

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

BUREAU OF EDUCATION, WASHINGTON

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**PLANTING THE GARDEN**

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**PURCHASING THE SEEDS.**

In order that a supply of seeds may be on hand for the different plantings of the home gardens, the bureau recommends that funds be secured to purchase seeds in bulk and the garden teachers divide the seeds into packages sufficient for 100 feet of drill. Small envelopes can be purchased at a reasonable price for this purpose. The children pay for the seeds from the garden products. Records show that 1 cent invested in garden seeds means a return of 20 cents in vegetables when the children work under the direction of a garden teacher. Since the success of the home gardens depends quite as much upon good seeds as upon mellow soil, too much emphasis can not be placed upon the importance of purchasing the seeds from a reliable seed house and placing the order as early as possible, for the supply of first-class seed is quickly exhausted.

**TESTING SEEDS.**

Just before the planting season the seeds should be tested at the schools. Use 25 seeds of the size of corn or beans, and 100 seeds of the size of radish or smaller. A simple method of testing is to put the seeds on a plate between folded pieces of cloth, cover with another plate or piece of glass, place in a room with the temperature of a living room and keep the cloth moist, but not wet.

**TIME OF PLANTING.**

Nothing is gained by sowing seeds before the soil is warm enough for them to germinate. Seeds differ in their soil temperature requirements. Some seeds, like kale and spinach, will germinate in early spring when the ground is not warm; beans and corn require a warmer soil, while melons require a much warmer soil. In general

seeds should be planted as soon as possible after the soil is prepared. To germinate well, seeds require a fine, moist soil, such as is produced in freshly tilled ground.

#### A SUGGESTIVE PLANTING SCHEDULE.

##### FEBRUARY TO APRIL, DEPENDING UPON LOCALITY.

Irish potatoes.	Radishes.
Garden peas.	Parsley.
Garden cress.	Carrots.
Onion sets.	Swiss chard.
Onion seeds.	Cabbage plants.
Spinach.	Lettuce plants.
Mustard.	Endive seeds or plants.
Beets.	Asparagus seeds or plants.
Turnips.	Horse-radish roots.

##### APRIL TO JUNE, DEPENDING UPON LOCALITY.

Beans.	Squashes.
Peanuts.	Melons.
Kohlrabi.	Pumpkins.
Carrots.	Okra.
Parsnips.	Cauliflower plants.
Salsify.	Tomato plants.
Sweet corn.	Pepper plants.
Pop corn.	Eggplant plants.
Radishes.	Sweet potato plants.
Cucumbers.	Irish potatoes.

##### JULY, DEPENDING UPON LOCALITY.

Carrots.	Brussels sprouts plants.
Sweet corn.	Radishes.
Beans.	Irish potatoes.
Rutabaga.	

##### AUGUST, FOR SOUTHERN STATES.

Irish potatoes.	Radishes.
Beans.	Tomato plants.
Beets.	Celery plants.
Garden peas.	Collard plants.
Kohlrabi.	Cabbage plants.
Carrots.	Lettuce plants.
Turnips.	

##### SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER, FOR SOUTHERN STATES.

Spinach.	Parsley.
Kale.	Garden cress.
Mustard.	Lettuce plants.
Winter radishes.	Endive plants.
Onion sets.	Asparagus roots.

## DEPTH TO PLANT SEEDS.

The depth to plant seeds depends upon four things: The size of the seeds, the method of germinating, the fineness of the soil, and the temperature of the soil. Small seeds should be planted shallow,  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch deep. They should be planted somewhat thickly, so that the strength of all will enable the tender plants to reach the surface. In large seeds, the depth to plant depends upon whether the seed leaves (cotyledons) are brought above the surface or left in the soil. If the seed leaves are lifted above the surface, as in beans and melons, the seeds should be planted not over 1 to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches deep, otherwise the seed leaves will be torn off as they come through the soil and the plant will be stunted. On the other hand, if the seed leaves are left in the ground, as with peas, the seeds may be planted deeper, 4 inches or over. Seeds like corn can be planted still deeper, 6 inches, for the food is stored around the plant in the endosperm, and the plant while coming through the soil is protected by a pointed shield. Since seeds will not germinate until they are thoroughly soaked, the soil should be made fine and should be packed over the seeds to enable the soil moisture to come to the surface and soak the seeds. When the soil is heavy and somewhat cold, it is safer to plant slightly shallower.

## DISTANCE APART OF THE ROWS.

The distance apart of the rows depends upon the size of the plants and the method of cultivation. Small vegetables, such as lettuce, onions, spinach, beets, carrots, turnips, or mustard, may be planted in rows 1 foot apart and cultivated with a hand or wheel hoe. Medium vegetables, like beans and peppers, may be planted in rows 2 feet apart. Larger vegetables, like corn and tomatoes, need to be planted in rows 3 feet apart and 2 to 3 feet apart in the rows. Wherever possible, it is economy to interplant with shade-loving vegetables, as summer lettuce or any of the melon family. Vegetables should never be so crowded as to interfere with free circulation of air needed to check such diseases as onion mildew. When the garden is to be cultivated with a horse, the vegetables should be planted in rows 3 to 4 feet apart. Long straight rows make cultivation easier. Paths should be eliminated; they take room needed for vegetable growing.

## REFERENCES.

Farmers' Bulletins:

255. Home Vegetable Garden.

647. Home Garden in the South.

For State experiment station publications, consult "List of Publications for Use of School and Home Garden Teachers," published by Bureau of Education.