



Edible Gardens Fact Sheet

Plant propagation

Growing your own food is a wonderful experience for so many reasons. One of the real wonders of gardening is actually creating your own plants. Whether it be planting tomato seeds or dividing clumps of mint, we can easily grow our own food from scratch. This fact sheet gives you some basic information on the major forms of plant propagation that you might use in your edible garden.

Although not technically a form of propagation, planting out seedlings may be the most practical form of growing plants for some residential units, when we consider the skill levels of residents and the overall level of care provided.

If you wish to take the next step of creating your own plants, you have a number of options based on the types of plants you wish to grow.

Seeds

Growing plants from seeds is not only cheap and fast, but can be for free if you collect some seed from your previous crop for planting out in the next season.

Most seeds need 3 major ingredients to germinate. Moisture, Warmth, Soil (or Potting mix). All seeds have slightly different needs so it is important to read the seed packet for how and when to plant each variety.

The following is a rough guide to some common food seeds

<u>Seed</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Planting depth</u>	<u>Spacing</u>
Parsley	Very small	2 - 5 mm	200 mm
Cucumbers	Medium	5 - 10mm	500 mm
Tomatoes	Small	5 mm	500 mm
Lettuce	Very small	2 - 5 mm	200 mm
Beans	Large	10 mm	200 mm
Peas	Large	5 - 10mm	200 mm
Pumpkins	Large	10 - 15mm	700 mm
Silverbeet	Small	5 mm	300 mm
Corn	Large	10 mm	400 mm
Sunflowers	Large	10 mm	300 mm
Capsicum	Medium	5 mm	500 mm
Chives	Very small	2 - 5 mm	50 mm
Celery	Very small	2 - 5 mm	300 mm



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Cuttings

This is simply cutting a piece off an existing plant and placing it in potting mix to create a new “clone”, which will grow into another new plant. This method of propagation usually only works well with certain types of perennial plants. (i.e. plants that grow from season to season and don't die off after flowering).

One particularly easy group of plants to grow this way are the Lamiaceae family which includes Rosemary, Lavender, Sage, Mint, Thyme just to name a few.

Division

Clumping plants like Mint, Tarragon, Oregano can be divided into smaller clumps and transplanted, thus creating a new plant.

Probably the easiest is dividing a potato into segments and planting these out.

Runners

Many plants send out shoots that run across the ground and will take root where they touch a bare patch of soil. You can easily turn these into separate plants by cutting off the runner and planting it separately. A good example of this type of propagation is the Strawberry plant.

Whatever method you use, try some of these out. Remember some might not work out, but that's part of being a gardener.

Above all else, have some fun trying and enjoy your garden.