

# Starting Vegetable Seeds Indoors

*(Excerpted from [www.humeseeds.com/indoor.htm](http://www.humeseeds.com/indoor.htm))*



Starting seeds can be a fun, easy, successful means of starting new garden plants. All you need is a little soil, a pot or tray and a warm spot to put the seedlings.

**VEGETABLES** - Leaf crops like spinach, lettuce, chard, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, tomatoes, plus the others can be started indoors in late February and March. Cucumbers, squash, pumpkins plus the other warm weather vegetable can be started indoors in late March and April.

**VEGETABLE ROOT CROPS** - Sow the seeds of all root crops directly into the garden. Wait for the soil to warm-up a little before seeding outdoors. Late March or early April is usually a good time for seeding root crops outdoors.

## **Here are a few hints on the best ways to start vegetable seeds indoors:**

- An all-purpose houseplant type potting soil or seed starting mix can be used for starting the seeds. Do not use soil from the garden unless it has been sterilized first. Otherwise you are apt to introduced weeds, bugs and disease to the seeding mix.
- Annual and vegetable seed packets can be put in the refrigerator for a couple of days before being seeded.
- Before sowing the seeds, be sure to fill the container to overflowing with soil. It is very important to have the soil high in the container so the air will flow across the soil, thus aiding in the control of damp-off disease.
- The next most important step is to barely cover the seed with soil. There is a tendency to cover the seed with too much soil. Some types and varieties do not need to be covered at all.
- The sowing instructions on the back of the seed packet will specify the correct spacing, planting depth, time to sow and any other pertinent information for that particular seed variety.
- Keep the newly seeded pots or trays in a warm spot where the temperatures average 65 to 72 degrees day and night. A heating mat will help. Select a spot where there is bright light. In fact, the seeds may even germinate faster if they are kept under fluorescent lights. Space the lights about 12 to 15 inches above the soil.
- Use tepid water to water the seeds for the first two or three days. Once the seedlings have germinated use water that is just a little warmer than room temperature.
- After the new seedlings have formed a couple of sets of true leaves they can be individually potted or spaced so there is room for them to develop naturally. Do not set the young seedlings outdoors until after all danger of frost has passed.