



S.E.E.D.S. Informational Binder

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Welcome!

Our mission is to bring the members of our community together and give them access to free seeds and the information they will need to grow their own plants. We hope to cultivate a flourishing network of gardeners, plant enthusiasts and avid learners who are dedicated to the sharing of seeds and knowledge.

The information in this binder is meant to be used as a resource for our fully-stocked inventory. Please refer to the order form for the most up-to-date list of our available seeds.

To be able to provide a consistent supply of seeds to the community, we limit the number of seed packets a customer can take at one time

We extend our utmost appreciation toward our donating organizations: Lowe's Home Improvement of California, MD, Wild Ones Chesapeake Bay, the St. Mary's County Community Development Corporation, and the University of Maryland Extension Master Gardeners.

Introductory Resources

How to Start a Vegetable Garden

STEP 1 - Plan your garden

- Will you grow vegetables and herbs in containers or in garden soil?
- Will you create an in-ground garden, or perhaps use raised beds?
- Start small and expand when you are ready. A good starter size is 50-75 sq. Ft.
- Grow vegetables that you like to eat and are expensive to buy. Some of the easiest vegetables are bush bean, tomato, cucumber, pepper, lettuce, summer squash, and leafy greens (Swiss chard, kale, mustard, etc.).
- Place taller crops on the north and west sides so they will not shade shorter plants.
- Group plants by what season they grow in and how long they take to come to maturity.
- Early, short-season crops, like lettuce, can give way to late-season crops after harvest.

STEP 2 - Select your site

- Your garden should be on level ground in a spot that gets at least 6 hours of full sun a day (preferably more).
- Avoid trees, shrubs, and buildings where possible.
- Make sure you have access to every part of your garden—include paths.
- Easy access to water is essential.
- Know your local animal population and fence as needed.

STEP 3 - Prepare your soil

- Vegetable garden soil should be deep and crumbly, should drain well, and should contain plenty of organic matter.
- Have your soil tested to determine nutrient levels and pH, and to be sure it is safe to plant in (less than 400 ppm of lead).
- Turn under or remove the grass sod but do not dispose of it as sod contains valuable topsoil and organic matter. You can also kill the grass by covering it with sections of cardboard or newspaper and then covering that with a 2 to 4-inch layer of compost.
- Add at least two inches of compost on top of your soil and dig it in. Continue to add a thin layer of compost every time you plant.
- You can fill a new raised bed with purchased topsoil and compost.
- Raised beds may either be surrounded by an enclosure or built up with sloped sides and no enclosure.

STEP 4 - Plant your crops

- View the information about the vegetable you are interested in growing to determine whether a particular vegetable is best direct-seeded in the ground or whether its seeds have to be planted indoors and grown to transplant size. You can buy seeds and transplants from local stores.
- If you buy seedlings to transplant, make sure they look healthy and are not so overgrown that roots encircle the bottom of the pot. Transplants raised inside your home or in a greenhouse should be exposed gradually to outdoor temperatures and conditions; this is called “hardening off.”
- Transplant on a cloudy, calm afternoon if possible, and water well; handle plants carefully and make sure there is adequate room for the roots in the planting hole.

STEP 5 - Take care of your garden

- Water deeply around the base of your vegetable plants, as necessary, to keep the roots systems moist. Frequent, shallow watering is good for newly planted seeds—not mature plants.
- Water in the morning when possible. Use a soaker hose or drip irrigation system to reduce water use.
- Fertilize as necessary based on your soil test recommendations, fertilizer label instructions, and the needs of your different crops.
- Control weeds by laying down organic mulches, slicing or chopping weeds with a hoe, and hand-pulling. Start early, as soon as weeds appear.
- Support tomato, pepper, and cucumber plants with stakes or trellises to save space.
- Monitor plants regularly for problems. Learn to take an integrated pest management (IPM) approach to any plant or pest problem. If you need assistance send your question with digital photos to Ask Extension.
- Vegetables and herbs can be grown successfully in Maryland gardens without chemical pesticides.

STEP 6 - Harvest and enjoy!

