

MAKING NEW PLANTS FROM SEEDS, ROOTS, & SHOOTS

Propagating Plants from Seeds

- Greater genetic diversity than with vegetative propagation
- Start seeds indoors to extend growing season – plant outside as soon as weather permits
- Seeds need a certain soil temperature, moisture, and sometimes light to germinate
 - Cool season vegetables germinate at soil temps of 35-80° F
 - Warm season vegetables germinate at soil temps of 60-95° F
- Typical time frames for starting seeds indoors use last frost date as a guide
 - DC's last frost date is April 15th (sometimes later)
 - Cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, Brussel Sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, kohlrabi) should be started indoors 4-6 weeks before last frost (February 25 – March 12)
 - Greens (collars, kale, mustard, Swiss chard) can be started indoors 4-6 weeks before last frost OR started out in the garden in March (March 12-31)
 - Eggplant, peppers, tomatoes should be started inside
 - Acclimate small plants to outdoor light and temperature before planting in garden - set outside in a sheltered space for a few days to a week before planting
- Typical outdoor planting times
 - Peas and Fava beans – plant seeds in February, as soon as ground can be worked
 - Spinach, lettuce, and other greens – plant outside in early March
 - Beets – plant seeds outside in late March/early April
 - Cruciferous vegetables – set out small plants in late March/early April
 - Squash, basil, beans, okra – plant in late May/June
 - Tomatoes & peppers – set out small plants from mid May to end of June
 - Eggplant – set out small plants in June
- Check your seed packet for planting times!
- Information on soil temperatures: <http://www.agweb.com/weather/soil-temperatures/>
- Planting depth (indoors or out) is about 2-3 times the width of the seed
 - Check your seed packet!

Propagating Plants from Cuttings and Divisions (Roots and Shoots)

- Vegetative propagation – creates genetic clones of parent plant
- Plants that propagate easily from stem cuttings in water
 - Basil, mint, sweet potatoes
- Plants that propagate easily from stem cuttings with rooting hormone
 - Woody herbs (lavender, rosemary, winter savory)
 - Cut stem with 3-5 nodes; remove leaves from lower stem
 - Dip lower stem in rooting hormone; place in soil in prepared pot or tray
- Plants that propagate easily from roots
 - Garlic, leeks, onions, potatoes, shallots, sweet potatoes, horseradish, mint
 - Cut up potatoes (must be organic) so that each section has an “eye”
 - Divide garlic bulb into cloves – plant cloves in fall, pointed side up