



Welcome to the

# JUNIOR GARDEN CLUB



# MARCH

## Let's GROW Together



### LESSON PLAN #1

Welcome to the first lesson of the Junior Garden Club!

This month we will learn how to plant seedlings indoors and properly take care of them so that they are ready for the nice weather.



### What you will need to start your March seedlings:

- Tomato seeds of choice (cherry, big, medium tomatoes)
- Sweet pepper seeds of choices (sweet bell peppers, jalapenos, or mini bell peppers)
- Containers such as yogurt cups, milk cartons, paper cups, or a seed planting tray
- Seed starting pot mix or jiffy pellets
- A spray bottle to mist the soil
- An area with lots of sunlight



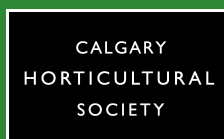
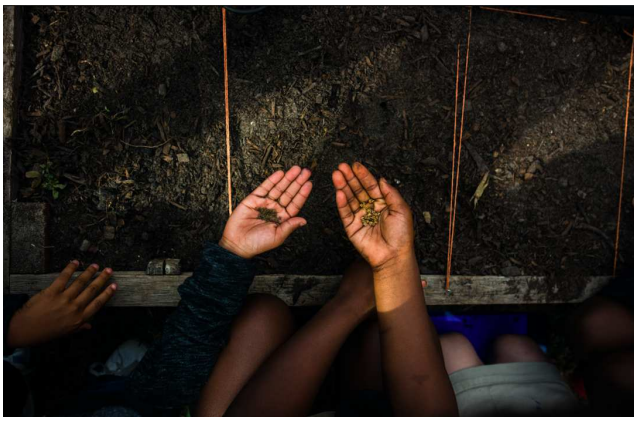
# Learning to read the seed package

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Reading the seed package before you buy seeds tells you a lot about the plant and helps you to choose which seeds to plant.

Look for the following terms on the seed package:

- Planting depth: seeds should generally be planted no deeper than their diameter. Some will be planted on top of moist ground with no soil covering it, and some will be planted as deep as an inch.
- Thinning: once the seedlings have started to sprout leaves, you need to reduce overcrowding. Your seed pack should indicate how far apart the remaining plants should be.
- Sun/shade: amount of daylight your plants need.
- Days to germination: the number of days you may start to see sprouts after planting.
- Maturity: the number of days until the crops may be ready to harvest.
- Start indoors: packages describe when to do this, to coincide with outdoor planting after all danger of frost has passed.





## Tomatoes and Sweet Peppers

Now it is time to choose your seeds! Look at different kinds of seedlings and choose based on what you want and the information given to you from the package.

Choose big, medium, or cherry tomatoes, sweet bell peppers, jalapeno, or mini bell peppers.

## Prepare Your Seedlings

Why do we start the seedlings inside? The goal is to have them ready to go outside once the weather is nice enough.

1. Start by finding a container to grow your seedlings in. You can try using yogurt cups or milk cartons. Make sure to poke holes in the bottom to allow the water to drain. Don't make the holes too big or the soil will fall out. There are also seed planting trays that are made especially for seed starting.
2. Next, fill your container with soil. Use a seed-starting potting mix. Do not reuse old soil or soil from outside! Jiffy pellets are also great for starting your seeds.
3. Add your seeds! Remember to look at the package first to see how deep they need to be buried under the soil.
4. Mist the soil with a mister or a small watering can. As the seeds grow you should continue to keep the soil moist, but not soggy. If you keep the soil too wet the seeds will rot.
5. Find a sunny spot to put your seeds in. Your seedlings will need a lot of sunlight to grow. Rotate them to keep them from leaning into the sun.

Make sure to consistently mist your seedlings. They will be transplanted after the last frost in May. Keep an eye out for our next update where we will learn to plant leafy greens such as kale!

