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www.newleafgardencenter.com

KENTON STORE
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Current March Hours: M-W-F 9-4, Sat. 9-1, Sun. Closed
Hours will change later in the month depending on weather – Please CALL for hours or check our website.

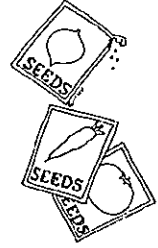


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Starting Seeds Indoors? Here is “How To” do it!

Jump start your vegetable garden by starting seeds indoors. This can give you earlier yields and extends the harvest season for plants that thrive in warm soil like peppers and tomatoes.

When should you start seeds indoors? That depends on the type of seed and the last expected frost. The average date of the last frost in our area is May 15th. So, by knowing our last expected frost date, the seed package should tell you how many weeks ahead you should start the seeds. On the calendar count back from May 15th for each type of seed you are planting and you'll know when to start that seed indoors. Don't start seeds too early or they become over-grown and leggy.



Things you need for starting seeds

- **Containers:** pots, trays or peat pots. If using containers from a previous year, always clean and disinfect them thoroughly before using to prevent seedlings from “damping-off”, a fungal disease that can kill seedlings.
- **Sterile soil-less seed starting mix**
- **Plastic bag or tray covers** to keep the seedbed humid

Tips for starting seeds:

Moisten soil before filling containers. It should be wet, but not dripping, without dry lumps. **Gently firm the soil** down in the containers, but don't pack it too tightly. **Plant 2-3 large seeds** by poking a hole in the soil with the tip of a pen or pencil and then drop the seeds in the holes. Small seeds can be sprinkled on top of the potting mix. Very small seeds can be mixed with sand or soil to help spread more evenly. Check each seed pkg. to check planting depth and then cover seeds with that amount of soil. **Sprinkle water** on top of the newly planted seed gently to insure good contact with soil. **Cover containers** with clear plastic to keep them moist. Most seeds don't need direct light to germinate. Just keep in a warm, out-of-the-way place until they begin to sprout. **Once seeds germinate** with their seed leaves, remove the cover and keep in a bright location or under a grow light for 12-18 hours a day. Moisten soil as it dries out.

Tips for growing healthy seedlings:

Transplant seedlings to individual containers once they have 3 or 4 true leaves. **Fill cell packs** with premoistened, soilless mix. Poke a hole in the middle of each cell. **Lift tiny seedlings** from the seeding flat and gently separate the seedlings. **Pick up seedling by its leaves**, rather than its tender stem, and insert roots into the hole. If seedling is leggy, set it slightly deeper than it was. Nudge soil mix around plant. **Lightly water** and label plants with variety name, date sown and date transplanted. **Place under a grow light** that is positioned 2"-3" above the plants or in a sunny window that gets **at least** 8 hours of bright light per day to prevent seedlings from becoming too tall and leggy. **“Brushing” plants** several times each day with your hands, or using an oscillating fan on low, will keep plant stems shorter and stronger. When touched or moved, plants release ethylene, which can inhibit elongation. **Don't fertilize** seedlings **until** the seed leaves (1st leaves to appear) begin to shrivel; then fertilize with a weak fertilizer once a week. **Everything you need is available at New Leaf!**

Common Seed Starting Problems & How to Fix Them

Starting seeds can be a bit of a daunting task, especially if you've not been very successful. But there is great pleasure in starting your own seeds, planting them out in the garden and raising them to maturity. Here are a few of the common indoor seed starting problems you might come across and ways to help you be more successful.



My seeds never germinate! Germination problems can be caused by a variety of reasons. Some of the most common are:

- **Incorrect Temperature.** Different seeds have different needs. Cool weather crops such as cabbage, kale or broccoli have a much lower germination temperature while warm weather crops like tomatoes will germinate better with temperatures in the 70°F range. If sprouting your seeds in a cool basement or outbuilding you may need to provide supplemental heat to ensure germination.
- **Old Seeds.** When properly stored, seeds can have a very long shelf life. But the older they get, the germination rate will begin to decline. For the longest life, store seeds in a cold, dry place. Humidity and warmth will greatly reduce your seeds' shelf life.
- **Incorrect Watering.** Water is a necessity for all plants. In the germination stage make sure to keep the soil evenly moist. If you water too much, you run the risk of seeds rotting before they germinate. If you let them dry out, they will either never germinate or die trying!
- **Planting Depth - Light.** When you plant seeds pay attention to the planting depth. If planted too deep plants could run out of energy before reaching sunlight. Planting too shallow can lead to drying out. Some seeds actually need some light to germinate, so instead of planting them deep just press into the soil. Read each seed packet.

My seeds sprout and then die! Everything starts off good, seeds germinate and the little seedlings are growing strong. Then all of a sudden, they wither and die! Often called “dampening off” it can be prevented by:

- **Do not over water.** Too much moisture allows disease to grow and plants to mold. Once seeds have germinated, water seedlings only when the soil is beginning to dry out. Watering from the bottom is best, but do not allow them to sit in standing water.
- **Don't overcrowd.** Your plants need room to breathe. A room with good airflow & enough space between the plants will help them stay healthy.

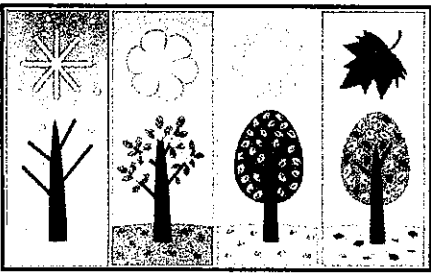
It all started off good, but my seedlings just aren't growing! Here are some common reasons for stunted growth in seedlings:

- **Incorrect temperature.** If it's cold your seedlings won't grow at the same rate as in warm weather. Warm weather crops like peppers, tomatoes, or eggplant require temps around 75°F. Even if they are small, when it warms up, they will take off and make up for their slow start.
- **Nutrient deficiencies.** If the seed starting soil is lacking in nutrients they will not grow properly. Watch for symptoms of nutrient deficiencies & feed plants a little bit as they grow.
- **Over watering.** Over watering is the number one cause of stunted growth. If your seedlings are stunted and have yellow tips, this is most likely the cause. Waterlogged soil prevents the plant's roots from bringing in oxygen, which will damage the roots and the seedling will be at risk for many more problems. Let the soil dry out just a bit before watering - and the soil should be *moist* not *soaked*.

