



RED RIDGE FARM PRESENTS

PLANNING
BEYOND
THE
HARVEST
HANDBOOK

BE INSPIRED BY RED RIDGE FARM

INTRODUCTION

Do you have a plan for beyond the harvest?

I know I didn't!

I've been gardening now for 15 plus years. But, it wasn't until about six years ago that I realized I was not planning for the most important part of a garden, the Harvest.

I would plan out my start and planting dates but only vaguely keep track of the harvest dates. There were many times that I would not harvest my crops at their peak. I would usually be too early or too late.

Has this ever happened to you?



But that was only a fraction of the problem, compared to what I have learned is our greatest problem when it comes to the harvest!

Here it is.

Our greatest problem when it comes to harvesting our garden is...

drum roll, please!

We do not make a plan for after the Harvest!

We do not plan for what we are going to do with all this beautiful homegrown goodness!

Sadly, most of our hard achieved Harvest goes to waste!

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I can vividly remember a time when I had an amazing green bean crop. I had green beans coming out of every drawer in my fridge and even every bowl I could find was full. But I'm going to tell you right now, with a heavy heart, that three-quarters of those beans went to the chickens.

I was new to preserving food, so while those beans sat in my fridge, I was researching how to preserve them. I wasn't sure if I should freeze or pressure-can them. On top of that, I had to make a trip to the store and search for supplies once I figured out my preserving method. I had chosen to freeze them because I will admit it, I was scared of my pressure cooker back then. So, I rushed off to the store to get freezer bags, while my beans continued to sit in the fridge.



Guess what I found out at the grocery store, like two boxes of the pint freezer bags I needed and a bunch of gallon bags that were too big. I traveled to several stores and let me tell you I was lucky to find the two I did. (Hint: I was not the only Gardner out looking for bags last minute. Plus everyone was getting ready for school to start on top of that) So, I returned home with my two boxes and got about half of them in the freezer that night. The next day I worked on the rest. However, because I had waited so long in getting this done the first two bags I picked weeks ago went directly to the chickens covered in mold.

But that is not even the worst of it!

The beans that were stored in the wrong size freezer bag got freezer burnt quickly and had to be thrown away within 3 months. After tasting freezer burnt beans, I was wary of using them at all.

INTRODUCTION

Well, that brings me to the next point and why more of these beans sadly went to the chickens.

I didn't know how to use frozen green beans in my recipes. I had many recipes that use canned green beans but not frozen. I knew I needed to find some new recipes or experiment with them. But, when was I going to fit that into my already busy schedule. When I made supper I had just enough time to get it on the table and then run off to the next event. Raising three boys is time-consuming with all the running from here to there.

The truth is, all of this could have been solved by simply planning for the harvest and beyond when I did have time. Like the hot summer afternoons when I couldn't work in the garden anyway.



Do you want help making a plan for beyond the harvest? Then you are in the right place!!!

Welcome to the Planning Beyond the Harvest Handbook designed to empowers growers to develop a garden plan for beyond the harvest so they no longer have to deal with their harvest going to waste in 5 easy steps!

I can't wait to help you get your harvest stored and on your family's plates!

Have a blessed day,

Crystal Mediate (A God Driven Gardener)



**“THE LORD WILL
INDEED GIVE WHAT IS
GOOD, AND OUR LAND
WILL YIELD ITS
HARVEST.”**

Psalm 85:12





Step #1

SCHEDULE YOUR HARVEST DATES



SCHEDULE YOUR HARVEST DATES

Have you gone out to the garden and wondered are the peas ready yet or is time to harvest these beans?

Or how do I know these beans are even close to being harvested. Should I pick them now or should I wait a couple more days??


Knowing your harvest date will help you find an estimated time to when you should be harvesting. There are other factors that may come into play but having a date to start monitoring your harvest is going to help you pick your vegetable at their peak. When they taste the best. Here is how you do this!