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Planting Vegetable Seeds in the Garden

- Step 1 - Consult the back of the seed packet for guidance on when to plant seeds in the ground;
- Step 2 - A good rule of thumb is to sow seeds 2 to 3 times deeper than their width;
- Step 3 - Sow seeds more deeply in light, sandy soil and less deeply in heavier, clay soils;
- Step 4 - Firm the soil over your seeds to hasten germination. Some gardeners lay boards or row covers over newly planted seed during warm weather to keep the bed moist. You must check daily for signs of germination

General Tips

- With cloddy or crusty soils, it may be helpful to apply a narrow band of fine compost or vermiculite over the row after seeds are planted. This will hold soil moisture and reduce crusting, making it easier for seedlings to push through the soil surface;
- Soil temperature has a major effect on the speed of germination. In the spring, the soil is often cold, and large seeds (i.e., corn and beans) may rot before they can sprout

Veggie-Specific Tips

- **Corn** and **beans** are often planted in single rows, whereas cucurbit (**cucumber**, **squash**) are sometimes planted 4 to 6 seeds to a hill or mound;
- Crops such as **spinach**, **peas**, **beets**, **lettuce**, and **carrots** are often sown in wide rows or beds instead of in long single rows. Sow seed evenly over the area, then rake in gently;
- Large seeds, such as **pumpkin**, **squash**, **bean**, and **corn**, can usually be planted at the correct spacing (indicated on a seed packet). It is much more difficult to precisely plant small seeds. You should expect to thin out excess seedlings later to achieve the desired spacing.

Starting Vegetable Seeds Indoors

- STEP 1 - Set up your lighting system
 - Your baby plants will generally need more light than your average indoor lights can provide;
- STEP 2 - Choose containers and prepare growing medium
 - Almost any clean container can be used for seed starting, as long as it has good drainage and is at least 2" deep.
 - Save money by reusing milk jugs, yogurt containers, clear clamshell containers, etc.
- STEP 3 - Prepare growing medium
 - Growing media have three main functions:
 - Supply roots with nutrients, air, and water
 - Allow for maximum root growth

- Physically support the plant
 - Seeds will be more successful in a specialized growing medium - not just regular ole dirt
 - Add warm water to your dry growing medium until it is moist like a wrung-out sponge - not sopping wet
- STEP 4 - Fill containers
 - Add moistened media to container and even it out, tamping down lightly
 - Fill to within ¾” from the top
- STEP 5 - Mark your rows (optional)
 - Use a ruler or straight-edge to create furrows
 - Seedlings grown in rows are easier to label and handle at transplanting time
- STEP 6 – Plant
 - Sow seeds thinly and uniformly in the rows
 - Lightly cover the seeds with growing medium and press down gently
- STEP 7 - Nurture your seedlings until they are ready to transplant

Growing Vegetables in Containers

What can I grow in a container garden?

Just about any vegetable or herb! Some of the more popular container crops are salad greens, peppers, eggplant, tomatoes, beans, chard, beets, radish, squash, and cucumbers.

- More challenging crops include melons, corn, potatoes, and sweet potatoes. The key is to experiment.
- Look for “bush” or “dwarf” varieties of the crops you want to grow. There are quite a few tomato and cucumber varieties bred for small-space gardening.
- New gardeners should start small in the first year.

Best location for a container garden

- Containers can be placed on any level surface — decks, balconies, and along driveways and sidewalks. You can also set them on bare ground and allow the plant roots to grow down into the soil or place them on top of a mulched area.
- Plants also be grown in hanging baskets and window boxes.
- Southern and western exposures will be the sunniest and warmest, while northern and eastern exposures will be shadier and cooler.
- You’ll need 6-8 hours of direct sun for warm-season crops (tomato, pepper, eggplant, squash) and 3-5 hours of direct sun for cool-season crops (lettuce, spinach, Asian greens).
- Easy access to water is crucial. Some containers will need watering every day when the weather is hot and dry.

- Consider the microclimate in the container garden area. Watch out for heat sinks created by brick, concrete, and reflective surfaces

Words of caution about container gardening

- Containers and the water that drains from them can mark and stain concrete and wood decking. Using self-watering containers or plastic saucers to catch water will prevent this problem (and is very helpful if you are gardening “above” your neighbor’s balcony.)
- The lighter weight of large plastic containers leads gardeners to believe they can be moved easily. But a 20-inch diameter container filled with moist growing medium and plants can weigh 100 lbs! (You can buy or make plant caddies to make heavy containers portable.)

Seed Viability List – When Do Seeds Expire?

