



Seeds

Seeds should be obtained early in the year so you can get the varieties you want. The Vegetable Crop Information chart in the back of this book will guide you on how much seed to buy. Seeds can be obtained from local dealers and seed catalogs.

Avoid using seed from your previous crops unless you have a special interest such as the continued propagation of an unusual variety. Commercially available seeds are treated for disease and insect resistance and are stored under conditions that ensure health and vigor. It is possible to get atypical plants when you save your own seeds and when the plants are cross-pollinated or hybrid varieties.

Use a string to mark straight rows through the garden. Use the Vegetable Crop Information chart to indicate proper spacing. If you have a mechanical tiller or cultivator, be sure to allow adequate space between rows for cultivating. After seeding at the proper rate and depth, cover gently and water if the seedbed is very dry. If your garden soil tends to crust

or the surface becomes hard after a heavy rain, apply a light layer of sand over seeds.

Producing Transplants

Most home gardeners obtain plants from local plant growers or suppliers. In areas where dealers are not available or where the desired varieties cannot be obtained, gardeners may need to produce their own plants.

Transplants are generally started by seeding vegetables in a small box or flat. In order to prevent diseases, a disease-free material such as sphagnum moss, vermiculite, or sand should be used instead of soil. Sow thickly in rows 2 inches apart. Cover lightly with a thin layer of the planting medium and water gently. Place the box or flat in a hotbed or sunny window and keep it moist until the seeds germinate.

It will be 6–8 weeks from the time seeds are sown until plants are ready for transplanting to the garden. Use the Vegetable Garden Calendar to determine the garden planting date.