

STARTING SEEDS INDOORS

Some seeds should be started indoors because they grow slowly or maybe the growing season outside is not long enough to allow them to mature.

SELECT A CONTAINER : You can use seed starting kit, fiber pot (peat pots) Growing pellets, small 3oz. bathroom cups or you can make your own pots out of newspaper. Trays for draining.

SELECT A SOIL : Use a seed starting mix as this type of soil is sterile and is designed to drain well yet stay moist. Always pre-moisten the mix before sowing seeds.

PLANT : Read the seed packet sow 2 or 3 seeds per container to the recommended depth. Tamp the soil down lightly and mist with a spray bottle. The ideal soil temperature for germination is about 72- 82 degrees F. At this time light is not necessary.

COVER : Lightly cover with a transparent cover. This will help maintain the moisture in the soil. Remove the cover when 50% of the seeds have germinated.

Light : As soon as seedlings emerge, place containers in a sunny window that will get at least six to eight hour of sun daily (remember winter days are shorter!), or use grow lights about 3 inches above plants. Grow lights need to be on the plants 16 hours/day and off 8 hours a day.

THIN : Thin to one plant per cell or pot when seedlings have two sets of true leaves. Snip or pull the weaker seedlings at the soil line. If you have more than one good plant in your cell try to remove and transplant .

FERTILIZE : Once seedlings have several true leaves, apply fertilizer at $\frac{1}{4}$ the strength of the directions.

HARDENING OFF

Move your seedlings outside to a sheltered location in partial shade during the warmest part of the day.

Bring them to a sheltered location outside each evening.

Move them for a few more hours each day to the location where they will be planted. On days 6 and 7 plants are now ready to be planted.

NOTE : If a frost is expected , bring them inside. If they are in the garden good luck !!

SOWING DIRECTLY IN YOUR GARDEN

Seeds that should be sown directly in the garden either are easy to start outside, Mature quickly or do not transplant well because of a fragile or tap root structure.

PLAN YOUR GARDEN : Choose the proper site for the plants you are growing with enough sun or shade and good soil drainage.

PREPARE YOUR SOIL : It is recommended that you have your soil tested. Remove weeds and work organic matter into the top 8-10 inches of soil then level and smooth.

PLANT : Seeds may be planted in rows, mounds, or scattered depending on seed type and your garden design. This information can be found on the seed packet. Gently cover seed with the recommended amount of soil and tamp down. Sow at least two seeds where you want a plant to grow. Once seedlings have two sets of true leaves, thin to the distance recommended on the seed packet.

WATER : Gently water seeds in after sowing. Always keep newly sown seeds moist but not too wet.

LABLE YOUR PLANT ROWS OR AREA AT THE TIME OF PLANTING.

When sowing seeds in containers, use Potting soil rather than garden soil. Garden soil (dirt) will not have good drainage

MOST OF ALL ENJOY YOUR GARDEN !!