

PLANTING AND TRANSPLANTING

1. Planting Seeds

- a. Mark out straight rows
 1. put stake at each end of row and tie a string tightly between the stakes
 2. this makes cultivation, insect control, and harvesting easier
- b. Follow directions on seed packet for spacing and depth of planting
- c. Make shallow furrows using a hoe or other garden tool
- d. Place seeds by hand evenly down the row
- e. If growing sweet corn, squash, melons or cucumbers, place several seeds in one spot at intervals along the row
- f. Cover seeds and firm the soil
 1. Pack soil around seeds by gently tamping the soil with your hands, or the back side of the rake or hoe
 2. Firming soil in this way prevents drying of the soil and keeps rainwater from washing away the seeds
 3. This also provides good seed to soil contact which will help seeds germinate faster
- g. Water lightly
- h. Thin the plants while they are young; remove the weakest plants

2. Plants

- a. Using plants shortens the time before harvest
- b. Plants should be healthy, stocky, medium sized
- c. Avoid plants that are wilted, yellow, or spindly
- d. Avoid plants that have a lot of roots coming out the bottom; lift plant gently out of container and check to make sure the roots aren't circling the plant
- e. Plants should be disease-free; don't buy plants with spots on the leaves, brown lesions on the stems, or knots on the roots
- f. Plants should be insect-free; inspect them carefully

3. Transplanting Plants

- a. Harden off any plants that have been started indoors from seed
 1. Place plants close to the house because this is a warmer climate
 2. This needs to be done to get plants used to outdoor temperatures
- b. Transplant on a cloudy day or in the evening
- c. Handle plants with care
 1. An hour before transplanting, water plants and the soil in the container
 2. Remove plants without disturbing the roots and keep as much of the soil as possible with the roots
- d. Dig a hole large enough so that the plant sits slightly deeper than it grew in the container
 1. If you want to fertilize and haven't done so prior to planting, put a very small amount in the bottom of the hole
 2. Be careful not to add too much fertilizer because you can burn the roots
 3. Follow directions on the fertilizer bag
- e. If plants are spindly place them in the hole at an angle
- f. Place plants in the hole, cover the roots, and tamp down the soil around the plant
 1. If the containers are made of plastic or clay, throw them out or recycle them
 2. If the container is a peat pot, it can be buried with the plant in it because the roots will penetrate the peat pot; these containers will be labeled; plant the container below the soil line
- g. Water after planting
- h. If there is a threat of frost after planting, cover the plants
 1. Baskets, boxes, or jars can be used
 2. Can buy "row covers" made of plastic
 3. Remove covers during the day as the temperature warms so plants can get ventilation