Every seed packet has a date to harvest written on the back. To get your harvest date, you take your plant date and add the number of harvest days. This will give you your estimated harvest date. It's only an estimate because it will depend on the weather. But, this date written on your garden calendar will get you observing your crops so you can pick at the perfect time.

To learn more about how to know exactly when to harvest then check out my eBook, *Planning Beyond the Harvest!* This eBook was designed to empower gardeners by giving them the knowledge to pick their produce at peak, to plan for beyond the harvest, to gain insight into preserving and storing their harvest and recipes to help them put the harvest on the table for their family to enjoy!

Step #1





**“WHILE THE EARTH
REMAINS, SEEDTIME
AND HARVEST, COLD
AND HEAT, SUMMER
AND WINTER, DAY AND
NIGHT, SHALL NOT
CEASE.”**



Genesis 8:22



Step #2

PICK AT PEAK



PICK AT PEAK

You are standing in your garden staring at your pea. They look ready to harvest, maybe or maybe not.

Do want to stop harvest hesitation?

I know for years I suffered from harvest hesitation. I would read the back of my seed packet to get clues but there never was enough information. I would harvest and pray that I was harvesting at the right time. Sometimes I was right and sometimes I was too early or too late. Because I was just playing the harvest guessing game. And I don't want that for you. But first!

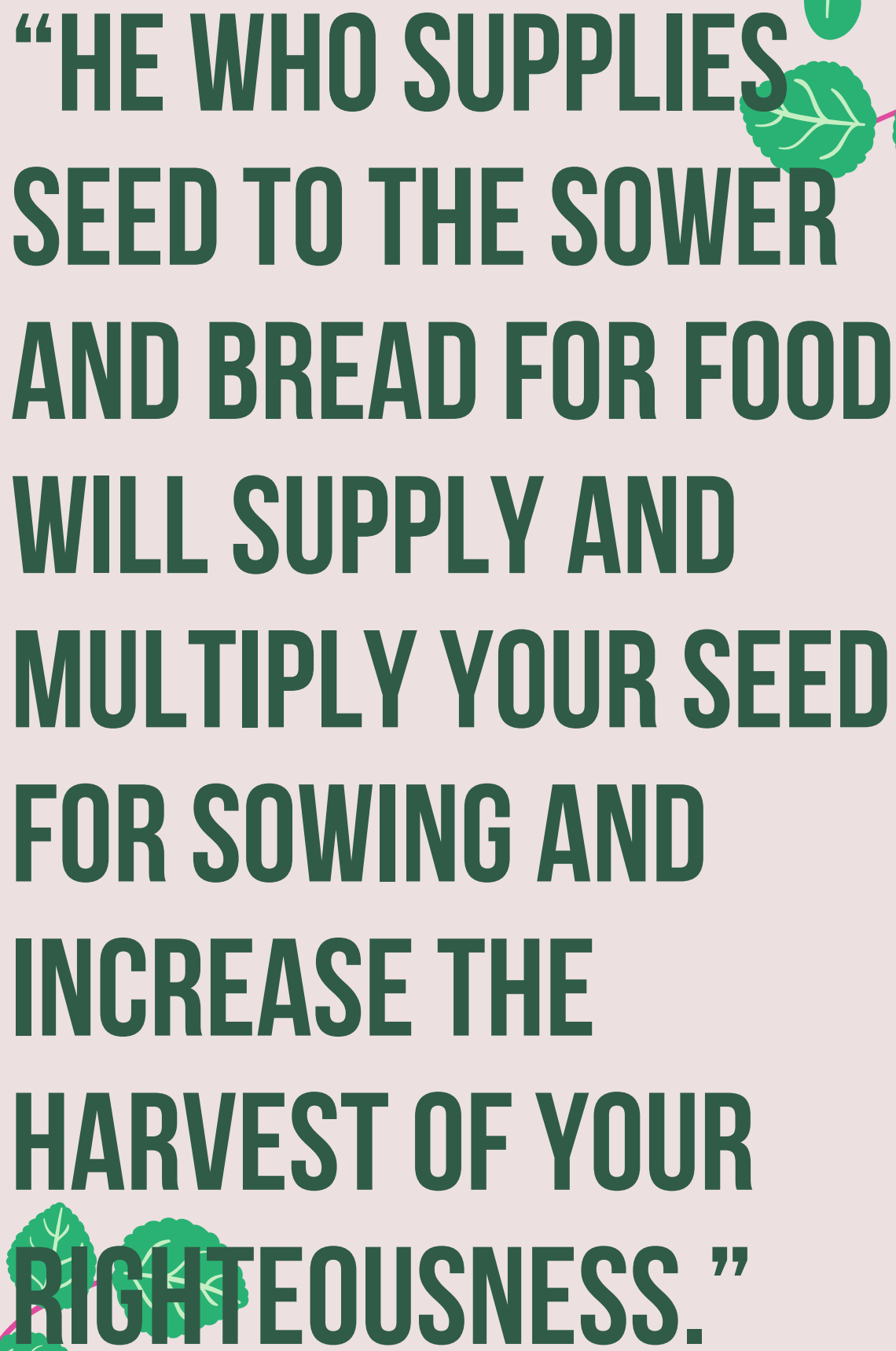
Why is Harvesting at peak so important?

