

## IT'S GARDENING TIME

By  
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March and April are the first real gardening months and never before has gardening been so important for the average family to save money and help save food. Everyone is urged to plant a **FREEDOM GARDEN** this year.

Plan your garden on paper if you haven't already done so. Plant the hardy things like radishes, onions, lettuce, spinach and beets *now*, wait until *later* for beans, corn, tomatoes—the tender crops. Take the plan with you to the garden. It helps you to make notes of successes and failure, harvesting dates, quantities, etc. Next year will be easier when planning time comes if you keep this data, even if merely scribbled on the back of an empty seed packet.

Plant only as big a garden as you (or your family) have time to take care of well. 1,500 square feet is a good size for a home vegetable garden. A larger space is needed for corn, potatoes and the vine crops.

Never grow root crops in newly manured soil—grow leaf crops there. Better to rotate root crops and cabbage to prevent soil from becoming polluted with disease and insects. Never let chemical fertilizers of any kind come in direct contact with seeds or roots. Distribute them in rows to the side and lower than the seeds.

In planting very small seeds like lettuce, allow about 15 - 20 seeds to the inch. Seeds somewhat larger, like beets, plant about 12 to the foot. Still

larger seeds like peas, 8 - 12 to the foot. Beans, 4 - 6 to the foot.

When soil is in right condition and already prepared for planting, mark off your rows all the way down your garden about 15 or 18 inches apart. For crops needing a lot of room, use two spaces. In planting very small seeds like lettuce, make a shallow furrow (called drill) with the handle end of a rake or hoe. Make rows straight for easy cultivation. Cover seeds with back of rake or hoe. Firm with feet lightly or with hands. Back of rake may also be used.

For beans or peas, which are larger seeds, make trench with corner of hoe. See seed packets for depth to plant seeds (usually a few times their diameter). Care in planting pays dividends in crops later on. Write on a stake at end of row what you have planted: the variety and date of planting. This information will be useful later and you will know the exact location of your row. Memories are short!

Pull weeds as soon as they appear between your plants. This is even more important than removing weeds from between rows, though the latter is also necessary. When young plants appear, rake or hoe around gently near them to break up surface crust. This keeps down weeds and makes it easier for rain to penetrate. Do not hoe or cultivate deeply near the rows at any time for fear of injuring the roots of your plants. Light hoeing is also easier on the back! Thin most seedlings when they are about 1 to 2 inches high. Beets, turnips, and lettuce may be left until 3 to 4 inches high, and the thinnings used as greens.

Don't waste space on long rows of radishes. They can be tucked in at odd places or sown in the same row with carrots, lettuce or beets. They are harvested in a few weeks leaving room for the other crops to spread out. Or plant half a short

