, and build healthier soil—all in a space the size of a card table.

Want a seasonal layout or companion planting guide for your climate? I can help with that too!