When a veggie is at its peak, it is at its peak in both taste and nutrients. And when you eat it at peak your body is getting the most benefits from the fruit and vegetable. God is miraculous in giving us a harvest but it is up to us to eat or preserve it when it is at its peak.

So now is the time to research each veggie or fruit you plan to grow so that you can learn more about picking at peak for everything you grow. This does sound like a daunting task but I want to help. That is why I wrote the Planning Beyond the Harvest eBook where I share with you the research I have done so you don't have to! To get your copy go to www.redridgefarm.org/beyond

Step #2





**“HE WHO SUPPLIES
SEED TO THE SOWER
AND BREAD FOR FOOD
WILL SUPPLY AND
MULTIPLY YOUR SEED
FOR SOWING AND
INCREASE THE
HARVEST OF YOUR
RIGHTEOUSNESS.”**

2 Corinthians 9:10



Step #3

RESEARCH PRESERVING



RESEARCH PRESERVING


You have harvested your tomatoes but now what?? Do you eat them all fresh or do you figure out how to preserve them so that you can eat delicious tomatoes 5 months from now? Yes, that is right, the next step is to figure out how you can save that delicious tasting veggie until next season. You are going to need to research how to preserve your harvest!!

Every veggie and fruit, (don't forget those!) has different specifications for preserving. Some do best frozen and others canned. If you choose to can them, you know you will have to see which is the best process: pressure canning or water bath. It will depend on the acidity of your veggies. It is very important to stick with your canning guidebook. If you don't have one, now is when you should get one, not when the product is sitting in the fridge, as I did.

To learn more about different ways to harvest different kinds of fruits and vegetables you can read the [Planning Beyond the Harvest eBook](#) that was designed to empower gardeners by giving them the knowledge to pick their produce at peak, to plan for beyond the harvest, to gain insight into preserving and storing their harvest and recipes to help them put the harvest on the table for their family to enjoy!

Step #3





**THOUGH ON THE DAY
YOU SET THEM OUT,
YOU MAKE THEM
GROW, AND ON THE
MORNING WHEN YOU
PLANT THEM, YOU
BRING THEM TO BUD,**

Isaiah 17:11





Step #4

FIND RECIPES



FIND RECIPES

You have your harvest in the freezer or lined up on shelves in the root cellar. I love the sight of a beautifully stocked root cellar. But, those jars full of harvest don't help your family just sitting on the shelf.

Now is the time to find a few recipes that will take your produce off the shelf, out of the freezer, and onto your plate!


Find recipes that will help you use up your harvest in the way you preserved it. If you pressure canned your green beans find recipes using canned green beans. If you made stewed tomatoes from your tomato harvest find recipes that help you use stewed tomatoes. The options are endless.

