

# APRIL 2026

# GARDENING TO DO'S

## NATIONAL GARDENING MONTH

April is here and **National Gardening Month** is the perfect time to kick off the growing season! While weather can still be unpredictable, there's plenty you can do now. Keep an eye on forecasts and protect plants from late frosts.

### Cool-Weather Crops You Can Sow Now

These crops thrive in cooler temperatures and can be sown outdoors:

Peas	Beets
Spinach	Swiss chard
Lettuce	Arugula
Radishes	Kale
Carrots	Turnips

### Garden Tasks for April



April is also a great month to tackle a few important seasonal garden jobs:



- Prepare beds (clear debris + loosen soil)
- Add compost
- Divide/transplant perennials
- Prune dead branches
- Start tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant indoors
- Plan your garden layout



## Book Suggestion

**The Regenerative Gardener's Handbook** by Briana Selstad Bosch

Learn practical, season-by-season techniques to improve soil, support pollinators, and create a healthy, sustainable garden.



## GIVEAWAY

Facebook Giveaway! You could win a seed starter kit! We will choose 3 winners at random. The contest runs April 1 to 7. To enter, head to our [Facebook page](#), like our gardening newsletter post, and leave a comment. Winners will be contacted April 8.

### Gardener's Tips



#### Check Your Soil

- Before planting, make sure your soil isn't too wet.
- Squeeze a handful—if it forms a sticky ball, wait a few days.
  - Slightly moist soil is best for healthy roots and seed growth.

#### Cold Stratification Trick

- Some perennials need cold to sprout.
- Freeze seeds in ice cube trays for about 30-60 days
  - Plant the frozen cubes directly in soil
  - As they melt, seeds settle naturally and germinate

#### Frost Reminder

In Southeast Michigan, the average last frost is around May 8. Wait to plant warm-season crops like tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and squash until then.

For more information on our Seed Library, please visit [rtdl.org/seed-library](http://rtdl.org/seed-library)

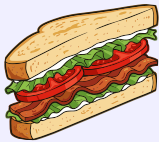
# APRIL RECIPES

## Beyond Salad: Ways to Use Your Lettuces



### Use It in Sandwiches & Wraps

- BLTs
- Turkey sandwiches
- Veggie wraps with hummus



### Grilled Lettuce

Best with romaine hearts.

- Cut in half
- Brush with olive oil
- Grill for 1-2 minutes
- Top with parmesan, lemon, and pepper.

### Blend It Into Smoothies

Add nutrients without overpowering the flavor

- Banana, pineapple, mango, or any other fruit you love
- Yogurt
- a handful of lettuce

## Chicken Lettuce Wraps



### Ingredients

- 3 to 5 tablespoons hoisin sauce
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch (optional)
- 1 pound ground chicken
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil, divided
- 8 ounces white button or cremini mushrooms
- Optional vegetables: finely diced onions, finely diced bell peppers, finely diced or grated carrots
- 1 (8-ounce) can water chestnuts, drained and finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon peeled and minced fresh ginger
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced scallions (from about 6 scallions), divided
- Lettuce of choice
- Serving options: red pepper flakes, [sriracha](#)

### Instructions

1. Start by whisking together the hoisin sauce, soy sauce, rice vinegar, and sesame oil in a small bowl. If you prefer a thicker sauce, stir in cornstarch and set aside.
2. Heat half of the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the ground chicken and cook, breaking it into small pieces, until fully cooked and no longer pink, about 7 to 8 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a bowl and set aside.
3. In the same pan, add the remaining oil and cook the mushrooms (and any additional vegetables) until tender, about 4 to 5 minutes. Stir in the garlic, ginger, and water chestnuts, cooking for about 30 seconds until fragrant.
4. Return the chicken to the pan, then add half of the scallions and the prepared sauce. Stir and cook until everything is heated through and the sauce is slightly thickened, about 30 to 60 seconds. Adjust seasoning if needed.
5. To serve, spoon the warm chicken mixture into lettuce leaves and top with remaining scallions or optional spicy toppings. Serve immediately.