

# PREPPERBASE – SURVIVAL GARDEN GUIDE

## Section 2: 4-Year Crop Rotation System

### 4-YEAR ROTATION SYSTEM

#### ⚠ CRITICAL RULE: BEANS BEFORE HEAVY FEEDERS

Always plant nitrogen-fixing beans the year BEFORE crops that need high nitrogen (potatoes, corn, squash, cabbage). Beans add 100-200 lbs of nitrogen per acre back into the soil – but only if you leave the roots in the ground after harvest.

### YEAR 1: ESTABLISHING THE SYSTEM

SECTION	CROP	TYPE	SPACE (SQ FT)
Section A (NW)	Potatoes	Heavy Feeder	300
Section B (NE)	Dry Beans	Nitrogen Fixer	200
Section C (SW)	Root Vegetables	Light Feeder	200
Section D (SE)	Squash + Corn	Heavy Feeder	300

### YEAR 2: FIRST ROTATION

SECTION	CROP	TYPE	NOTES
Section A	Dry Beans	Nitrogen Fixer	Follows potatoes – replenishes nitrogen
Section B	Root Vegetables	Light Feeder	Benefits from residual bean nitrogen
Section C	Squash + Brassicas	Heavy Feeder	Uses nitrogen from last year's beans
Section D	Potatoes	Heavy Feeder	New location breaks disease cycle

### YEAR 3: SECOND ROTATION

SECTION	CROP	TYPE	NOTES
Section A	Root Vegetables	Light Feeder	Deep roots improve soil structure
Section B	Corn + Squash	Heavy Feeder	Modified Three Sisters system
Section C	Potatoes	Heavy Feeder	Third location in 3 years
Section D	Dry Beans	Nitrogen Fixer	Replenishes soil after squash

## YEAR 4: THIRD ROTATION + RECOVERY

SECTION	CROP	TYPE	NOTES
Section A	Wheat + Cover Crop	Soil Builder	Adds organic matter (skip if <5,000 sq ft)
Section B	Potatoes	Heavy Feeder	Fourth location completes cycle
Section C	Dry Beans	Nitrogen Fixer	Builds seed stock
Section D	Root Vegetables	Light Feeder	Overwinter some for seed (biennial)

### THE "ROOT FOLLOWS LEAF" PRINCIPLE

- ▶ Alternate between above-ground crops (beans, squash, corn) and below-ground crops (potatoes, roots)
- ▶ This natural alternation prevents pest buildup and soil exhaustion
- ▶ Different root depths access different nutrient layers
- ▶ Above-ground crops provide living mulch while below-ground crops loosen soil

### THE "LIGHT FOLLOWS HEAVY" SEQUENCE

**Step 1 – Heavy Feeder:** Potatoes, Corn, Squash, Cabbage

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**Step 2 – Nitrogen Fixer:** Dry Beans (leave roots in ground!)

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**Step 3 – Light Feeder:** Root Vegetables, Carrots, Beets

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**Step 4 – Heavy Feeder:** Repeat with replenished nitrogen