Have a few recipes up your sleeve is going to help you that delicious harvest off the shelf, onto your family's plates, and into their bodies.


To learn about a few recipes I use here at Red Ridge Farm you can check out my blog at www.redridgefarm.org/resources or read my eBook *Planning Beyond the Harvest* where I list several recipes I use with their corresponding fruit or veggie!

Step #4





**“AS FOR WHAT WAS SOWN
ON GOOD SOIL, THIS IS THE
ONE WHO HEARS THE
WORD AND UNDERSTANDS
IT. HE INDEED BEARS
FRUIT AND YIELDS, IN ONE
CASE A HUNDREDFOLD, IN
ANOTHER SIXTY, AND IN
ANOTHER THIRTY.”**



Matthew 13:23



Step #5

MAKE A MENU



MAKE A MENU

If it is 5:30 you are standing in your kitchen wondering what to have for supper. What sounds good? What veggies are you going to cook?

That is where this next step is going to help you. An organized menu is going to help you take all of those recipes you gathered and pair them together to make complete meals.

Now a menu can be made in many different ways. It could be a list of 30 meals and so can pick and choose what you want to eat. It could be meals listed out on a calendar. Don't get too hung up on this step. The goal here is just to get your recipes organized so that when you do decide to make that meal everything you need is already on your shelves. Have fun with this!

Step #5





CONCLUSION

Do you see it?

A table covered in the delicious harvest that you worked so hard to grow. Your family is gathering to sit down. Your heart wells with the knowledge that you not only grew this food for your family but they are now about to taste it. They are about to eat the best food that you could provide for them. A single tear forms at the corner of your eye. Your child asks what wrong? You say oh nothing dear, let's eat!

Doesn't that sound amazing! Isn't that why you worked so hard in the garden to bring the harvest to your family and with these few steps you can do it. You can present your harvest to your family!

I want to tell you right now that this is not going to be an easy task but is going to be the most rewarding of your life. And I want to help you. I want to help you with every single step. That is why in my eBook, Planning Beyond the Harvest I have done this work for you. For every veggie or fruit that I grow here on the Farm, I have done these 5 steps, I wrote all of my notes down and I want to share what I have learned with you.



That right! I have done the work for you and gathered these 5 steps for different fruits and vegetables all together in one place, just for you.

To learn more about the Planning Beyond the Harvest eBook you can go to www.redridgefarm.org/beyond

Have a Blessed Day,

Crystal Mediate (A God Driven Gardener)





AUTHOR

My Name is Crystal Mediate and I am a co-owner of Red Ridge Farm. I am also the author and founder of the Red Ridge Farm Blog and Online Courses. Here at Red Ridge Farm, our mission is to offer timeless education to all who want it. Yes, I know what it is like to try to build a garden and homestead on my own. I truly feel it is my calling to help others build not only a garden but food security, and to help put healthy food on every plate I can!

So Why am I doing this?

I feel God has called me to be a teacher. Gardening and homesteading are what I know! Growing food for my family has helped us in many ways, we have food security, we have healthy options for our plate, and we have saved money on our monthly grocery bill. I started growing food out of necessity. My husband and I always planned for me to be a stay at home mom, but that meant we would be a single income family. I felt that even though I was home I was not destined to be a Day Time Tv-aholic. I wanted to contribute! I found the best thing I could do was to reduce our monthly bills. Most of our bills were fixed but groceries were not. I thought if I could reduce this monthly bill, I could help. I also knew the answer was not in eating less. I researched coupons, meal planning, and so much more. What I found is that if we could grow our own food and grow it in a healthier manner, while also teaching our boys a good work ethic, I could save twice as much as any coupon could give us. That is when our first garden was born. Since then I have learned to grow our own chicken, turkey, pork, and how to preserve our harvest to last the whole year. I even raise dairy goats and Layer chickens, so we have access to fresh milk and eggs, daily. Now I want to help others do the same.

