



The DIRT Society Crop Rotation Guide

There are many ways to approach crop rotation, though the general rule remains the same: To best prevent disease and malnourishment, replace finished crops with plants from a different family. To build upon that principle, you should learn to group your fruits and vegetables into their respective families, and continue to develop the best system for your growing operation. *This is easily done!*

Below, find a list of some commonly grown food crops grouped in two ways. First, each is grouped with its genetic family. There are many families, and in a larger food-growing operation, rotating by each division is easier to manage and strongly recommended.

In smaller operations, such as a home garden, you can form broader groups by determining the crops' needs. This grouping is done by color: Red, tan, green, orange, brown and blue categories include plants that perform well together. These should follow and precede a group of another color.



- **Tomato Family (Solanaceae):** Tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, potatoes, tomatillos, okra
- **Beet Family (Chenopodiaceae):** Beets, chard, spinach, quinoa, orach
- **Carrot Family (Umbelliferae/Apiaceae):** Carrots, parsnips, celery, parsley, fennel, cilantro, dill
- **Onion Family (Alliumn/Lilliaceae):** Onions, shallots, garlic, leeks, chives
- **Cabbage Family (Brassicaceae):** Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, collards, radishes, Brussels sprouts, arugula, turnips, cress, mustard, rutabaga, kohlrabi, horse radish, wasabi, bok choy, daikon
- **Pea Family (Leguminosae/Fabaceae):** Beans, peas, peanuts, alfalfa, clover
- **Squash Family (Cucurbitaceae):** Cucumbers, winter squash, summer squash, melons, pumpkins, zucchini
- **Sunflower Family (Compositae/Asteraceae):** Lettuce, endive, Jerusalem artichokes, sunflower, chicory, radicchio
- **Grass Family (Gramineae):** Corn, barley, rye, spelt, wheat
- **Buckwheat Family (Polygonaceae):** Buckwheat, sorrel, rhubarb
- **Mint Family (Laminaceae):** Mint, lemon balm, anise hyssop, basil, marjoram, oregano, thyme, sage, winter savory

The mint family grows aggressively, and is best utilized in a container garden or controlled space. However, even containers should be washed out and the spent soil revitalized between seasons.

Rotating crops is a very simple way to reduce disease, infestation and poor quality in your growing operation, no matter its size. For more information on why you should rotate, and how it can benefit your harvest, read *The Importance of Crop Rotation*.