*Average years when stored in optimal cool, dry, dark conditions

Veggie seeds

Bean: 2-3 years
 Beet: 3-5 years
 Brassicas*: 3-5 years
 Carrot: 2-3 years
 Chard: 3-5 years
 Corn: 2-3 years
 Cucumber: 5-10 years
 Eggplant: 2-3 years
 Okra: 2 years
 Onions: 1 year
 Lettuce: 2-3 years
 Melon: 3-5 years
 Mustard: 4 years
 Pea: 2-3 years
 Pepper: 2-3 years
 Radish: 3-5 years
 Spinach: 2-3 years
 Squash: 2-6 years
 Tomato: 5-10 years
 *Brassicas: *broccoli, broccoli raab, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collard greens, kale, and more!*

Herb seeds

Basil: 5 years
 Cat Grass: 3 years
 Chives: 1-2 years
 Cilantro: 5 years
 Cumin: 1-3 years
 Dill: 5 years
 Fennel: 3-4 years
 Lavender: 4 years
 Paprika: 2 years
 Parsley: 1 year
 Peppermint: 4 years
 Sage: 2 years
 Summer Savory: 1-4 years

Native Plant Seeds

Achillea millefolium
 (Common Yarrow): 3-5 years

Cephalanthus

occidentalis
 (Buttonbush): 1-2 years
Echinacea purpurea
 (Purple Coneflower): 2-4 years
Eragrostis spectabilis
 (Purple Love Grass): 2-3 years
Helenium autumnale
 (Common Sneezeweed): 4 years
Hypericum prolificum
 (Shrubby St. John’s Wort): 2-3 years
Panicum virgatum
 (Switch Grass): 2-3 years
Pycnanthemum spp
 (Mountain Mints): 4 years
Salvia lyrata (Lyreleaf Sage): 1-2 years
Schizachyrium scoparium (Little Bluestem): 2-3 years
Sorghastrum nutans
 (Indian Grass): 2-3 years

Symphyotrichum laeve
(Smooth Blue Aster): 1-2
years
Veronicastrum
virginicum (Culver's
Root): unknown

Yucca filamentosa
(Adam's Needle Yucca):
4 years

Sources:

Clear Creek Seeds, *Seed
Viability Chart*
Chicago Botanic Garden,
Seed Viability Chart
University of Maryland
Master Gardeners of Placer
County, *Saving Seed*

Resources

[2023 USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map – Maryland & District of Columbia \(PNG file\)](#)

- St. Mary's County is both 7B and 8A

[Learn more about the Master Gardener Program](#)

[How to start a vegetable garden](#)

[Vegetable planting calendar](#)

[Starting seeds in containers](#)

[Poor germination of vegetable seeds](#)

[Looking to answer a really specific question? Ask UMD Extension!](#)

Looking for a book? Check out our collection of gardening books in the 635s of our non-fiction section.

Questions & Answers

When can I come back to get more seeds?

- Community members are invited to use the Seed Library once every season: December - January; March - April; June - July; September - October
- The Seed Library will be closed to the public for one month between each season (February, May, August, November) for restocking

Can I request multiple packs of the same species?

- To maintain our varied supply for the community, we will not be providing multiple packets of the same category to customers

Do you accept seed donations?

- Yes! Thank you for your consideration. You may drop off donations at any of our three Library buildings.

Will you be getting different seeds? Do you take requests?

- All of our seeds have been generously donated, which means our supply depends on what we get! We cannot guarantee the same species every season, but we would love to hear what kinds of plants you're most interested in!

- The native plant species have been specifically chosen to be able to be planted in current weather conditions. Stay tuned for different types for spring vs winter!

Why are these seeds not in commercial seed packets?

- Commercial seed packets often have more seeds than the average individual uses for their personal garden. To stretch our supply of seeds while still meeting the needs of most, we have divided up commercial seed packets into multiple packets.
- Our native plants are not commercial – they have been collected from local sites, including our own Front Yard at Leonardtown.

Why do you have the botanical names instead of the common names for native plants, but not for veggies?

- Using the botanical name of a plant helps to avoid confusion, especially when several species share common names.
- We are not using the botanical name for the vegetables and herbs because there are a variety of species, subspecies, and cultivars, and generalizing the categories helps us have a more consistent supply.

Who can I ask for more information about the Seed Library?

- Check in with your local Library for more information, or email.nbega@stmalib.org
- We would also love to hear about any success stories! Send us your photos!

