

Extension Tip of the Week January 26, 2009

Starting Garden Transplants at Home

Starting annual flowers and vegetables at home can be fun and offers several advantages. Many gardeners prefer to grow their own seedlings so they can select specific cultivars (varieties) and control seedling growth. By starting seedlings indoors, gardeners can enjoy vegetables and blooming annuals earlier in the growing season. Transplanting also reduces some of the hazards (birds, insects, rains, and weed competition) that can occur when seeds are sown directly in the garden. Success with growing transplants requires the following:

- Quality seeds
- Well-drained, disease-free growing medium
- Warm, moist conditions for seed germination
- Adequate light for seedling growth
- A period of plant adjustment to outdoor conditions

More detailed information can be found in the ISU Extension Publication PM 874:

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM874.pdf>