

## Planting Vegetables by Seed

Starting seeds indoors is the safest and most economical way to begin your garden. Planting vegetable or flower plants from previous year's seeds is even better. Seeds saved from mature plantings can be kept in a marked paper envelope, in a cool dry place for 2-4 years.

### Testing the seeds:

To check any seeds for viability, germination rate, place some seeds between two moisten paper towels. Keep the paper towels moist, not wet, for eight to ten days, and then check for little roots. If no growth, continue the process for another three or four days to give them a little more of a chance. This is easier than planting a whole set of "starts" with no progress to show!

### Starting vegetables from seeds, *indoors*

**Soak seeds overnight**, the night before planting, to improve germination rate and to have sprouts sooner. Soak only the amount of seeds that will be planted the next day.

**Plant seeds** in moist, loose, not wet soil. If using cardboard egg cartons, poke a hole in the bottom of each egg section for drainage before filling with moist soil. Keep soil moist and warm for the first week until sprouts form. There is no need for light for the plants until the sprouts are up, but at that time a light source is required to allow the plants to continue to grow. When they have outgrown their containers, either move them to larger containers or plant them outside in moist loose soil, *when the weather is appropriate for the plant variety*, and water them each morning for two weeks until they are established on their own.

If plantings are too close, thin them to allow enough space for them to grow properly. Save these young plants to plant elsewhere, or eat them as you go for a healthy snack!

When starting in cardboard egg cartons, cut each section of the carton, with the plant, to transplant directly into the outdoor soil or container. Peat containers will also work, but cardboard egg cartons may be on hand and *free*.

## **Planting vegetables by Seed, *outdoors***

**Soak seeds overnight**, the night before planting, to improve germination rate and to have sprouts sooner. Soak only the amount of seeds that will be planted the next day.

Plant seeds in moist, loose, not wet soil. Keep soil moist and warm for the first week until sprouts form, then water them each morning until they are established on their own, usually 2-3 weeks.

If plantings are too close, thin them to allow enough space for them to grow properly, save these young plants to plant elsewhere, or eat them as you go for a healthy snack!