

Step-by-Step Crop Scheduling

Tools: calculator, pencil, seed catalogs (esp. Johnny's), spreadsheets, calendar, Seed Cost Calculator, weight conversion chart

1. I want to grow enough cabbage for my 115-member CSA to receive 4 cabbages over the season. I want them to be spread out over the 20-week season, and I want them to be small to medium heads so that people are not overwhelmed.
2. I know Gonzales is a good green variety for small heads.
3. I want to get my first cabbage harvest June 13. I need 115 good heads, but I need to plan for some loss, so I will plant 33% more.

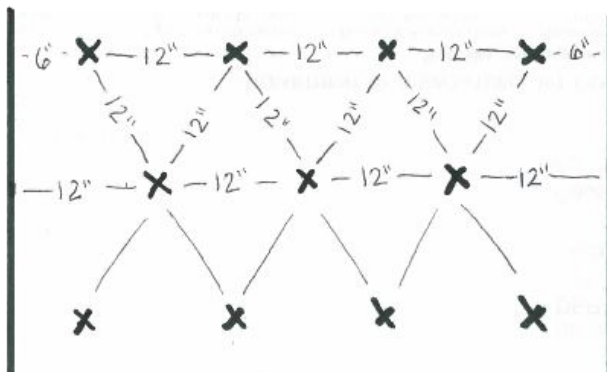


$115 \times 1.33 = 153$ cabbage plants in the field

Gonzales takes 66 days to mature from transplant. If I want to harvest on June 13, I need to plant transplants 66 days earlier. That date is April 4. (Side note: I will need row cover on plants that early.)

4. I also need to know how much space the cabbage will take in the field.

I use 4 foot wide beds that are 100 feet long. I plant transplants in offset spacing. Usually, I would plant cabbage 15-18 inches apart but since I want smaller heads I'm going to plant them 12 inches apart.



At this spacing, I can fit 7 plants in every 2 feet of bed length. I need to plant 153 plants, so they need

$$153 / 7 \times 2 = 44 \text{ feet of bed space}$$

We'll round up to 50 feet, or half of a 100 foot bed.

5. The next step is to find out when I need to start seeds so that I have plants big enough to transplant by April 4. Cabbage should be started 4-6 weeks before transplanting. We'll start them 5 weeks early, on February 28. I need 153 strong transplants, and I use flats with 72 cells in them, so I'm going to round up to fill whole flats. $72 \times 3 = 216$ 216 is about 33% more than we need to plant in the field.

(We could start 2 flats, with 128 cells, but they would be smaller plants.)

6. But I still need to know where I'm buying my seeds from, and how many seeds I need to buy.

Fedco Gonzales Cabbage: .5g=\$1.60, 1g=\$2.80, 4g=\$9.50, 14g=\$24.00, 28g=\$45.00

Johnny's Gonzales Cabbage: Pkt=\$2.95, 1000seeds=\$13.60, 5M@\$8.19/M, 25M@\$6.81/M, 100M@\$5.92/M

I need to fill 216 cells, and germination usually isn't 100%. It's a good idea to plant 2 seeds in each cell. That means I need at least 450 seeds. Johnny's catalog tells me a packet has 100 seeds. 1000 seeds are cheaper. How many seeds are in 1 gram? Johnny's tells us there are on average 112,000 seeds/pound. Now What?