Upcoming Library Programs

[Check out the Seed Library page on our website!](#) Scroll to the bottom to see our upcoming programs related to gardening!

Fruits and Vegetables

Brassicas

What is a brassica?

Brassica vegetables, also called cruciferous vegetables, are part of a large family of plants, commonly known as the mustard family. Many plant species in this family are edible!

Did you know?

Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collards, kale, and kohlrabi are all the same plant species? *Brassica oleracea*!

Seriously! They have all been developed over time from the species' original form: wild cabbage

Broccoli Raab

- Small, flavorful florets
- Days to germination: 7-21
- Days to harvest: 55
- Planting: ½ inch depth, 1' x 1.5' apart
- Planting time: March-April & Sept.-Oct

- Days to harvest: 90-110
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 2' x 3' apart
- Planting time: Mar.-Apr. & Aug.-Sept.

Broccoli

- Edible florets & stems, good cooked or raw
- Days to germination: 10-15
- Days to harvest: 70-90
- Planting: ½ inch depth, 3' x 2' apart
- Planting time: March-April & June-July

Collard Greens

- Mild, earthy flavor, chewy leaves
- Days to germination: 5-8
- Days to harvest: 60-70
- Planting: ½ inch depth, 1' x 1' apart
- Planting time: April-August

Brussels Sprouts

- Tender, small heads
- Days to germination: 7-14
- Days to harvest: 85-110
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 3' x 2' apart
- Planting time: March-April & June-July

Cauliflower

- Tender, mild florets
- Some cultivars can be other colors, even purple!
- Days to germination: 8-10
- Days to harvest: 60-70
- Planting: ½ inch depth, 3' x 2' apart
- Planting time: Mar.-Apr. & Jun.-Jul.

Cabbage

- Sweet, tender leaves
- Days to germination: 7-12

Kale

- Dense, curly leaves
- Days to germination: 10-21
- Days to harvest: 55
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 1.5' x 2' apart
- Planting time: March-April & August-September

Mustard Greens

- Peppery salad green
- Days to germination: 4-8
- Days to harvest: 21-40
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 1' x 1.5' apart
- Planting time: April-August

Root Veggies

Orange Carrots

- Crunchy, sweet carrot
- Days to germination: 7-21
- Days to harvest: 75
- Planting: ½ inch depth, 15" x 20" apart
- Planting time: April-July

Rainbow Carrots

- Can be orange, yellow, red, purple, & more!
- Days to germination: 10-15
- Days to harvest: 67
- Planting: ¼ - ½ inch depth, 15" x 3" apart
- Planting time: April-July

Tip: Carrot greens make for a tasty pesto, salad ingredient, or garnish!

Bulbs

Yellow Onion

- Can be orange, yellow, red, purple, & more!
- Days to germination: 10-15
- Days to harvest: 67
- Planting: ¼ - ½ inch depth, 15" x 3" apart
- Planting time: April-July

Scallion

- Crisp, bunching onion

- Days to germination: 10-12
- Days to harvest: 60-65
- Planting: ½ inch depth, 12" x 2" apart
- Planting time: March-May

Other Root Veggies

Red Radish

- Crisp, sometimes slightly spicy root vegetable
- Days to germination: 4-7
- Days to harvest: 22
- Planting: ½ inch depth, 12" x 1" apart
- Planting time: March-May & August

Purple Radish

- Crisp, sometimes slightly spicy root vegetable
- Days to germination: 4-11
- Days to harvest: 25-30
- Planting: ½ inch depth, 6" x 6" apart
- Planting time: March-May & August

Beet

- Earthy, unique root vegetable
- Days to germination: 6-8
- Days to harvest: 58
- Planting: 1-inch depth, 1.5' x 4" apart
- Planting time: March-May & August

The Rest

Tomatoes

Beefsteak

- Good slicing tomato
- Indeterminate (continuous growth)

- Days to germination: 7-10
- Planting depth: 1/4 inch
- Days to harvest: 80
- Spacing: 2' x 2.5'
- Planting time: April-June

Roma

- Good sauce tomato
- Determinate (set growth)
- Days to germination: 7-10
- Planting depth: 1/4 inch
- Days to harvest: 80
- Spacing: 3' x 2'
- Planting time: April-June

Cherry

- Good snacking tomato
- Indeterminate (continuous growth)
- Days to germination: 7-10
- Planting depth: 1/4 inch

- Days to harvest: 70
- Spacing: 3' x 2'
- Planting time: April-June

Heirloom

- Generally liked for their robust flavor
- Mostly indeterminate (continuous growth)
- Days to germination: 7-10
- Planting depth: 1/4 inch
- Days to harvest: varies
- Spacing: 3' x 2'
- Planting time: April-June

What is an “heirloom” vegetable variety?

