

STARTING SEEDS INDOORS

Mid-March to April is a great time to start planning your vegetable garden and gathering your supplies to start seeding indoors. You can plant seeds in peat pots, coir pellet, plastic pots, or any container with drainage. It is so rewarding watching your seeds start to grow.



BEST SEEDS TO START INDOORS

Which seeds should I be starting you ask? The best ones are Broccoli, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Leeks, Kohlrabi, Peppers, and Tomatoes. You can try other seeds, but most will germinate and establish quite quickly when directly sown into the ground. Most of your root vegetables won't transplant well, thus they must be sown directly. Also let's not forget fresh herb and flower seeds.

BEST TYPE OF SOIL TO USE

A nice, sterilized peat mixture is a great soil to seed in. Such as Terra Organic Potting Soil. In a larger container, such as a rubber maid container place you soil and add water to moisten it. You want it to be moist but not dripping wet. Fill your containers to ¼" below the top and pat it down. Place two or three seeds in each container and then cover with soil. To water the seed, use a spray bottle. A watering can be too forceful and wash the seeds out of the container. If you use a coir pellet the seed is directly placed in the pellet. The pellets will fit into most miniature greenhouse kits.

WHERE TO GROW AND HOW OFTEN TO WATER

Place the pots in a sunny warm location. On top of your fridge is an excellent warm spot. Keep the soil moist. As the seedling grows it is a good idea to let the top layer of soil dry out between watering. This will help prevent the plants from rotting or damping off.

Once the seedlings have started to grow it is best to thin them out so that you leave the strongest growing one in the container. Then as we approach the transplanting time, which is usually End of May beginning of June in Manitoba, you will need to harden your plants off. To take them directly outside and plant into the garden would be a shock for most plants. Hardening off is quite easy. A week before you plan to transplant the plants you need to move them outside into a sheltered spot of a little bit each day. Start with a two-hour period the first day and increase it one hour a day for the rest of the week.

SEED STARTING CHART MANITOBA		
VEGETABLE	START INDOORS	PLANT OUTDOORS
Beans -Bush & Pole	No	May 24th
Beans - Broad	No	May 15th
Beets	No	May 15th
Broccoli	April 15th	May 15th
Brussel Sprouts	March 25th	May 15th
Cabbage Early	April 15th	May 15th
Cabbage Late	April 15th	May 15th
Carrot	No	May 10th
Cauliflower	April 20th	May 24th (after last frost)
Corn	No	May 24th (after last frost)
Cucumber	May 5th	June 1st (well after last frost)
Kale	No	May 15th
Leeks	March 20th	May 10th
Lettuce	March 20th	May 10th
Onion (Sets)	No	May 10th
Parsnips	No	May 10th
Peas	No	May 10th
Peppers (hot)	March 5th	June 1st (well after last frost)
Peppers (Sweet)	March 15th	June 1st (well after last frost)
Potatoes	No	May 15th
Pumpkins	May 1st	June 1st
Radish	No	May 10th
Spinach	No	May 10th
Squash	May 1st	June 1st (well after last frost)
Swiss Chard	No	May 15th
Tomatoes	March 15th	June 1st (well after last frost)
Watermelon	May 1st	June 1st (well after last frost)
Zucchini	No	May 24 (after last frost)
HERBS		
Basil	April 1st	May 24th (after last frost)
Borage	No	May 24th (after last frost)
Catnip	April 1st	May 24th (after last frost)
Chamomile	No	May 15th
Chives	April 1st	May 24th (after last frost)
Cilantro/Coriander	No	Start May 24th, seed every 2 weeks for fresh leaves
Dill	No	May 24th (after the last frost)
Lemon Balm	April 1st	May 24th (after last frost)
Lemon Verbena	April 1st	May 24th (after last frost)
Mint	April 1st	May 24th (after last frost)
Oregano	April 1st	May 24th (after last frost)
Parsley	March 25th	May 24th (after last frost)
Rosemary	April 1st	May 24th (after last frost)
Sage	April 1st	May 24th (after last frost)
Savory	April 30th	May 24th (after last frost)
Tarragon	April 15th	May 24th (after last frost)
Thyme	April 15th	May 24th (after last frost)