

# Planting Seeds

## Plan

- Read seed packet directions
- Come up with a planting timetable (plan)
- Have all supplies and tools on hand (i.e. seed starting potting mix, pencil, spray bottle, containers, heat mat, etc.)

## Prepare

- Prepare seed starting potting mix
  - Add water to potting mix
  - Place mix in containers or flats
- Group seeds
- Make labels

## Plant

- Per seed packet planting instruction, make indentations in the mix with pencil
  - Drop in 2 seeds per section
- Push seeds down with eraser to desired depth
- Cover with more mix if needed

# Optimize Care

## Germination and Seedling Care

- Water - Lightly mist with water (sprayer) and cover
  - Keep somewhat moist (mist top or bottom-water)
  - Ventilate (remove lid when half of the seeds have germinated)
- Heat - Place on heat mat, radiator or radiant floor (70-75 degrees)
- Light - Put under grow lights (<16 hr/day) or in a south facing window

## Thinning and Transplanting (to larger containers)

- Thin when 4 true leaves emerge on the stems
- Transplant bigger plants to bigger containers (moist potting soil)
  - Create holes larger than seedling roots
  - Gently lift each seedling using a spoon
  - Handle by leaves, not stem
  - Preserve as much potting soil attached to seedling
  - Lower seedling into hole slightly deeper than it was in the flat
  - Gently press potting mix around roots
  - Label
  - Fertilize weekly at half-strength



# *INTRODUCTION TO VEGETABLE SEED STARTING*

March 3, 2020

Presenters & Master Gardeners: Linda Eickhoff and Diane Guidone

# Acknowledgments

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# WHY?

- Lengthen growing season
- Choice of heirloom varieties
- Self satisfaction
- Cost savings





# When?

- Seed Starting (March & April)
- Direct sow (Late spring)



**Seed Starting Schedule**

In the chart below you will find some of the more popular crops that are grown within the Maritimes. This is a guide to help you know when to start seeds indoors and when to sow directly in the garden.

Seeds	Start Seeds Indoors	Sow Directly In Ground
Beans		May
Beets ***		Late April - May
Broccoli ***	Mid March - Mid April	Mid April
Brussel Sprouts	Mid March - Mid April	
Cabbage	Mid March - Mid April	Late April - Early May
Carrots		April - May
Cauliflower ***	March	Early May
Celery	March	
Corn		Mid May
Cucumbers	Mid April	Mid May
Eggplant	March - Mid April	
Kale		Mid April - Early June
Leeks ***	Mid February - Mid May	Mid May - Early June
Lettuce	Early April	May - Fall
Melons ***	Mid April	Mid May
Onions Sets		Mid April
Parsnips		Mid - Late April
Peas		April - June
Peppers ***	Mid February - Mid March	
Pumpkins	Mid April	Mid May
Radishes		Late April - Early May
Spinach ***		Early April - fall
Squash Summer Early	Early - Mid April	Mid May
Squash Winter Early	Early - Mid April	Mid May
Tomatoes	Mid February	

Please note that these are estimated seeding dates and you must keep an eye on weather patterns and protect crops if frost warnings arise.

\*\*\*All these crops are perfect for succession plantings. Sow seed at 2 week intervals to ensure a continuous harvest.

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# SEED-Start

- tomatoes
- peppers
- eggplant



- brassicas
- melons
- leeks
- celery
- lettuce
- onions

# Direct Sow

- Peas
- radishes
- spinach
- swiss chard



- carrots
- spinach
- cukes
- beans
- corn
- beets



# Check list

- Containers
- Seed-starting mix
- Seeds
- Labels
- Flats
- Heat mat (or radiator)
- Lights (or window)
- Bucket for moistening mix



# Seeding Set-up & How-to (Handout)



- Plan
- Prepare

- Plant
- Optimize



# Seedling Care (2 sets of true leaves)



- Grow/sunlight
- Bottom/mist watering
- Heating pad

- Ventilation for:
  - Damping off prevention
  - Stem growth
- Fertilize (i.e. fish or seaweed)



# Next Step (4 true leaves on stems)

- Thin
- Larger Pot prep
- Tender transfer
- Fertilize (1/2 strength)
- Label





# Hardening off (1-2 wks. before planting in garden)

- DAY - Partial shade, protected
- Gradually increase sun exposure



- NIGHT – In the house
- Keep well-watered



# Into the Garden (Safe by Memorial Day)

- Shovel or crumble test
- Mix in 2-4” compost/manure +fertilizer
- Keep well-watered
- Mulch with hay, straw, grass clippings, leaves





THANK YOU