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Starting seeds at home

What you will need:

- Fresh seeds of your choice: vegetables, herbs or flowers
- Good quality potting soil from your local garden store
- A container such as jiffy pots, clean milk cartons, clean egg cartons
- Zipper-type plastic bags
- Water
- Light and heat

Instructions:

1. Fill the container with soil.
2. Plant the seeds in the soil (the seed packet will tell you how deep.) Close in a zipper- type bag to act as a mini-greenhouse, leaving just a bit open for ventilation.
3. Place the container somewhere warm (60 degrees minimum). A sunny window sill is a good spot.
4. Keep the soil moist by watering it lightly every day. Moisture will build up on the inside of the bag. When you see green growth, open the bag all the way.
5. When all danger of frost is past, you can plant it outside in a sunny spot, protecting it from cold and wind for a few days.
6. Be sure to read the seed packet for specific recommendations.

For more information, call our Gardening Helpline weekday mornings at 585-753.2555 or go to: www.gardening.cornell.edu

"Please contact the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County office if you have any special needs."

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SEED STARTING SCHEDULE
(Using May 19 as frost free date)

	When to start indoors	Weeks from sowing	Safe setting out date (relative to frost-free date)	Set out date	Seed Starting tips
Arugula	3/17	3-4	as soon as ground can be worked	4/14	
Basil	4/14	6	1 week after	5/26	
Beans	direct seed		0 weeks – August	5/19	Needs warm soil temp
Beets*	direct seed	4-6	2 weeks before	5/5	
Broccoli	3/24	4-6	2 weeks before	5/5	Keep seedlings cool 50-60°
Cabbage	3/24	4-6	4 weeks before	4/21	Keep seedlings cool 50-60°
Carrots	direct seed		0 weeks – August	5/19	
Celeriac					
Collards	3/10	4-6	4 weeks before	4/21	Keep seedlings cool 50-60°
Cucumbers	4/28	3-4	1-2 weeks after	5/26	Sow in individual plantable pots
Eggplant	3/24	8-10	2-3 weeks after	6/2	Germinate at 80°
Escarole	3/24	4-5	2-3 weeks before; mid-summer for fall crop	4/28	
Fennel Bulb	direct seed				
Kale	3/10	4-6	4 weeks before	4/21	Keep seedlings cool 50-60°
Leeks/Onions	3/3-3/10	6-8	4 weeks before	4/21	Grow seedlings at 55-60°
Lettuce	3/17	4-5	3-4 weeks before	4/21	Grow seedlings at 55-60°
Parsley	2/17-3/3	9-10	2-3 weeks before	4/28	Rinse and soak seeds overnight
Peas	direct seed		6-8 weeks before	3/24	
Pepper	3/10-4/7	6-14	2 weeks after	6/2	Germinate at 75° grow at 65°
Pumpkin*	5/5	3-4	2 weeks after	6/2	
Spinach	3/10	4-6	3-6 weeks before	4/7	Refrigerate seed 1 week before
Squash	5/5	3-4	2 weeks after	6/2	Sow in individual plantable pots
Swiss Chard	3/24	4-6	2 weeks before	5/5	
Tomatoes	3/31	6-8	1-2 weeks after	5/26	Germinate at 75° grow at 65°

Using this chart: Determine your spring frost-free date. Add or subtract the number of weeks shown in column 4 (safe setting out date) to or from your frost-free date for each crop and record in column 5 (setting out date). Now take each date from column 5, subtract the number of weeks shown in column 3 (weeks from sowing) and record that date in column 2 (when to start indoors).