Heirlooms are species of plants that have stayed the same for dozens (if not hundreds) of years.

- Most agree that an heirloom variety must have been around before the first hybrid vegetables were introduced (in 1951)
- Heirloom varieties are open-pollinated, which means the seeds grown from an heirloom variety will be true to their parent plant (with certain exceptions to this rule)

Why should I grow an “heirloom” vegetable?

Many argue that heirloom varieties offer the best flavor as compared to their commercial counterparts. Being “open-pollinated” means that the seeds collected from the heirloom varieties you grow will yield the same great results next growing season! Be on the lookout for upcoming Library workshops on best practices for seed saving.

University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Center for Agriculture, Food, and the Environment,
[*Heirloom Vegetable Varieties*](#)

Bell Peppers

- Can be green, red, orange, yellow, or somewhere in between!
- Crisp and sweet
- Days to germination: 10-14
- Days to harvest: 65-85
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 2' x 2' apart
- Planting time: March-May

Hot Peppers

- Includes types like Joe E Parker (mild),
- Portugal (medium), and Habañero (hot)
- Range in level of spiciness
- Days to germination: 10-14
- Days to harvest: 65-85
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 2' x 2' apart
- Planting time: March-May

Tip: Generally, the longer you leave a pepper to ripen, the hotter it will be!

Lettuce

Arugula

- Spicy; our cultivar (Apollo) has a large leaf and fewer lobes
- Days to germination: 5-7
- Days to harvest: 40-60
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 6" x 6" apart
- Planting time: March-May & July-September

Green Oakleaf & Tango Lettuce

- Curly, loose-leaf lettuce
- Days to germination: 7-10
- Days to harvest: 40-60
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 1' x 1.5' apart
- Planting time: March-April & July-August

Butterhead Lettuce

- Tender, loose-leaf lettuce
- Some cultivars are speckled or red
- Days to germination: 7-14
- Days to harvest: 57
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 1'x1.5' apart
- Planting time: March-April & July-August

Romaine Lettuce

- Lettuce with a great crunch
- Some cultivars are speckled or red
- Days to germination: 7-10
- Days to harvest: 30-60
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 1.5'x1.5' apart
- Planting time: March-April & July-August

Spinach

- Thick, buttery leaf, some crinkly cultivars
- Days to germination: 5-7
- Days to harvest: 45
- Planting: ½ inch depth, 12" x 6" apart
- Planting time: March-April & July-August

Squash

Summer Squash

- Eat this yellow squash cooked or raw
- Days to germination: 7-10
- Days to harvest: 53
- Planting: 1-inch depth, 3' x 4' apart
- Planting time: May-July

Spaghetti Squash

- Hearty winter squash, healthy substitute for spaghetti

- Days to germination: 10-14
- Days to harvest: 100
- Planting: 1-inch depth, 6' x 6' apart
- Planting time: April-May

Pumpkin

- Perfect for carving; roast the seeds and slices of the hull
- Days to germination: 7-10
- Days to harvest: 100
- Planting: 1 - 1 ½ inch depth, 8' x 8' apart
- Planting time: (Late) April-July

Zucchini

- Eat this summer squash cooked or raw
- Days to germination: 8-10
- Days to harvest: 50
- Planting: 1-inch depth, 4' x 1' apart
- Planting time: May-July

Melons

Cantaloupe

- Juicy orange melon
- Days to germination: 7
- Days to harvest: 70-90
- Planting: ½ inch depth, 4' x 4' apart
- Planting time: May-June

Muskmelon

- Sweet orange or green melon; similar to cantaloupe and honeydew
- Days to germination: 7
- Days to harvest: 80-90
- Planting: ½ inch depth, 4' x 4' apart
- Planting time: May-June

Watermelon

- Juicy red/pink melon
- Days to germination: 6-8

- Days to harvest: 95-105
- Planting: 1-inch depth, 5' x 6' apart
- Planting time: May-June

