










Green Manures






In the quest for healthier gardens and a greener planet, green manure is a powerful ally. Often overlooked, this natural soil booster offers a sustainable way to enrich your garden while supporting the environment.

Green manure refers to specific plants grown to be turned back into the soil before they mature. These plants, like clover, vetch, mustard, or rye, are packed with nutrients and organic matter. When dug into the soil, they decompose and release their goodness, improving soil health naturally.

Here's a list of overwintering (hardy) and non-hardy green manures to help you choose the right green manures for your garden:

Plant name	Image	Type	Sowing time	Key benefits	Frost tolerance
Winter tares		Hardy legume	Autumn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixes nitrogen in the soil (legume) • Good ground cover to prevent erosion • Hardy and suitable for overwintering 	Frost tolerant
Field beans		Hardy legume	Autumn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nitrogen-fixing legume • Deep roots help break up compacted soil • Ideal for heavy clay soils 	Frost tolerant

Crimson clover		Hardy legume	Late summer to autumn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixes nitrogen and adds biomass • Attracts pollinators when flowering • Hardy in mild winters 	Tolerant in mild winters
Red clover		Hardy legume	Late summer to autumn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-lasting nitrogen fixer • Improves soil fertility and structure • Hardy and suitable for multi-season use 	Frost tolerant
Trefoil (bird's foot)		Hardy legume	Spring to autumn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixes nitrogen efficiently • Low-growing, good for ground cover • Hardy and perennial in some climates 	Frost tolerant
Rye grass		Hardy	Autumn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast-growing and excellent for erosion control • Adds organic matter and improves soil texture • Hardy and suitable for winter cover 	Frost tolerant
Bristle oats		Hardy	Autumn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adds bulk organic matter • Helps suppress weeds and improve soil tilth • Hardy and good for overwintering 	Frost tolerant

Mustard		Non-hardy	Late summer to early autumn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very fast-growing and good for weed suppression • Helps break disease cycles in soil (biofumigant) • Can be used as mulch 	Not tolerant
Buckwheat		Non-hardy	Spring to summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid growth and excellent weed suppression • Attracts beneficial insects 	Not tolerant
Fenugreek		Non-hardy legume	Spring to summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nitrogen-fixing legume • Good for light soils and summer use 	Not tolerant
Phacelia		Non-hardy	Spring to early autumn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracts pollinators and beneficial insects • Suppresses weeds with dense foliage • Can be left as mulch 	Not tolerant
Bitter blue lupin		Non-hardy legume	Spring to summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep-rooting legume that fixes nitrogen • Improves subsoil structure • Best in spring/summer 	Not tolerant