

Spring Seed Starter Kit

Planting Guide:

Adapted From: Johnny's Selected Seeds

<http://www.johnnyseeds.com/>



Harvard Pilgrim
Health Care Foundation



Beets

CULTURE: In general, cool temperatures produce the best flesh color. Acute weather fluctuations will cause white rings in the roots.

TRANSPLANTING: Sow seed in a cold frame or indoors in early spring, about 5-6 weeks before transplanting out after heavy frosts become infrequent. Sow seeds 1/2" deep, 3-4 seeds per inch. Transplant out 3" apart in rows 12-18" apart.

DIRECT SEEDING: Begin early sowings when soil has warmed to 45°F/7°C. Sow 15 seeds/ft. 1/2" deep, rows 12-18" apart. Thinning is not necessary. For a continuous supply of greens and small tender beets, sow seed at 2-week intervals until 8 weeks before regular heavy frosts are expected.

DISEASES: Keep beets well irrigated to prevent scab, the same disorder that affects potatoes, causing raised brown rough spots on the mature roots. Rotate Crops to prevent diseases

HARVEST AND STORAGE: Lift plants, wash and store bunches 10 days at 32°F/0°C

WINTER STORAGE OF ROOTS: Sow about 10 weeks before heavy freeze is expected. Cut tops, wash, and store 6 months at 32°F

AVG. SEEDING RATE: 15 seeds/ft. and 18" between rows.

PACKET: 350 seeds sows 23'.



Carrots

CULTURE: Carrots require well-drained soils, Deep, loose, soils with good moisture-holding capacity grow the straightest and smoothest roots.

Pelleted seed requires a little extra attention when it comes to watering, as it performs best with consistent, moderate soil moisture throughout the germination period.

An initial watering will split or dissolve the pellet, but if the soil is allowed to dry out before the germination period is over, the seed may receive insufficient moisture for optimal germination.

PLANTING: Sow from early spring to midsummer, $\frac{3}{4}$ " apart (about 16 pellets/ft.), $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ " deep, in 2" wide band, or single rows 16–24" apart.

Sprinkle the soil surface to keep moist.

Don't allow soil to crust before the emergence of seedlings which takes 1–3 weeks, depending on temperature and moisture. If crowded, thin young seedlings to $\frac{3}{4}$ –2" apart, depending on size desired.

DISEASES: To help prevent, practice a 3-year crop rotation.

HARVEST: Carrots may be dug any time after they reach a good orange color (bright, not pale), at which stage flavor develops.

Generally the best harvest period lasts about 3 weeks (longer in cool, fall weather), after which time the roots may crack or the taste and appearance may decline.

Make a few sowings at 3 week intervals for a continuous supply of tender carrots at their prime.

STORAGE: Plant carrots intended for winter storage about 100 days before expected fall frost. Carrots store best at 32°F (0°C)

AVG. SEEDING RATE: 16 seeds/foot, $\frac{3}{4}$ " spacing in rows 24"



Cilantro/Coriander

DAYS TO GERMINATION: 7-10 days.

SOWING: Direct seed (recommended): Direct seed spring through late summer.

Sow 1-2 seeds per inch, 1/4- 1/2" deep in rows 12-18" apart.

There is no need to thin, as cilantro continues to grow well even when sown thickly.

For coriander seed production, thin to stand 2-4" apart.

Successive sowings can be done every 2-3 weeks for continual harvest of leaves.

LIGHT PREFERENCE: Sun. In most locations, bolting is likely in the heat of midsummer.

SOIL REQUIREMENTS: Does best in rich, well-drained soil.

PLANT HEIGHT: 12-18".

PLANT SPACING: 2-4".

HARDINESS ZONES: Annual.

HARVEST: Leaves may be harvested once the plants have become established and before flowering begins. Mature seeds are produced about 3 months after planting and are harvested when dry on the plant.



Cucumbers

CULTURE: Requires warm, well-drained soil.

Consistent, adequate watering is needed to produce an abundant crop.