Cucumbers

English Cucumber

- Long, non-bitter cucumber
- Days to germination: 7-14
- Days to harvest: 52
- Planting: ½ inch depth, 2' x 15" apart
- Planting time: April-July

American Cucumber

- Crunchy, slightly bitter, slicing vegetable. Typically served raw
- Days to germination: 8-10
- Days to harvest: 60
- Planting: ½ inch depth, 2' x 15" apart
- Planting time: April-July

Pickling Cucumber

- Perfect for pickling
- Days to germination: 7-14
- Days to harvest: 50-55
- Planting: 1-inch depth, 1' x 6" apart
- Planting time: April-July

Some Other Veggies

Eggplant

- Mild flavor, pairs well with bold sauces/seasonings
- Days to germination: 10-114
- Days to harvest: 75-85
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 3' x 1.5' apart
- Planting time: April-May

Garden Bean

- Classic crisp green bean

- Days to germination: 6-8
- Days to harvest: 55
- Planting: 1 – 1½ inch depth, 20” x 4” apart
- Planting time: May-June

Okra

- Mild, almost grassy flavor.
- Can be crunchy or tender, depending on cooking method
- Days to germination: 10-14
- Days to harvest: 55-65
- Planting: ¾ inch depth, 3’ x 1.5’ apart
- Planting time: May-June

Snow Peas

- Crisp pods, sweet peas
- Days to germination: 8-12
- Days to harvest: 60-65
- Planting: 1½ inch depth, 2’ x 2” apart
- Planting time: Feb.-April & Late July

Swiss Chard

- Earthy, pleasantly bitter taste
- Days to germination: 7-10
- Days to harvest: 30-60
- Planting: ¾ inch depth, 18” x 6” apart
- Planting time: April-July

Sweet Corn

- Large ears, white kernels
- Days to germination: 7-10
- Days to harvest: 80-100
- Planting: ½ inch depth, 3’ x 20” apart
- Planting time: May-July

Herbs & Spices

What's the difference between herbs and spices?

Herbs and spices are both obtained from plants and are primarily used for adding flavor to food. The difference comes down to which part of the plant is used.

Herbs:

- Come from the leaves of herbaceous (non-woody) plants
- Native to temperate climates
- Often used in larger amounts

Spices:

- Can come from roots, flowers, fruits, seeds, or bark
- Native to warm, tropical climates
- Often used in smaller amounts due to their stronger potency
- Some can be used as a preservative

Fun Fact: Some plants can be both! The leaves of cilantro can be used as an herb, while the seeds (coriander) can be used as a spice!

Iowa State University Extension, *What is the difference between an herb and a spice?*

Sowing Herb Seeds

Nearly all herbs can be grown from seed (some are easier than others)!

Sowing Your Seeds:

1. Before sowing seed work the soil surface to a fine texture and wet it slightly.
2. Make a shallow trench, plant the seeds and firm the soil over them. Generally the finer the seed the shallower it is planted but follow packet directions.
3. After planting, water with a fine mist of water

Tips:

- Some herbs such as lavender seeds can be tricky to germinate.
- Sow anise, borage, coriander (cilantro), dill, and fennel directly in the garden since they do not transplant well.
- Basil, parsley, sage, marjoram, and many other herbs can be started indoors and planted outside after the danger of frost has passed.
- Fine seeds, such as marjoram or thyme will spread more evenly if you mix them with sand before planting.

Basil

Common

- Classic, flavorful basil; can be purple or spicy
- Days to germination: 5-10
- Days to harvest: 85
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 10" x 10" apart
- Planting time: April-July

Flavored

- Variety of flavors, including anise, cinnamon, and citrus; great for teas
- Days to germination: 5-10
- Days to harvest: 85
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 1' x 1' apart
- Planting time: April-July

Catgrass

- Fun (and safe) for cats!
- Days to germination: 5-15
- Days to harvest: 80
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, broadcast
- Planting time: April-July

Chives

- Mild, onion-flavored plant
- Days to germination: 15-21
- Days to harvest: 80
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 6" x 6" apart
- Planting time: April-August

Garlic Chives

- Mild, garlic-flavored plant
- Days to germination: 15-21
- Days to harvest: 80
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 6" x 6" apart
- Planting time: April-August

