



# GROW YOUR OWN

## 2022 Workshop Series

### MAY: Starting from Seed and Transplanting

#### May is the time to:

- Start some types of seeds indoors
- Direct-sow other types of seeds
- Transplant cool-weather vegetables and companion flowers
- **BONUS: Nancy brought FREE onion bulbs and seed packets for participants!**

#### Workshop Notes

Master Gardener, Nancy Zychek, talked about and demonstrated seed starting methods, and best practices for transplanting. The workshop started with Nancy fielding questions that participants had about their gardens. Then she covered a variety of topics including:

- Growing Media
- Choosing a pot
- Choosing a growing area
- Direct seeding vs. Transplanting
- How to read seed catalogs and packets for instructions
- The importance of temperature and light for seed germination.

#### Recommendations for grow lights

Four foot florescent 40 watt lights are a good size to start with. Have two, one cool white and one warm light. A broad spectrum - blue to red.

If you do not have the space or the time to care for seedlings, buy plants to transplant into the garden from a reliable plant nursery and transplant when the soil warms up.

#### Direct Seeding

- Plant seed when soil temp is over 50 degrees. It helps to buy a "soil thermometer". Some crops, such as peas, carrots, lettuce need a cooler temperature to germinate. Others need a warm soil temp. Read the seed packet, and research online for each type of plant.
- Pre-soak seeds when soil is cold and wet.
- The soil should be well prepared so the seed can emerge easily from the seed bed.
- Large seeds do better direct seeded than smaller seed. Small seeds need to be kept moist.

- The seed packet should have directions about how deep to plant specific crops and how far apart to place the seeds. It may also tell when you should see the little seedlings growing (days until germination). Observe them every day.
- Whether planted indoors or in the garden, young seedlings are very fragile. They respond to tender care.

### Transplanting into the Garden

Young plants need to be “**hardened off**” before transplanting into their permanent home. Start by putting seedlings outside in a protected area with lots of sunlight for just 2 or 3 hours a day and then bring them indoors. Gradually lengthen the time. If your nights are guaranteed frost free you can leave them out overnight for a few days before finally transplanting them.

It is a good idea to be sure the soil is well prepared with well-mixed compost and amendments. Dig a hole large enough to accommodate the roots of the transplant and gently place in and fill the hole. Press down gently to firm the soil around the roots and water well to fill in any air pockets.

Mulch your newly transplanted plants or your rows of direct seeded plants once they have their set of true leaves. Keep the mulch about 2 inches away from the stem of the plants. Keep the soil moist but not drenched. You should water before the soil is completely dried out.

Water deeply adding an inch of water a week. Use the tuna can method to measure how much water you are adding if you are not doing a drip irrigation system.

**TIP:** When you first water your transplant (or newly planted seeds) mix in “**Quantum-Organic Total**” Photosynthetic & Heterotrophic Cultures. This organic product is **super-food** for plants. Follow the instructions on the bottle for amount to add to water, and how often to feed.

## RESOURCES

Information on specific plants:

[www.MissouriBotanicalGarden.org](http://www.MissouriBotanicalGarden.org)

hort.uconn.edu - hit refresh for pics.

Conn. Botanical Society [www.ct.botanical-society.org](http://www.ct.botanical-society.org)

[www.Ladybug.uconn.edu/factsheets](http://www.Ladybug.uconn.edu/factsheets)

<https://GObotany.com:newenglandwild.org>

Provided by **Real Food CT**, Newtown, Connecticut