Cucumbers are very sensitive to cold. Make sure both soil and air temperatures have warmed prior to planting.

TRANSPLANTING: Sow indoors, 3-4 weeks before transplanting. Keep temperature above 70°F (21°C) day and 60°F (16°C) night.

Transplant 12" apart in rows 5-6' apart. Do not disturb roots when transplanting.

DIRECT SEEDING: Wait until soil is warm, at least 70°F (21°C). Cucumber seeds will not germinate at a soil temperature below 50°F (10°C). Sow 2 seeds/ft., 1/2" deep, in rows 6' apart. Thin to 12" apart.

DISEASES: Practice crop rotation, Control insect pests to prevent bacterial wilt.

HARVEST: Once fruit bearing begins, pick daily.

STORAGE: Hold cucumbers at 45-50°F (7-10°C) for up to 2 weeks.

AVG. DIRECT SEEDING RATE: 2 seeds/ft. in rows 6' apart.

TRANSPLANTS: Avg. 85 plants/100 seeds.



Lettuce/Greens/Salad Mixes

CULTURE: Gently shake the packet to mix the seeds. Tap the packet to sprinkle seeds about 60 seeds per foot in a 2-4" wide band, lightly cover (1/8"), and firm gently.

Dry soil must be sprinkled to ensure even germination.

Begin harvesting in about 3 weeks by clipping with scissors; most plants in the mix will regrow.

AVG. DIRECT SEEDING RATE: 60 seeds/ft



Parsley

DAYS TO GERMINATION: 14-30 days.

SOWING: Direct seed (recommended): Sow in spring after the danger of frost has passed, about 1/4- 1/2" deep, 3 seeds per inch in single rows or 2-3" wide bands 12-18" apart. Thin plants to 8-12" apart.

Transplant: Sow in 1" cell containers. Seeds take at least 3 weeks to germinate.

DISEASES: Prevent disease with crop rotation and good sanitation.



Spinach

CULTURE: Spinach grows in a wide range of soils if moist and fertile, but is sensitive to acidity; pH should be at least 6.0, preferably 6.5-7.5.

SOWING DATES: Spinach germinates best in cool soil. Begin sowing in early spring as soon as the ground can be worked.

Summer sowing in soil over 85°F (30°C) risks low or erratic germination. If sowing has to be done during warmer weather, irrigating (watering) can help cool the soil and improve germination.

Sow in mid to late summer for a fall harvest. Spinach can also be planted from late summer until freeze-up in protected structures for fall, winter, and spring harvest.

PLANTING AND HARVEST: For bunching and full size: Sow 10 seeds/ft., 1/2" deep, rows 12-18" apart. Harvest spinach full size but before bolting (going to seed), cutting just below root attachment for "rooted spinach", or cut higher for "clipped spinach".

For baby leaf: Sow in a 2-4" wide band, 3/4" apart, about 40 seeds/ft. Clip small leaves in 3-5 weeks, depending on time of year and speed of growth.

Triple-rinse leaves, sort out cut and broken leaves, and package. For a continuous supply, sow every 7 days.

STORAGE: Store at 32°F (0°C) 10-14 days.

AVG. DIRECT SEEDING RATE: For full-size leaves: in rows 12-18" apart.

For baby leaf: . in rows 18" apart.



Sugar Snap Peas

CULTURE: Peas are a cool weather crop. Midsummer pickings are not as prolific as earlier harvests.

Plant the first sowing in early spring as soon as the soil can be worked. In well-drained soil, sow 1-1 1/2" apart in a 3" band (25 seeds/ft.), 1/2-1" deep.

For taller varieties use a trellis net or chicken wire to keep vines upright, easy to pick and off the ground where they are less likely to rot if rainy weather coincides with harvest.

Suspend the bottom of the trellis net or chicken wire just above the young plants. The best time to install a trellis is at planting time. Normal row spacing is 4-6' for trellised peas.

Harvest when peas enlarge in the pods.

