

JUNE VEG GARDEN 2026

WEATHER

First, I must talk about this coming growing season weatherwise, and how we are shifting to a possible **super El Niño** pattern and it could be a doozy. We haven't had a super El Nino since 2015-2016 when temps got warmer. June of 2016 was a hot month averaging 94 degrees with little rain and lots of winds. I hope that is not going to happen this year.

There is an 82% chance that El Niño is likely to emerge between May and July in 2026. It's about whether the water currents get warmer or cooler off South America and how that affects the jet stream that goes across the US from west to east.

How does this affect us here in New Mexico?

El Nino

With El Nino patterns we historically get more moisture here in the southwest. The jet stream is pushed further south to us. We are now going into an El Nino weather pattern which means the southwest part of the country should be getting more rain this year as the Jetstream is pushed down, while the northwest part of the country will be getting less. But they are also predicting warmer temperatures across the southwest, so I hope we get a decent monsoon season.

Monsoons

Last year we got out of our drought when the monsoon pattern we get in the summers came earlier than normal. The monsoons normally come in after the first week after July 4th. Last year they came in mid-June. The year before they came in the third week of June. Perhaps global warming has something to do with the monsoons coming early.

That storm we got on May 25 brought us almost .5 inch here on our property. Boy did we need that! But with the rain will come weeds

So how to control weeds?

WEEDS- Definition of a weed is a wild plant growing where it is not wanted and in competition with cultivated plants. Two types of weeds are annual weeds which come from the seeds of weeds and perennial weeds which come back every year and usually have a long taproot.

So, the weeds have started coming and will explode soon unless we take steps immediately.

Here's what we can do to control weeds organically-4 options:

1) **Use 20-30% vinegar** to spray persistent weeds-90% kill rate. Designate a gallon hand sprayer to use with vinegar as you don't want to accidently get any residue of the vinegar on your plants as it will kill them. Regular vinegar (5%) doesn't work, not strong enough.

2) **Use a pre-emergent-** put down corn gluten in your paths but not your beds. Corn gluten is high in nitrogen & will kill all seedlings as they germinate. Get it online. I couldn't find it in the nurseries locally.

3) **Stirrup hoe-** This style of hoe is unique in that where most hoes only cut when you pull it towards you, a stirrup hoe will cut in both directions-pushing or pulling. It's called a stirrup hoe because it is shaped like the stirrup on a horse saddle. This is my go-to hoe as I can basically cut off weeds faster. This works good on annual weeds.

4) **Pull them** yourself or hire someone!

TIPS

DAYS TO HARVEST-also called Days to Maturity

The time it takes for a plant to grow from seed to harvest. You can find this info on your seed packet or plant tag. When direct seeding in the garden, count the day from when the **seeds germinate** until the first harvest to determine the **days to harvest**.

Tomatoes, peppers, eggplants are usually transplanted in the garden as we have a short growing season so don't plant by seeds now. You count from the **day you transplant the tomato plant in the ground**.

PEPPER TIP

It is safe to transplant pepper (and eggplant) plants after June 1. Peppers hate cold nights and can stall out and stop growing if you plant them too early outside without protection. If you did plant early and see in a couple of weeks, they are not growing, they may have stalled out and will not grow again. Then you will have to go buy more and replant.

BUGS

SQUASH TIP

There are basically two pests we should be on the lookout for the Squash Vine Borer and Squash Bugs. Here's how to control them.

Squash vine borers (SVB) -Keep row cover over your squash as it grows until the female flowers appear. SVBs leave right about the time the female squash flowers come and then you do need to take off the row cover as the bees need to do the pollinating for us. SVB will kill the plant. The moth is black and orange so be on the lookout for it.

People ask every year why their squash has flowers but no fruit. The reason is the male flowers come first-about two weeks earlier than the female flowers. We need both flowers for the pollinators to do their job.

FEMALE/MALE SQUASH FLOWERS

How can you tell the difference? The female flowers have a baby fruit at the base of the flowers and the males don't, just a stem but no fruit. By the time the female flowers arrive, usually the squash vine borer's life cycle is done, and you must take off the row cover that was protecting them so the pollinators can do their job.