My seedlings are tall, thin, and leggy! Legginess is a common problem in plants that are started indoors and is caused by the seedlings having to compete and stretch for light. Here are a couple of ways to reduce the tall, leggy appearance of your seedlings:

- **Rotate your trays.** If using a south facing window, make sure to rotate your plants a couple of times a day so that all plants have an equal time closest to the window. Even if you're using a grow light, rotate the plants within your trays so that all get equal time directly under the light.
- **Low Light -** Set seedlings outside on warm, sunny days in a protected area for a few hours. They will benefit from the direct sunlight, as well as get a head start on the hardening off process. Or use a grow light in addition to a sunny window for 15-18 hours a day.
- **Thin out seedlings** – The more crowded they are, the more they compete for light.
- **Brushing plants** with your hands several times each day, or using an oscillating fan on low, will keep plant stems shorter and stronger.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



The seasons rotate as each brings its special beauty to this earth of ours. Winter's snow and summer's flowers. Frozen rivers will flow come spring. There's a renewal of everything!

Garden To Do List

March

Garden:

- ☞ Walking on wet soil will cause compaction. After the spring thaw, wait until the ground dries to start working it. To test moisture level, squeeze a clump of dirt in your hand, if it breaks apart when you open your hand, it is dry enough to work.
- ☞ Amend soil with gypsum, compost or peat moss to add nutrients and improve drainage.
- ☞ Plant peas, onion sets, radishes, spinach, kale and lettuce as soon as soil thaws and can be worked
- ☞ Prepare vegetable garden beds as soon as possible for early vegetables like cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli and Brussels sprouts
- ☞ Plant pansies & violas weather permitting
- ☞ Start seeds indoors that can be planted after frost free date such as tomatoes and peppers. Our average frost-free date is May 15. Watch weather forecasts for cold nighttime temps to cover plants!
- ☞ Harvest horseradish while still dormant.
- ☞ Spray fruit trees with dormant oil, peach trees with **Bonide Liquid Copper Fungicide** before bud break.
- ☞ Fertilize blueberries & apply a soil acidifier.
- ☞ Test saved seeds for germination.

Perennials

- ☞ Clean up perennial beds.
- ☞ Tie up and cut back ornamental grasses to within a few inches from the ground.
- ☞ Cut dead wood out of roses and trim to shape.

Landscape

- ☞ Trim dead/damaged branches from trees and shrubs.
- ☞ Remove protective mulches around perennials as temps begin to warm and plants break dormancy. Don't remove too soon as hard freezes are possible.
- ☞ Transplant roses, shrubs and ornamental trees before leaf buds open.
- ☞ Apply slow-release fertilizer to shrubs and perennials.
- ☞ Apply Preen, a pre-emergence herbicide, to prevent weeds in landscape beds.
- ☞ Get help with landscape design now before the busy gardening season.

Lawn

- ☞ Apply crabgrass preventer late March. This prevents crabgrass and other weed seeds from germinating.

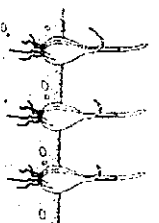
Early Spring Shopping Check List

- Seeds – bulk & pre-packaged
- Onion Sets
- Seed Starter Mix
- Peat Pots & Pellets
- Jiffy Cell packs
- Perlite & Vermiculite
- Fruit Tree Sprays
- Dormant Oil Spray
- Fertilizers
- Crabgrass Preventer
- Soil Amendments
- Gypsum
- Animal Repellents
- Peat Moss & Bark Mulch
- Preen weed preventer



Coming Soon!

- Asparagus Roots
- Seed Potatoes
- Onion Sets
- Fruit Trees & Plants
- Cool weather vegetable plants
- Tree, Shrubs & Evergreens



Top Seeds to Start Indoors

Here is a list of the top seeds that do well when started indoors and when to start them before the last frost date of May 15th. These are the average dates for these plants, so make sure you check your seed package for the suggested number of weeks for that particular seed.

| Start Date | Plant |
|---|---|
| March 6 th – 20 th | Peppers |
| March 20 th | Eggplant |
| March 20 th – April 3 rd | Tomatoes |
| April 3 rd | Broccoli, Cabbage & Cucumbers |
| April 3 rd - April 17 th | Basil & Cauliflower |
| April 17 th | Pumpkins (can also be direct sown after May 15 th) |
| April 17 th – April 24 th | Melons (can also be direct sown after May 15 th) |
| April 24 th – May 1 st | Squash (can also be direct sown after May 15 th) |

Most other seeds do best when sown directly into your garden beds.

Upcoming Dates

March 20th – First Day of Spring (we hope!!)
April 4th – Easter

We will have: Easter lilies, Asiatic lilies, Tulips, Hyacinths, Daffodils and other Spring Blooming plants!

*If your church or organization is looking for Easter flowers, we have special pricing for large orders. Contact either store for details.

Call NOW to get on our Spring Schedule

- Landscape design & installation
- Landscape maintenance – clean up, trimming, edging & mulching
- Paver patios and sidewalks & concrete retaining wall installation
- Lawn fertilization and weed control
- New lawn installation – seeding & sodding