

listed on the packet including the seed depth and the spacing for row planting. Plant spacing indicates how closely to plant each vegetable so that they are not crowded at maturity. Row spacing is a term used in conventional farming rather than backyard gardening, however the term “row spacing” is still kept on the packet. In conventional farming, farmers plant in rows. They will hill up soil in rows and plant the seed on the top of the flattened out hill of soil. Depending on what is planted, the rows will be closer or farther apart. Rows are irrigated thru the furrows where water is delivered to the entire field. A difference between large field farmers and backyard farmers is that backyard farmers don’t plant in rows. We usually use intensive methods of planting because our space is limited.

- 3) You will need to look at the Summer Characteristics Handout found on our website to figure out which veggies you want to grow and the timing of those vegetables in the soil. You will also need to know the dimensions of your planting space. Ask yourself, what do I want to eat? Answer that question and you will know what to grow. The Characteristics handout lists approximate spacing of plants (the seed packet also lists spacing and should be the first place where you go to find spacing information). Using the information on the chart, figure out how many of any one vegetable you will be able to fit into your space and figure out how much of any vegetable you want to eat. Once you figure out what, where and how much to grow, you can begin direct seeding.
- 4) Prepare your markers with the veggie name and date of sowing on the marker to mark where and when you have sown your veggies.
- 5) Begin by making a little furrow where you are going to seed your vegetables. You can do this with your finger or a trowel. If the seeds you are planting are very, very small like broccoli, cauliflower, mustard, cabbage, etc. Do not make a furrow for these.
- 6) Check on the seed packet for the spacing required for the seed you are planting. Try to seed the space required by half. For example, if you are seeding a vegetable that requires 3” of space, try to dispense a seed every 1 ½ inches. This will give you a back-up plant in case of low germination.

- a. Germination rates for seeds are about 90% for fresh seeds. A seed is fresh if the label is marked for the year you are seeding. Seeds will remain good for a few years if kept in a cool dry place out of the sun – like a closet. Seeds vary in “shelf-life” averaging 3-4 years. The older your seeds get the more seeds you will need to seed during seeding to make sure that you plant enough to get good germination.
- 7) If you are seeding very tiny seed, you will use a different method which is to pinch the seed between your fingers, then as you pass over the area where you want you vegies to grow, rubbing your fingers back and forth to dispense the seed.
- 8) Gently cover your seeds with soil.
 - a. THE RULE FOR SEED DEPTH IS AS FOLLOWS: PLANTING DEPTH IS 2X THE WIDTH OF THE SEED.Knowing the rule above, do not cover your seed with soil more than twice the depth of its width. For very, very tiny seed, just barely cover the seed with soil. Then gently press down on the soil to ensure that the seed makes contact with the soil. DO NOT over-compress!
- 9) Using a watering can with a rose tip is the best way to water seedlings. It mimics rain and is very gentle on your seeds. The next way to water your seedlings is to use a spray nozzle with a shower setting. Never use a jet spray on your seeds. You will wind up displacing them in the soil or they just might wash away. Water in well. Keep the seeds moist thru germination.
- 10) Once the seedlings pop up in a few days, wait until they get their first true leaves to begin thinning them out to the required spacing on the seed packet.