Cumin

- Flavorful seeds
- Days to germination: 7-10
- Days to harvest: 120
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 6" x 6" apart
- Planting time: April-May

Cilantro (Coriander)

- Edible leaves and seeds
- Days to germination: 7-10
- Days to harvest: 70
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 6" x 6" apart
- Planting time: April-July

Dill

- Robust, unique flavor
- Days to germination: 7-14
- Days to harvest: 65
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 9" x 9" apart
- Planting time: April-July

Lavender

- Fragrant, attractive flower
- Days to germination: 10-28
- Days to harvest: 100-110
- Planting: ⅓ inch depth, 1.5' x 1.5' apart
- Planting time: April-May

Fennel

- Vegetable, herb, and spice!
- Days to germination: 7-14
- Days to harvest: 80
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 1' x 1' apart
- Planting time: April-July

Oregano

- Aromatic cooking herb
- Days to germination: 14
- Days to harvest: 85
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 1' x 1' apart
- Planting time: April-July

Parsley

- Mild, all-purpose herb
- Days to germination: 21-28
- Days to harvest: 75
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 10" x 10" apart
- Planting time: April-June

Peppermint

- Refreshing, minty leaf
- Days to germination: 12-15
- Days to harvest: 85-90
- Planting: 1/16th inch depth, 1' x 1' apart
- Planting time: April-May

Sage

- Pleasant seasoning herb
- Days to germination: 10-20
- Days to harvest: 70-80
- Planting: ¼ inch depth, 1' x 1' apart
- Planting time: May-June

Summer Savory

- Peppery, versatile herb
- Days to germination: 10-15
- Days to harvest: 60-70
- Planting: ⅓ inch depth, 1' x 1.5' apart
- Planting time: May-July

Thyme

- Woody, floral herb
- Days to germination: 10-15
- Days to harvest: 60-70
- Planting: ⅓ inch depth, 1' x 1.5' apart
- Planting time: May-July

Maryland Native Plants

What is a native plant?

Simply put: native plants were here first.

Native plants are the indigenous species that occur naturally in a particular region, ecosystem, and habitat. Native plants have co-evolved over time to be especially suited to their environment and the other species in it. North American native plant species are generally recognized as those occurring on the continent prior to European settlement.

Why should I grow native plants?

Support pollinators!

Preserve Maryland's biodiversity!

Support song birds!

Enjoy a beautiful landscape!

Low-input landscapes (grow a flourishing garden without adding extra water, fertilizer, or pesticides)!

University of Maryland Extension, *What is a Native Plant?* and *Why Include Native Plants in Your Garden?*

US Forest Service, *What are Native Plant Materials?*

Native Flowers

Achillea millefolium (Common Yarrow)

- Reaches 12-18 inches tall
- Blooms June – September
- Prefers full to partial sun
- Grows best in medium wet to dry soil
- No cold moist stratification needed

Echinacea purpurea (Purple Coneflower)

- Reaches 4 feet tall
- Blooms July – September
- Prefers full to partial sun
- Grows best in medium wet to med dry soil
- No cold moist stratification needed

Helenium autumnale (Common Sneezeweed)

- Reaches 4 feet tall
- Blooms August – September
- Prefers full to partial sun
- Grows best in medium wet to wet soil
- No cold moist stratification needed

Symphyotrichum laeve (Smooth Blue Aster)

- Reaches 4 feet tall
- Blooms August – October
- Prefers full to partial sun
- Grows best in medium wet to med dry soil
- No cold moist stratification needed

Veronicastrum virginicum (Culver's Root)

- Reaches 5 feet tall
- Blooms June – August
- Prefers full to partial sun
- Grows best in medium wet to med dry soil
- No cold moist stratification needed

Salvia lyrata (Lyreleaf Sage)

- Reaches 2 feet tall
- Blooms May – July
- Prefers full to partial sun
- Grows best in medium wet to medium soil
- No cold moist stratification needed

Mountain Mints

Pycnanthemum tenuifolium (Slender Mountain Mint)

- Reaches 2 feet tall
- Blooms June – September
- Prefers full to partial sun
- Grows best in medium wet to med dry soil
- No cold moist stratification needed

Pycnanthemum muticum (Short-toothed Mountain Mint)

- Reaches 3 feet tall
- Blooms July – September
- Prefers full to partial sun
- Grows best in medium dry to dry soil
- No cold moist stratification needed

