

It Takes Moisture As Well As Right Temperature For Seed

Are your flower seeds sprouting nicely? Chances are they are coming up promptly and thickly (maybe too thickly), because in general spring is the season when conditions are best for making seeds sprout.

But, if a couple of weeks have passed since you planted the seeds and nothing has happened then you might begin to consider the reasons for a slow start.

It takes a certain combination of conditions to make seeds begin to grow. The first is moisture. Without enough moisture in the soil to stimulate growth activity the seed will simply lie dormant until such moisture is available. So, if you have planted in fairly dry soil, or if the soil has dried out rapidly through wind and heat since you sowed your garden, it may be that you'll have to wait for a rain or supply moisture by sprinkling the garden in order to

get things started.

The next factor in beginning growth is the temperature. Seeds can be soaking wet in the ground for months during the winter, but they won't begin to sprout until the temperature rises to a certain point. Some kinds of seeds sprout at a fairly low temperature (larkspur, for instance), while others require much more heat before they go into action (for instance, celosia). If you've had pretty cool weather, then, you might find some kinds up and growing well, while others aren't showing any sign of life. The thing to do then, is to be patient. When it warms up they'll burst into activity. The only danger here lies in the possibility that very long exposure to cold, wet soil might permit attacks of fungus diseases which rot the seed before it begins to grow. For this reason, it is desirable to wait until the soil is warm before you plant such things as zinnias, marigolds or sunflowers.

One other reason for certain rows being up and growing while others show no signs of life lies in the fact that some seeds just naturally sprout quickly while others take a long time. For instance you might, under the very best of conditions, see zinnia seedlings starting through the surface in only three or four days, and germination could be complete in less than a week. On the other hand, seed of the perennial sweet pea (*Lathyrus latifolius*) is invariably

slow to start, with the fastest germination seldom accomplished in less than a month.

So, before you decide the seeds you planted aren't going to grow consider whether there has been steady and ample moisture in the soil, whether the temperature has been high enough to stimulate germination, and whether this might not be one of the kinds which take a little longer to start than others. Replanting all too frequently results in double the number of plants you need, both sowings coming up when sprouting conditions are favorable.

GARDEN TIME

By M. E. GARDNER
N. C. State College

If you have read this column from week to week, I hope that you have a speaking acquaintance with the more common bugs which harass you and your plants. I feel rather sure, that some puzzlers still come to your attention which give you trouble.

Soft bodied insects such as caterpillars, maggots and grubs, should be placed in small bottles filled with 70 per cent alcohol, rubbing alcohol or shaving lotion. Insects in or on plants may be placed in moistureproof containers with enough of the plant material to prevent shaking. Insects in wood and soil should be sent in a small quantity of the material on which they have been feeding. Again, do not leave empty space in the containers. Dead insects may be sent in either a preservative or in crumpled tissue in a box.

You can send either to me or to the Extension Entomologist, Gardner Hall, State College Station, Raleigh, N. C.


Aphids (plant lice) have hatched and I found a generous number on my spireas. These pests attack so many crops that you want to keep a close watch. They are sucking insects so your spray must come in contact with their bodies to be effective. Spray thoroughly, especially on the undersides of the leaves. Use Lindane or Malathion according to directions.

Stake and mulch your tomatoes. Keep your vegetables free of weeds and sidedress quick maturing crops such as lettuce with nitrate of soda. Mow the lawn regularly and not too close. Topdress with nitrogen as needed to promote good growth and color.

Much emphasis is being placed on the slogan, "Grow a Square Meal Around the Home." You cannot afford not to do this if you have the land available. Production of your home food supply will not only result in much personal satisfaction but will save you money and assure your family of a well balanced diet. Ask your county agent for a home garden manual and recommendations for insect and disease control.

Buds AND Blossoms

By MAMIE MILLER



"Flowers may beckon toward us, but they speak toward Heaven and God."—Henry Ward Beecher.

Enjoy the beautiful vines around us. Start new ones. They may be used for blossoms of beauty, or just screening.

We have Dutchman pipe, silver fleece vine, hydrangea vine, cucumber vine, and clematis, cathedral-bells, scarlet-runner beans and our colorful morning-glory.

The woods are now colorful with wild flowers. In this locality we find alum root, blood root, blue bonnet, columbine, pasque flower, Solomon seal, tooth-wort, gentian, Jack-in-the-pulpit, lady-slippers, and Jacob's ladder.

Seek to identify each. Most of the wild flowers have medical uses.

See that your garden is well lighted. A garden is too pretty not to enjoy at night. Use a colorful bulb to keep insects away. Many hours may be spent eating out in the garden, and much time may be saved. Many friendships can be shared under such pleasant surroundings.

Our outdoor fireplace may be made from old drums or we can have a portable outdoor grill.

While the weeds and grasses grow, cut and save all the clippings to put in a compost pile. Make your compost pile in shade, and you won't have to water it so often.

Clip the buds of the chrysanthemums, so they will be larger next Fall. Sow a new crop of zinnia and marigold seed. This will give you a continuous crop of flowers. Place more fertilizer around flowers, and this will produce more blossoms.

"He was as the flower of roses in the Spring of the year, as lilies by the rivers of waters; and as the branches of the frankincense tree in the time of Summer."—Ecclesiastes 50:8.

THE HARD WAY

Misfortune may be a good teacher, but a man is fortunate if he can learn his lesson without her.

W. C. CHADWICK

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