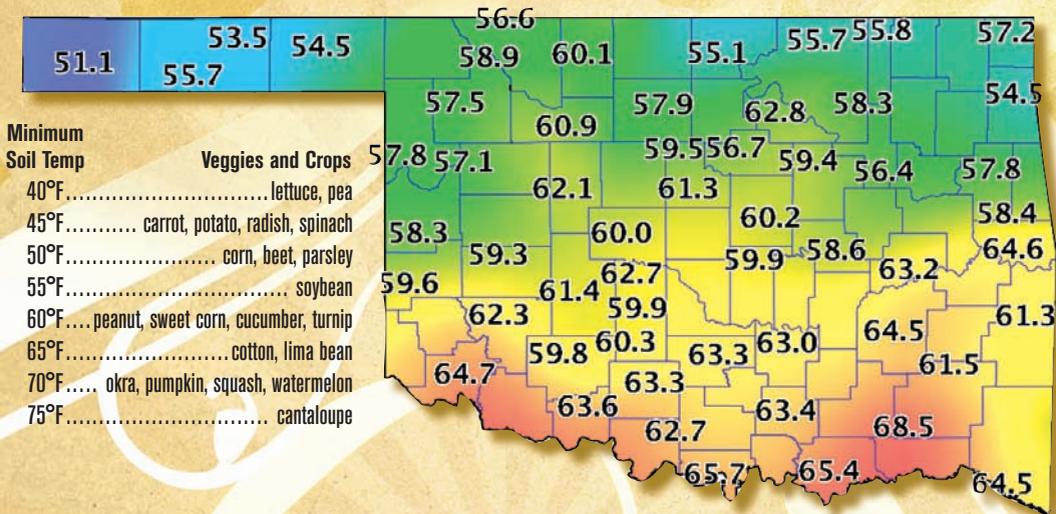


Weather Wise Spring Planting!

As Oklahoma transitions from winter to spring, the earth begins to warm and plants emerge from winter dormancy. Spring is also the time of year to plant most garden veggies. Before you begin planting, you will want to know the minimum soil temperature required for each plant species. If you plant the seeds when the soil is below this temperature, the plant may not germinate and the seed will likely decay and die.

Some seeds, like peppers and tomatoes, require warm temperatures to germinate, while others, like lettuces, need cooler temperatures. Look on the seed package to find the planting temperature. You can determine the best time to plant by looking at a 3-day average of soil temperatures measured 4 inches below ground.

For more information about soil temperatures, go to <http://agweather.mesonet.org/soil/>



Activity: Use the map above to answer these questions.

- What is the lowest soil temperature on the map? What is the highest? What is the range of soil temperatures?
- Do you see a trend in Oklahoma soil temperatures on this day? How would you describe it?
- According to the map and table, which veggies and crops would you plant in Oklahoma at this time? List the best planting location for each vegetable.
- According to the map and table, which veggies and crops would you NOT plant at this time? Why?
- Why do you think gardeners use soil temperature instead of air temperature when deciding the right time to plant?
- Using an Oklahoma map, if you were living in Cherokee, what would you have planted in your garden? What if you lived in Antlers?
- Can you think of some techniques that gardeners might use to make the soil temperature warmer than it already is?

Newspapers for this educational program provided by:



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