



Timing of Seed Planting for the LCMGA Plant Sale

And other IMPORTANT information for Plant Sale growers. This timeline is also useful for growing seedlings for your own garden!

Soil and Containers

- It is best to use seed starting soil to avoid weeds or additives that may harm seeds or seedlings.
- All containers should be clean and sanitized (10% bleach water) to prevent disease.
- *Plant Sale only.* Six packs are discouraged, especially small ones, since they don't allow room to develop good root systems. Plants will grow out of them very quickly and we can't keep them adequately watered during the Plant Sale set up.
- *Plant Sale only.* If you plan to transplant seedlings before the Plant Sale, you can start seeds in any sort of large containers. Be sure there are drainage holes.

**Please remember that we accept only nursery containers for the Plant Sale.
No dairy, Deli or Salad containers**

February

- **Artichokes:** sow multiple seeds in a large container and transplant one to a pot.
- **Onions, Leeks, Shallots or any Alliums:** about **25 to 40** seeds in a **4" or 5"** pot works well; choose deep pots.
- **Herbs:** such as Chives, leaf Fennel, Marjoram, Parsley, Savory, Sage, Thyme, Cat Nip, Cilantro should be started now as herbs are slow to germinate. Cilantro needs a deeper pot as it has a tap root so use the taller **4" pot**. Seeds can be planted directly into the 4" pots that you will bring to the Sale. **Full looking pots sell!** Sow several seeds across the surface of the pot, approx. **12 to 16 for smaller seeds and 8 to 10 for the larger seeds** so pots will have a "full" look. Chives for instance only send up one blade for each seed planted so we need several to be sellable.

8 weeks before Sale (mid March)

- **Tomatoes and Peppers:** these all can be started in groups in large containers and then moved to individual pots.
- **Tomatoes** should be planted no sooner than 8-9 weeks before the Sale. They will likely need repotting more than once and should end up about **12 to 16"** tall in a 1 gallon pot.

- **Basil** should be planted at 8 weeks. Put **12 to 16 seeds in 4" pots**.
- **Peppers: 2 in a 4 or 5" pot.**

4 to 5 weeks before Sale

Broccoli, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Beets, Chard, Bulb Fennel:

- **Brassicas 4 to 5 in a 4" or 5" pot.**
- **Lettuces and salad mixes: 10 to 20 plants in a 4" or 5" pot.**
- **Beets and Chard:** are good in a **4" or 5" pot** of at least a dozen plants. **Full pots** will sell first.

3 to 4 weeks before Sale

- **Squash, Pumpkins, and Cucumbers:** These can all be started many seeds to a large container and transplanted a few days after they come up and transplanted to the final Sale pot.
- Handle very carefully if you transplant.
- All should be **1 to 2 plants per 4" pot or 3 to 4 in a 5" or 6" pot.**
- **Gallons are not desirable** because they require a lot of soil, are heavy and hard to handle, don't transplant easily and we can't sell them for more money.

3 weeks before Sale

- **Peas and Beans: 4 to 6 plants in a 4" or 5" pot.** You can plant about 5 to 7 seeds and hope for good germination.
- **OR** you can plant a lot of seeds in a large shallow container and then transplant the very small seedlings to the 4" or 5" pots. A larger pot is not recommended for these since they are too tricky to transplant when they get large.
- You can pre-sprout peas between two damp paper towels; it may work for beans also.

4 to 5 weeks before Sale

- **Annual Flowers: Cosmos, Sunflower, Marigold, Nasturtium and Zinnia.**
- **Several in a 4" or 5" pot.**
- **Sunflowers** are very popular! **2 to 3 in a 6" pot** are good.
- Most of these germinate quickly with some warmth.

General Transplanting

- Plants should be moved to larger pots once they start to out-grow the pots they are in. *Plant Sale Only*: Transplanting should be done **NO LATER than 2 weeks prior to the Plant Sale** to allow enough time for them to recover and start growing new roots.
- Water newly transplanted seedlings with a commercial transplant solution or liquid seaweed. Then place them in a shaded and protected area to recover for a day or two.
- All plants must be well rooted and not wilted by Sale time.

WANTED: HEALTHY PLANTS IN A 'RIGHT SIZE' POT

Remember,  **NO BAD PLANTS = NO HURT FEELINGS** 

General Labeling

- **Be sure to label!**
- **Vegetable and tomato labels** don't have the same requirements as ornamental plants. Please see the **labeling document**.

Note

- This timeline assumes that seeds are started indoors, and that warm season vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, and many other vegetables and herbs are started on a heat mat.
- Timing will be affected by your situation such as weather or growing conditions. Cold conditions will slow plant growth and require more time. Un-natural light after germination will cause plants to grow leggy. Get seedlings into SUNLIGHT (or at least daylight) ASAP.

If you have questions, ASK! There are no stupid questions! Some very knowledgeable people you could contact include Jill Johnson, Sharon Busby, Marlene Shapiro and Carita Edson.

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