

SEATTLE TILTH'S Hot Tips: Planting Veggies



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tilth**

Harden-off all plants before you plant them! Help ease the transition from the greenhouse to your garden and prevent transplant shock which will slow growth. Here's how:

- Put your plants outside during the day. If practical, you can increase the time outside by a few hours each day for about a week.
- At night, bring your plants into your garage, breezeway or other cool, protected place.
- You can also use a cloche or cold frame to help with the transition.
- After 1-2 weeks, your plants can be transplanted into your garden, unless they are hot-season crops (see below).

Hot season crops such as tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, squash, cucumbers, corn and basil should not go into the ground until warmer temperatures arrive, usually early June. Keep plants inside by a sunny window, away from heat registers. If you want to plant hot season crops before nighttime air temperatures reach 50+ degrees F consistently, then be sure to use special protection such as a cold frame, cloche, or Wall-o-Water. Don't forget to harden-off your hot season crops before you transplant them!

Small yard? You can **grow vegetables in containers!** Containers are useful for growing herbs, edible flowers, greens and even hot season crops like eggplants or determinate tomatoes. If you choose to garden in containers, use a premium potting soil which provides good drainage (not garden soil, topsoil or straight compost).

Remember to **water your garden early in the morning** to conserve water loss and give the soil a chance to warm up during the day. Water at the base of your plants to safeguard against disease.

Looking for **more edible gardening advice?** Consult Seattle Tilth's "Maritime NW Garden Guide," our new book "Your Farm in the City," contact the Garden Hotline at (206) 633-0224 or help@gardenhotline.org, or take one of our classes.

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