FALL CROP: Sow about 2 months before frost. Keep seeds well watered to encourage good germination.

FREEZING: All our peas are good for freezing and canning.

AVG. SEEDING RATE: 25 seeds/ft. in rows 24" apart.



Zucchini Summer Squash

CULTURE: Fertile, well-drained soil with a pH of 5.8–6.8 is best.

FROM TRANSPLANTS: Sow 2–3 seeds in 1½–2" containers or plug trays 2–3 weeks before transplanting outdoors. Thin to 1 plant/cell with scissors. Transplant after frost danger when weather is warm and settled, about 12–18" apart. Take care not to disturb roots! Plastic mulch and fabric row covers will help plant establishment and exclude insect pests.

DIRECT SEEDING: Sow beginning in late spring after danger of frost, when the soil temperature is at least 62°F (17°C). Seeds will rot in cool, wet soil. Sow 3 seeds every 12" (thin to 1 plant), ½–1" deep, in rows 5–6' apart. Sow every 2–3 weeks until 8 weeks before your first average frost date for consistent supply.

DISEASES: If the first few fruits wither, blacken, and/or fail to enlarge, it indicates an absence of pollination, remedied when male blossoms appear and provide pollen.

HARVEST FRUIT: Cut or gently twist off young fruit. Handle with care to avoid scratching fruits. Harvest regularly, 2–3 times per week depending on age of plants and amount of daylight.

HARVEST BLOSSOMS: Male blossoms have thin stems, females have thick stems and a bulbous base where fruit is developing. Harvest male/female blossoms at midday, when fully open, for use in salads or for stuffing. If squash crop is desired, harvest only male flowers, being certain to leave a few to pollinate female flowers. Clip flowers from vine 1–2" below flower base with sharp scissors or pruners.

STORAGE: Refrigerate fruit at 32–50°F (0–10°C) for 1–2 weeks.



Glossary

Crop Rotation- The practice of not growing the same crop in the same area of land multiple years in a row. EX. If you grow carrots in an area one year, grow peas there the following year.

Germination- to cause (a seed) to begin to grow

Pelleted Seed- A very small seed which is encased in a substance (usually clay) in order to make it easier to work with

Organic- Growing food or plants with out the use of artificial chemicals **of any kind**, this includes the use of pesticides, herbicides, fungicides or any other product not labeled as “Organic” or “safe for Organic Growing” When in doubt please reach out to GVI (Communitygardens@gogvi.org) with any questions.

Sowing- The act of planting seeds either in the ground or in a pot

Transplant AKA: Seedling, Start, Potting Off, Potting On, Potting Up- A small plant which has been started from seed, either indoors, or in a greenhouse, or the small vegetable/ fruit plants you would find at a nursery / garden store for purchase.

Transplanting- The act of planting the Transplant (see definition above) into the outdoor garden or it's final growing space

Hardiness Zone (Zone)- A hardiness zone is a geographically defined area in which a specific category of plant life is capable of growing, as defined by weather and climate conditions, including the plants ability to withstand the minimum temperatures of the zone. EX. Bridgeport is in Zone- 6b

Frost- the process of freezing - a covering of minute ice crystals on a cold surface; -the temperature that causes freezing – Plants should not be planted when there is a danger of frost. EX. - Bridgeport CT First Frost is usually October 21st -31st and the last chance of Frost is April 11th -20th

Irrigating- To supply (dry land) with water by means of ditches, pipes, streams or to manually water with a hose or watering can



Planting Guide

Only Direct Seed	Can Go Either Way	Strongly Recommend Transplanting
Beets	Kale	Cucumbers
Carrots	Snap Peas	Okra
Corn	Lettuce	Eggplants
Parsnips	Cilantro	Summer Squash
Radishes	Cabbage	Peppers
Turnips		Onions
Spinach		Pumpkins
		Tomatoes



*Please feel free to contact us with questions at anytime.
we can be reached through Communitygardens@gogvi.org*