

Seed Savvy: Propagation by Seed

Getting the Goods

- choose seed from a reputable company
- check that seed is fresh
- store seed dry and preferably in the dark until sowing time
- some seed have a short storage life span. Be sure to sow before seed viability is lost

Starting them off Right

- be sure to use clean containers/pots/trays/flats (sterilize with bleach solution - 2 tbsp bleach per litre water)
- use sterile soil mix to prevent damping-off (a soil borne fungi which destroys young seedlings by attacking soft tissue)
- fill pots with soil mixture allowing room at top to cover seeds
- moisten mixture and allow it to drain
- sow seeds thinly on surface
- cover seed if necessary with soil/vermiculite/sand
- label
- cover with plastic/glass
- place in appropriate light requirements
- when germinating starts, remove cover



Leaving the Nest

- after germinating and when seeds have developed its first set of true leaves(the first set after the cotyledons, or seed leaves), it's time to transplant, (sometimes called prick out)
- again use sterilized container/pots/flats and reputable soil mix.
- hold seedling by its leaves and loosen soil with fork. No fancy tool needed here!
- place new seedling in soil being careful to cover all roots
- label
- water using water soluble fertilizer high in phosphorus (10.52.10) to help establish root system. In 2-3 weeks, switch to balanced formula (20.20.20)
- place in high, but not hot, light

The Special Treatment

- some seed need and special treatment, for example,
- snapdragon seed need 48 hours in freezer before sowing
- peas benefit from a soaking overnight before sowing
- seeds of some native plants need cool/moist period(stratification) in order to break dormancy
- lettuce needs light to germinate