



Basic Vegetable Gardening

Lesson 4: Starting Your Plants from Seeds

Lesson Summary: Boys and girls will plant seeds in small containers. They will be transplanted in a few weeks.

What the boys and girls will learn:

Boys and girls will understand the advantages of starting seeds in a nursery.
Boys and girls will plant seeds and care for them.

Trainer Preparation:

Sterilize soil before this lesson. To do this, cover your soil with clear or black plastic or large leaves like banana leaves. Leave it in the sun for several days so it becomes very hot.

If boys and girls will be planting beans and peas, soak the seeds in warm water about one hour before planting.

Length: 30 minutes

What you need for the lesson:

A variety of seeds to plant
Small containers to plant seeds in (tin cans, short boxes, etc.)
Soil
Compost or animal dung
Water

Lesson Steps

1. (2 minutes) – Introduction

Today boys and girls will start seeds in small pots or in a nursery. Seeds must grow a little before being transplanted into the garden.

2. (5 minutes) Review information about the germination experiment.

Talk about the germination rates. If they were low, plant more seeds because some of the seeds will not germinate.

3. (20 minutes) – Begin planting seeds in small containers or under the shade of an outdoor nursery.

Tell boys and girls they will start seeds and grow them indoors or under an outdoor covering so they can grow without being hurt. In a few weeks they will be transplanted into the garden.

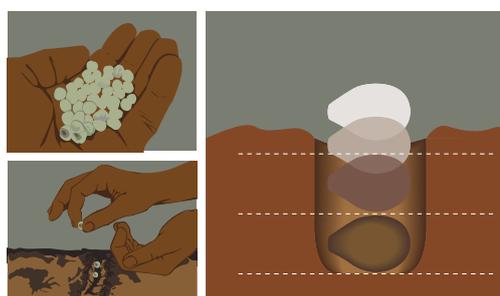
Explain why and how you sterilized the soil before the lesson today.



Steps for Starting Transplants

1. Mix half sterilized garden soil with half good compost or well-rotted dung.
2. Make holes in the bottom of your containers for water to drain.
3. Fill the container with a soil/compost mixture until it flows over the top. Then pat it down gently.
4. Sow the number of seeds for the size of container. Most seeds should be planted in the soil 2 times the depth of the seed size. For example, plant a 1 cm seed 2 cm deep. Do not plant the seeds too deep or they will not be able to germinate.
5. Cover the seeds with a little bit of soil. Press lightly so the soil touches the seed.
6. Water gently with a watering can or spray lightly over a palm leaf.

Planting Depth



Planting Depth Some Examples			
Plant	Length of Roots	Sunlight	Moisture
Carrot	medium/deep	partial sun	keep soil moist below 4 cm.
Onion	shallow	bright	keep top soil moist
Pepper (green and red)	medium	bright	keep soil moist below 2 cm.

Tips:

Carrots, radishes, and spinach should be planted directly into the garden. Melons, cucumbers and squash must be planted in slightly larger containers. Bean and pea seeds should be soaked in water for one hour before planting.

Plant the seeds twice the depth of the seed height.



4. (3 minutes) - Review

Ask the boys and girls the following questions:

- What did we do today?
- Why was it important to sterilize the soil before planting?
Answer: The heat will kill some pathogens (diseases) that would harm the plants.
- It is not possible to sterilize all the soil in our garden. So why do we sterilize the soil in the nursery?
Answer: Sterilizing the soil for the transplants can help them get started when they are still young and cannot fight disease as well.
- What were some things we needed to remember when planting?
Answers: Planting depth should be no more than twice the depth of the seed. Water well when finished. Think about the germination rate and plant more seeds if the germination rate is low.
- When you plant a garden at home, would you plant the same plants in transplanting containers? Why? Do you use nursery at home?



5. (1 minute) - Close

Keep all notes and records of what was planted and where.
Make plans for checking the germination and growth of the seeds for transplanting.

