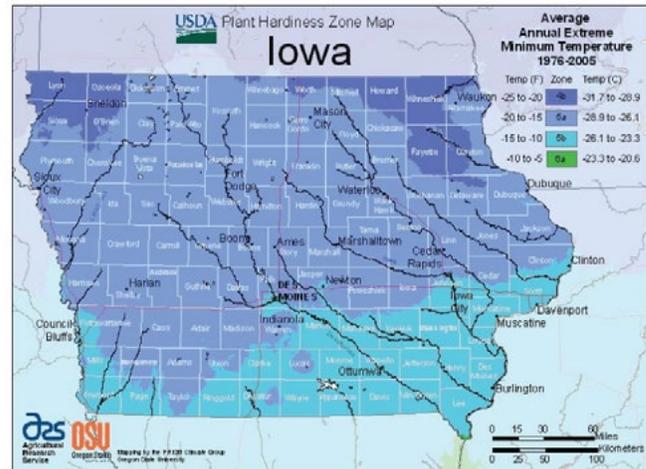


# URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

## Growing and Harvesting in Iowa

Iowa's USDA Hardiness Zones range from 4 to 6, making it ideal for cool-weather crops. Iowa's zones begin with zone 4 in a small patch in both the northwest and northeast corners of the state. Zone 5 takes over from there, taking up a large portion of the remaining state. However, zone 6 is present in the southernmost tip of the state. First frost dates begin as early as the end of September in areas such as Sioux City, and frost dates can hold out as late as the first week of May.



[Iowa Planting Calendar on ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)

### What to plant and when:

Since Iowa features some colder parts of the state being in zone 4, it is important to pay attention to planting dates so certain crops won't freeze. With different USDA Hardiness Zones comes different planting schedules for vegetables.

#### Zone 4:

- **April:** Begin beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, kale, onions, peas, peppers, spinach and tomatoes inside. Plant potatoes outside.
- **May:** Plant beets, broccoli, carrots, kale, lettuce, peas and spinach outside.
- **June:** Begin beans inside. Plant Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, onions, peppers and tomatoes outside. Begin corn, squash and cucumbers inside.
- **July:** Plant beans, corn, cucumber and squash outside. Begin beets, broccoli, carrots, kale and spinach inside.
- **August:** Plant beets, broccoli, carrots, kale, lettuce and spinach inside.

#### Zone 5:

- **March:** Begin broccoli inside. Plant potatoes outside.
- **April:** Plant broccoli outside. Begin beets, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, kale, lettuce, onions, peas, peppers, spinach and tomatoes inside. Near the end of the month, plant carrots, kale, peas and spinach outside.
- **May:** Begin beans, squash, corn and cucumbers inside. Plant beets, onions and tomatoes outside.
- **June:** Plant Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, corn, cucumbers, peppers and squash outside.
- **July:** Begin beets, broccoli, kale, spinach, lettuce and peas outside.
- **August:** Plant beets, broccoli, kale, lettuce, peas and spinach outside. Begin carrots inside.
- **September:** Plant carrots outside.

#### Zone 6:

- **March:** Begin beets,



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broccoli, cauliflower, kale, lettuce, onions, peppers, peas, spinach and tomatoes inside. Plant potatoes outside.

- **April:** Plant beets, broccoli, cauliflower, kale, lettuce, peas and spinach outside. Begin carrots inside.
- **May:** Plant carrots, onions, peppers and tomatoes outside. Begin beans, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, corn, cucumber and squash inside.
- **June:** Plant beans, corn, cucumbers and squash outside.
- **July:** Plant Brussels sprouts and cabbage outside. begin spinach, beets and broccoli inside.
- **August:** Plant beets and broccoli outside. Begin peas, kale, lettuce and carrots inside.
- **September:** Plant kale, peas, lettuce, spinach and carrots outside.

### Iowa's soil and how it affects agriculture:

Iowa is a great state to farm in because its topsoil is very fertile and sometimes referred to as "the black gold of Iowa." The following list is of the dominant soil orders in the state of Iowa.

**Mollisols:** This sort of soil takes up most of the land in Iowa. It stretches from the western side, almost encompassing the entire width of the state until it narrows out around central Iowa. Mollisols are often found in grasslands. These soils are fertile and excellent for crop growth. Mollisols are darker in color than most soils.

**Entisols:** These are very limited in quantity in Iowa. They are found on the western side in small patches. Some thin



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lines stretch across the eastern portion of the state, as well. Entisols are usually found in rocky mountains or riverbeds. Entisols are sometimes able to be used for crop growth, although some types of these soils are sandy or shallow and don't hold moisture well.

**Alfisols:** These are the second most common type of soil found in the state of Iowa next to Mollisols. They encompass the eastern border of the state, and they also are present along the southeastern border as well and stretch up into the central portion of the state. Alfisols are good farming soils, as they are fertile and excellent for crop growth.

**Inceptisols:** These are the last types of soils found in Iowa. They are very limited in their quantities throughout the state, even more so than the Entisols. The Inceptisols soil is only found in a very small patch just south of central Iowa. Inceptisols are usually found in mountain areas and can grow crops well.



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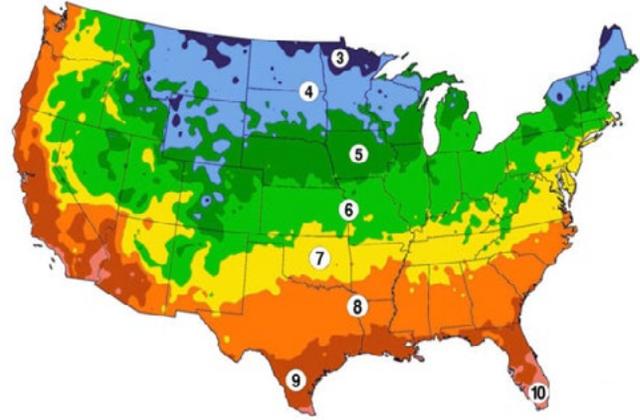
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## Average rainfall in Iowa:

Iowa's annual precipitation rates come from both snow and rainfall. In Eastern Iowa, average yearly precipitation ranges from 34.6 inches to 39.2 inches. In Central Iowa, average annual precipitation is somewhat similar to Eastern Iowa, ranging from 35.2 inches to 38.9 inches. However, in Western Iowa, average annual precipitation is slightly lower, ranging from 29.6 inches in Milford to 36.3 inches in Shenandoah.

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[USDA Hardiness Gardening Zone Finder](http://ufseeds.com)  
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