Pycnanthemum virginianum
(American Mountain Mint)

- Reaches 3 feet tall
- Blooms June – September
- Prefers full to partial sun
- Grows best in wet to medium dry soil
- No cold moist stratification needed

Native Shrubs

Hypericum prolificum (Shrubby St. John's Wort)

- Reaches 4 feet tall
- Blooms July – September
- Prefers full to partial sun
- Grows best in medium wet to med dry soil
- No cold moist stratification needed

Yucca filamentosa (Adam's Needle)

- Reaches 2.5 feet tall
- Blooms June – September
- Prefers full sun
- Grows best in dry soil
- No cold moist stratification needed

Cephalanthus occidentalis
(Buttonbush)

- Reaches 12 feet tall
- Blooms June – August
- Prefers full to partial sun
- Grows best in wet to medium wet soil
- No cold moist stratification needed

Native Grasses

Eragrostis spectabilis (Purple Love Grass)

- Reaches 2 feet tall
- Blooms July – August
- Prefers full to partial sun
- Grows best in dry soil
- No cold moist stratification needed

Panicum virgatum (Switch Grass)

- Reaches 4 feet tall
- Blooms July – September
- Prefers full to partial sun
- Grows best in medium wet to dry soil
- No cold moist stratification needed

Schizachyrium scoparium (Little Blue Stem)

- Reaches 3 feet tall
- Blooms July – October
- Prefers full to partial sun
- Grows best in medium to dry soil
- No cold moist stratification needed

Sorghastrum nutans (Indian Grass)

- Reaches 6 feet tall
- Blooms August – September
- Prefers full to partial sun
- Grows best in medium to dry soil
- No cold moist stratification needed

What's in a Name?

Most plants are referred to by several different names, which can vary by language, culture, and region. One Maryland native plant species, *Monarda didyma*, can be referred to as beebalm, Oswego tea, bergamot, horsemint, or scarlet monarda, depending on where you live.

While each plant can have many different common names, it only has one botanical name. This helps to describe species attributes, prevent confusion in identification, and determine relation between species.

A botanical name is typically made up of two parts: a genus and a species. The genus, which comes first and is capitalized, can refer to a wide variety of closely related plants. The species, which is second and lowercase, directly describes that one specific species within that genus. For example, *Monarda didyma* has a genus (*Monarda*) and a species (*didyma*). The genus *Monarda* contains many other species, including *M. punctata* and *M. fistulosa* - two other native plant species - but *Monarda didyma* refers to just one species of plant!

Weston Nurseries, *Don't Confuse Me with Those Scientific Names!*
Sky Nursery, *Why Botanical Names Matter*

Glossary

Botanical Name: a unique name for each individual species of plant; comprised of a genus and species

Brassica: a large family of plants, commonly known as the mustard family; includes broccoli, kale, cabbage, and more

Broadcast: a method of seed distribution wherein seeds are thrown in a sweeping motion to cover an area

Compost: decayed organic matter used as plant fertilizer

Cultivar: a plant variety that has been produced through selective breeding

Genus: the first part of a botanical name; a term used to classify a group of species

Germination: congrats! your seed has developed into a plant!

Hardening off: the process of acclimating plants started indoors to the outdoor elements to reduce transplant shock

Hardiness: a plant's ability to survive adverse growing conditions, like cold, heat, drought, flooding, and wind

Heirloom: refers to a species of plants that have stayed the same for dozens (if not hundreds) of years

Herbaceous: refers to a plant that does not have woody tissues

Native plants: indigenous species that occur naturally in a particular region, ecosystem, and habitat

Open-pollinated: refers to plants whose flowers are fertilized by pollinators (insects, birds, bats, etc.) or elements (wind, rain); open-pollinated plants' seeds that will grow to produce the same plant as its parent

Planting zone: the USDA standard by which gardeners can determine which plants are likely to thrive in a particular area

Sowing: the process of planting seeds

Species: the second part of a botanical name; a term used to describe one distinct type of plant

Stratification: a seed survival mechanism that can prevent germination until certain conditions (time, temperature, moisture, etc.) are met. This process occurs naturally when seeds are left in natural conditions, or can be simulated indoors

Transplant: the technique in which a plant is moved from one location to another, most often during the plant's seedling stage

Vermiculite: a mineral that is often added to soils to aid in aeration and drainage