Garden Seed Beds and Seeding

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GARDEN SEED PADS AND SEEDING

by

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PLOTHING OR SPADING

The garden plot should be plowed or spaded in the fall or just as early in the spring as possible. (It is best to plow the garden in the fall and then plow again in the spring.) If your plot is small use a spading fork but if fairly large it would be best to have it plowed. Always be very careful not to plow or spade the land when it is too wet as serious results will usually follow. It is a simple matter to tell when the soil is dry enough for spading. Squeeze a handful of soil tightly in your hand and if it sticks together in a hard ball, it is too wet for working, but if it falls apart after releasing the pressure of the hand it is in excellent condition for spading. Don't forget to use plenty of well rotted manure and spade it under thoroughly.

THE SEED BED

After spading or plowing the next step is to get the top two or three inches of soil as fine as possible. A little hard work with an ordinary rake will turn the trick. Rake off all the lumps to one side and crush them. Then go over the entire surface of your garden with the rake, thus smoothing it off by pulling loose dirt into all the depressions. Now bear down while raking and you will bring up any clods that are just beneath the surface. Crush these. Do not stop raking until the top two or three inches of dirt is very fine. This is one of the most important points in the raising of a successful garden. As soon as this operation is completed we are ready for the seeding of our first rows of vegetables.

TIME OF PLANTING

Before a seed is sown we first must learn which vegetable can be sown early without danger and which should be left until later. Vegetables are divided into four groups with respect to time of planting in the spring.

Group I - Spinich, turnips, radishes, and onion sets. These can be planted as soon as the ground is ready even though the nights may still be frosty.

Group II - Beets, carrots, parsnips, parsley, peas, lettuce, and chards. Cauliflower and celery plants may also be transplanted from the seed boxes you started in the house.
last month. This group should be sown about two weeks after Group I.

Group III - Sweet corn, potatoes, snap and pole beans and tomato plants from your indoor seed boxes. This group should be planted about two weeks after Group II or just after the apple trees have bloomed.

Group IV - Cucumbers, watermelons, muskmelons, squashes, lima beans, and pumpkins. Egg plants and pepper plants can be transplanted from the indoor seed boxes. This group should not be planted until at least two weeks after the apple trees have blossomed.

GROUP I.

At this time you should be getting ready to sow your spinach, turnips, and radishes, also, to set out your onion sets. Now get out your garden plan and find out where these vegetables are to go, how far apart the rows should be, etc. This information can also be found on page 6 of The Balanced Garden which we sent you last month. The radishes and spinach should be planted from one-half to one inch deep and the turnip seed a little shallower. If the radishes and spinach do well, in three weeks the largest of these vegetables will be ready for the table. If your family have a liking for spinach and radishes more of each of them should be planted every 10 days or two weeks. By doing this you will always have a supply of them for the table.

GROUP II

The planting of the Group II vegetables as described above will come this month. Remember this planting includes the beets, carrots, parsnips, parsley, peas, lettuce, and chard. Again turn to your garden plan and learn where these are to go, how far apart the rows are to be, etc. Then turn to page 6 of The Balanced Garden and learn the rate of sowing, how long before the crop will be edible, etc. The carrots and parsnips should be planted from one-half to one inch deep, the beets a little deeper, the lettuce and parsley very shallow, and the peas from two to three inches deep.

STRAIGHT ROWS BEST

There is nothing that looks more shiftless than a garden with very crooked rows nor nothing so pretty as a garden with nice straight rows.

Make the rows in your garden as straight as possible for two reasons: First, because it looks better, and second, it will be much easier to cultivate later. To make straight rows stretch a stout string between two stakes which are stuck into the ground at the ends of the proposed row. Using the string as a guide mark the row with the end of the hoe or rake handle. For small seeds make the mark shallow and for the larger seed deeper. When marking for a
crop to be placed in hills again use the string but instead of a mark, make shallow holes at the proper intervals along the string with a single stroke of the hoe for each hole. After the seeds are planted always be sure that the soil is pressed firmly about them. Many seeds that are left loosely covered without firming will never sprout.

THE GARDEN RECORD BOOK

An accurate record of all seeds planted (cost of seeds and date of planting), of labor by yourself on your garden, and of the amount and value of the crop harvested will not only be a valuable thing for you from the standpoint of your garden, but if properly kept it will show us that you have business ability as well as gardening ability. All real good business men, farmers included, keep an accurate record of all the business they do. That is why we want you to keep that kind of a record of your garden. We want you to learn the business side along with the garden side of your club work. We are sending you a home garden record book for club members in which this record is to be kept. Study this record book and you will see what is wanted. Keep an accurate record of all seeds, labor performed and value of the crop harvested. Figure your own work or labor at the same amount that you could get working for someone else. Figure the market value of your crop, if you do not sell it, as equal to the amount that the stores are getting for similar vegetables. In your record book work be neat and accurate. Do not put off entering items until you have forgotten them. At the end of the year this record book is to be returned to us and then we can tell just what kind of a business boy or girl you have been.

We are also sending you Government Circular #48 entitled The Club Members Home Vegetable Garden. This is a handy guide for all boys and girls who grow gardens. Keep it to go to when you want to know a certain point about your garden.

Next month we will take up garden cultivation, weeds, the last two groups of vegetables emphasizing tomato culture.

Enclosures:
The Club Members Home Vegetable Garden - Dept. Circular #48 Home Garden Record Book.