From Seed to Plant
Janet Waagen, UCCE Master Gardener

Starting Seeds In Containers

1. Fill Containers to ¾” from Top
   a) Select planting container
   b) Use packaged potting soil
   c) Tamp gently
   d) Wet “soil to the consistency of a DAMP sponge
      Set aside to drain excess

2. Sow Seeds
   a) Determine appropriate depth:
      - Package directions
      - Seed width
   b) Plant 2 seeds per unit
      (Remove weakest sprout later)
   c) Add thin layer of Vermiculite
   d) Moisten by lightly spraying with water

3. Label the Container
   a) Name and Date

4. Maintain Uniform moisture
   a) Use gentle spray
   b) Make mini” green-house
      (remove when seeds sprout)

   Special Treatment *
   Soaking
   Light
   Scarification – Scarification
   Stratification – Chilling

5. Set Container in Warm Spot
    OUT OF DIRECT SUN
    Most seeds need a constant soil temperature of approximately 70 degrees to germinate

6. Transplant to 4” pot
    For Proper Growing Space
   a) Cool months: use bottom heat until seeds germinate
   b) AFTER GERMINATION
      - place in bright window OR
      - Use special grow lights or two 40 watt fluorescent tubes

7. Water Regularly
   a) Cool months: use bottom heat until seeds germinate
   b) AFTER GERMINATION
      - place in bright window OR
      - Use special grow lights or two 40 watt fluorescent tubes

8. Fertilize Every Week
   a) Half strength liquid fertilizer

9. Hardening Plants
   a) 2 Weeks before planting in the garden, GRADUALLY acclimate seedlings to direct sun

10. Plant in the Garden
    a) Dig a hole twice as large as soil mass around root
    b) Replace soil loosely around roots
    c) Water in
    d) Provide shade for 2-3 days until well established

* Special Treatment for Seeds (by plant name) http://earthnotes.tripod.com/seeds.htm
(see list of treatments page 2, Then click on first letter of plant name, “Seed Chart”)

Reference: Seed Sowing and Saving, Carole B. Turner, Storey’s Gardening Skills
### INFORMATION ON THE FRONT OF THE SEED PACKET

- **Plant Name**
  - “Lettuce”
- **Variety**
  - “Grand Rapids”
- **Details**
  - Annual, Bienniel, Perennial
  - Vegetable, Hybrid
  - Disease Resistant or Disease Tolerant (initials) “VFN”, “B”, “TMV”, “PM”
  - Heirloom & Net Wt
- **Other Information**
  - Easy to grow, Harvest Longer into the season

### INFORMATION ON THE BACK OF THE SEED PACKET

- **Plant Description and Days to Harvest**
- **Planting Directions**
  - Type of Light Sun/ Shade
  - Row Spacing
  - Plant Spacing
  - Planting Depth
  - Days to germination
  - Plant Height
- **Special Instructions**
  - Cool Weather, Needs Light to germinate, cover lightly
- **Date Packaged**

### Direct Seeding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan the Garden Layout</th>
<th>Site placement, sun orientation, rows, paths, plant placement and water access</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Space saving ideas: Interplant, Under-plant, Cage or Stake, Grow Vertically, Use 3 seasons, Succession planting, Replant and plant early to mature varieties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare the Soil</td>
<td>Remove weeds and large rocks, Loosen soil 10-12” deep. Amend growing area with compost. Rake smooth, Water to assess drainage and rectify. Let settle a couple of days before planting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sow the Seeds</td>
<td>Make furrows the depth seeds are to be planted. sow the seeds. (Over seed, Mother Nature’s critters may visit!) Cover seeds and LABEL rows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dampen the Soil</td>
<td>Use a fine spray of water as not to disturb seeds. Keep moist throughout the germination period. Then begin to taper off watering after germination. Supply adequate moisture during the growing season.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thin Seedlings</td>
<td>Thin seedlings after the first set of “TRUE” leaves appear. Check seed packet for proper spacing. Use extra seedlings to fill in any bare spots (easier just after watering).</td>
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