

GARDENING GUIDE 03

Season Extension for Kansas City

Grow food from March through December using row covers, cold frames, and low tunnels.

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Our climate in one paragraph

Kansas City sits in USDA Zone 6b. Our last average frost is around April 15 and our first average frost is around October 20 — a growing season of about 190 days. With simple protection, you can stretch that to 300.

Row covers

Lightweight spun polyester (sold as Agribon or Reemay) drapes directly over crops and adds 4–8°F of frost protection while letting in light and water. Weight the edges with soil, boards, or sandbags. Use it in March, April, October, and November.

Low tunnels

Bend 9-gauge wire or half-inch PVC into hoops every 3 feet along a bed. Cover with row cover or 6-mil greenhouse plastic. This adds another 8–12°F and lets you harvest spinach, kale, and carrots into January.

Cold frames

A cold frame is a bottomless box with a slanted, transparent lid — think mini greenhouse. Build one from scrap lumber and an old storm window. Vent on sunny days above 45°F or you'll cook your greens.

A KC year-round schedule

- March: Sow spinach, arugula, radishes under row cover
- April: Transplant lettuce, kale, chard; direct-sow peas, carrots
- May–September: Warm-season crops with no cover
- Late August: Sow fall greens, garlic, and root crops
- October: Add row cover as nights drop below 40°F
- November–February: Harvest from low tunnels weekly