

## SOWING SEEDS vs. TRANSPLANTING SEEDLINGS

Gardeners typically plant a combination of seeds and seedling transplants (*aka*, “starts”) based on what works best in their area and garden for various plants. While this often comes down to personal preference, there are some basic guidelines to consider.

- Buying seeds is generally less expensive and offers a wider selection, and plants that are quick to germinate are fairly easy to start from seeds.
  - BUT, the conditions needed for seed germination vary from plant to plant (e.g., soil temperature, ambient temperature, light/dark periods, and moisture levels.)
  - AND, newly emerging seedlings are more prone to damage from weather fluctuations and predation by pests.
- Starts accelerate the growing process increasing the likelihood that you get vegetable/fruit production before the growing season ends, which is especially important in cooler climates or with plants with long times to maturity.
  - BUT, you are limited in selection to starts available in your area (unless you start seeds indoors yourself.)
  - AND, some plants just do not like being transplanted (e.g., spinach, beets, carrots, peas, nasturtiums, and snapdragons), largely because they have tender roots and root hairs that can be damaged during transplanting.

The table below provides some general guidance on the more typical way to start some common garden vegetables in the Upper Valley region. **These aren’t rules, as one can always find exceptions.** For example, you may succeed in transplanting plants that generally don’t like it by using starts that are in degradable pots that allow you to plant without ever disturbing the roots.

DIRECT SOW SEEDS	TRANSPLANT or START IN TRAYS
<i><b>Beans</b></i>	Broccoli
<i><b>Beets</b></i>	Celery
Carrots	Collards
Cucumbers*	Eggplant
Melons*	Kale
<i><b>Peas</b></i>	Kohlrabi
<i><b>Radishes</b></i>	Leeks
Spinach	Onions
Squashes*	Peppers
<i><b>Turnips</b></i>	Scallions
Zucchini*	Tomatoes

Items in bold/italics text are quick to germinate.

\*= roots are sensitive or fragile. Can transplant if don’t disturb roots.