Squash bugs-Again, keep your squash covered with mid-weight row cover while early growing but you will need to take the row cover off once the female flowers come. Then the battle starts. Go out every 7 days to take off the adults and eggs on the stems or underside of the leaves. Be diligent. If you let the eggs hatch, you will get the nymphs which are hard to catch. They suck the juices out of the plant and slowly kill it.

-Beet Leafhopper-They are a problem for tomatoes in our dry, hot windy months which are generally, May and June. Although this May was definitely cooler. They can bite your tomato plant and give it a deadly virus called Curly Top Virus. The only way to keep this from happening is to completely cover your tomatoes with medium weight (.5) row cover to act as a physical barrier from this bug. **AFTER THE MONSOONS COME, TAKE OFF THE ROW COVERS.**

MORE BUGS!

-Roly Poly bugs can cut your new emerging seedlings down like a weed whacker. I had to plant bean seeds 3x a couple of years ago because of them. I now put an organic product called **SLUGGO PLUS** on top of the ground right after you plant the seeds before they come up and again sprinkle it over the seedlings after they germinate. It's organic and no more problems with germination. After the plants are about 3-4 inches tall, the Roly Polys aren't interested. I put it down for cucumbers, beans and squash when planting by seeds.

Aphids-To get rid of them, spray them off with a stream of water and then hit them with a **NEEM** product. It's organic and works well against aphids and thrips. Comes from the Neem tree in India. Plum and peach trees especially attract aphids. Spray in the evening as some trees and plants may be sensitive to it and get burned with heavy sun and it can also hurt bees-so do spray at dusk. Follow instructions.

TOMATO TALK

- This year I planted my tomato plants in the ground mid-May as it was still too cold at night to put out earlier. We had one hot day of 85°F in May but colder overall. If you already planted earlier with **Wall of Waters**, remove them once tomato plants reach top of them OR if it gets hot. Don't leave them on all season-they are only an early extension helper. When the weather gets hot, take them off or you could fry your plants.

-Once you remove the WOWs, put on cages and cover your tomato plants with **row cover** around your cage and over the top to prevent the leafhopper from biting your plant and transmitting **Curly Top Virus** disease.

-Put straw under tomato plants as a mulch to help retain moisture and to protect plants from soil borne diseases such as **Early Blight** from splashing up on the lower leaves. Remove branches that will touch the ground, this will help protect against soil fungal diseases.

Tomato blossom drop will probably happen in June when it gets over 92°F. They drop blossoms but will continue to make more and will set tomatoes when the temperature drops with the monsoons hopefully in July. This is the number one question I get all the time when everyone has plants but no fruit.

WARM SEASON CROPS-TIP

I direct seed a lot of warm season crops in June. I use Sluggo PLUS to deter Roly Poly bugs from eating your newly germinated crops. Follow directions.

WARM SEASON CROPS

You can direct seed the following warm season crops in June:

Beans

Fast growing in warm soil, they can give you a crop in as little as 35 days with some varieties. Look on package to see how many days to harvest. Pole beans need a trellis or fence to grow on, and bush beans can be planted close together and don't need support. For a continuous crop of bush beans, plant every few weeks. Cover with row cover until 3" tall so birds don't eat the bean sprouts.

Corn

Corn is a fast-growing crop once it germinates. Follow package directions for spacing but plant in a block of at least 3 rows for better pollination. After planting seeds, cover with row cover until baby corn are 3 inches tall to keep birds from eating the seedlings.

Cucumbers

Cucumbers are fast growing and come as either vine or bush cucumber plants. Be careful to pick a variety for the space you have in your garden. Vine cucumbers will need more space than bush varieties. Grow vining varieties up a fence or trellis.

Melons

You need to get the seeds in the ground now as they take a while. Melons need heat and sun to produce good melons. Get an extra early variety (70 days to harvest)

Summer Squash

Summer squash sowed in June, or early July will lead to fresh squash and zucchini in July and August. I keep mine covered with row cover until I see the flowers. Then I uncover them so the bees can pollinate them. They need a pollinator to produce the fruit. You can even plant a little later to be less exposed to squash bugs. I like **Friulana** variety.

Winter Squash

Winter squash can still be grown here but hurry, as many varieties need a long season. Pick varieties that have a shorter harvest like **Waltham Butternut**. A benefit of butternut squash is not as attractive to squash bugs.