



# CROP PLANNING SERIES

CREATED BY THE INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE – CHARLOTTESVILLE VA

## Summary

This series of six workshops covers a range of topics related to crop planning. Farmers will be introduced to the concepts of harvest windows, succession planting, and days to maturity. Multiple sessions help farmers learn how to use calendars and tables to plan their growing season. One session teaches participants how to handle orders from customers and restaurants, and plan cropping and harvest schedules accordingly. Most of the workshops are appropriate for beginning- to intermediate-level farmers.

## Who made this guide?

These teaching resources were developed by the International Rescue Committee in Charlottesville and enhanced in collaboration with the Institute for Social and Economic Development (ISED). From 2015-2017, ISED partnered with refugee farmer training programs throughout the country to support the design of new and shareable teaching resources for culturally and linguistically diverse farmers. To access the whole list of newly developed teaching resources for refugee farmer training program, follow this link. For more in-depth explanations of the teaching approaches and activities used in these materials, you can refer to this handbook.



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Audience (TA or Tot)	TA (Technical Assistance for farmers)
Language and Literacy Level	Most are appropriate for those with low/no literacy, but some require the ability to read numbers/dates and write
Farmer Experience	Ranges from beginning to advanced
Pre-Requisites	None
Region or Climate	Any
Program Structure	Any
Season	
Time	Sessions range from 20 minutes to 45 minutes
Staff and Interpreters	
Additional Supplies Needed	Varies by workshop
Background Material	

## TEACHING MATERIALS INCLUDED

1. *A Season on a Clothesline (45 minutes)*  
Main message: Different crops take a different amount of time to reach maturity.
2. *Planning for an Order (30 – 45 minutes)*  
Main message: In planning for an order, you need to think about yield and days to maturity as you plan your planting dates and quantity of bed feet you will plant.
3. *Succession Planting (20 minutes)*  
Main message: Farmers may choose/need to plant certain crops repeatedly through the season in order to have continuous harvests.
4. *Creating a Planting Calendar (45 minutes)*  
Main message: You can use a grid format to plan out your planting plan and expected harvest window.
5. *Reading a Table (45 minutes)*  
Main message: This is how to read a table.
6. *Harvest Windows (30 minutes)*  
Main message: Different crops have shorter or longer harvest windows.

## CORE SKILLS IN THESE LESSONS

- Describing what happens during seasons (frost dates, etc.)
- Knowing English names of crops, English introductions
- Crop planning
- Practicing succession planting, planting at the correct season
- Yield estimation, familiarity with yield estimation chart (review of what LBs means)
- Reading a calendar, counting weeks and/or days, creating a Planting Calendar Grid
- Measuring with a measuring tape, understanding fractions (estimating  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  bed)
- Reading tables and charts, recordkeeping

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

### *A Season on a Clothesline*

- Farmers will pin cards with key dates on a string to create a visual timeline for crop planning.
- Learning objectives:
  - Practice knowing and saying the months of the year.
  - Be introduced to the representation and use of a timeline.
  - Be introduced to the concept/term “Days to Maturity.”
  - Learn what “last frost date” and “first frost date” means.
  - See that some crops are long season crops and take a long time to be ready for harvest, while others are short season crops and take a shorter amount of time to be ready for harvest.

### *Planning for an Order*

- With the teacher playing the role of a customer, farmers will practice receiving an order and planning crops accordingly.
- Learning objectives:
  - Understand how to work backwards to plan for an order.
  - Practice skills in using the concepts ‘days to maturity’ and ‘succession planting.’
  - Become familiar with the concept of harvest windows.

### *Succession Planting*

- Two volunteers participate in an activity demonstrating the differences, benefits, and drawbacks between planting seeds all at once versus in succession.
- Learning objectives:
  - Learn the term succession planting and know what it refers to.
  - Understand why a farmer might do succession planting.
  - Know some crops that you might do in succession.

### *Creating a Planting Calendar*

- Farmers will develop their own planting calendar from a blank template.
- Learning objectives:
  - Have created a planting calendar for their season.

### *Reading a Table*

- Farmers will be taught how to read tables and fill them out.
- Learning objectives:
  - Farmers will know the term “table” and what a table is in this use.
  - Farmers will know the beginning skills of reading a table.

## *Harvest Windows*

- Farmers will practice categorizing crops by harvest windows and harvest types (e.g., cut and come again, one time harvest, etc.).
- Learning objectives:
  - Become familiar with the concept of harvest windows.
  - Be able to name 3 vegetables that are cut and come again, or continuous harvest.
  - Be able to name 3 vegetables that have short harvest windows and 2 that have long harvest windows.