

The time is here to start transplants

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Some vegetables and many flower transplants can be started now. But an investment in equipment and material is needed to produce worthwhile results, according to Charles A. McClurg, Extension vegetable specialist and associate professor of horticulture at the University of Maryland in College Park. McClurg notes that

healthy, good quality transplants require heating cables and fluorescent lights to keep the seedlings from becoming tall and spindly; and soilless growing mix and fungicide to help prevent damping off disease. It is important not to sow seeds too early, or your transplants may get oversized before they can be set outdoors. Assuming a target date of April 1 for setting out cool-season crops, seed for

broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower and head lettuce should be started indoors by mid-February. Warm-season crops like tomatoes, eggplants and green peppers can be started about mid-March. They should not be set outdoors until early May in most parts of Maryland. Cucurbits and other garden vine crops should be started indoors about mid-

April. This group includes cucumber, cantaloupe, pumpkin, squash and watermelon. Many annual flower seeds can be started indoors anytime between mid-February and late March. More information is contained in two Home Horticulture mimeo sheets available free from Maryland county extension offices. Titles are "Growing Vegetable Transplants" (HE 109-75) and "Hardening of Vegetable Transplants" (HE 108-75).

Whether you decide to buy vegetable seeds now or transplants later, you can also help to assure success by checking the 1980-81 approved listing of the Extension Service at the

University of Maryland. It is titled Vegetable Cutivars for Maryland Home Gardens (Leaflet 15).

Like the mimeo sheets, it is available free in limited supply from county Extension offices throughout the state.

1980 vegetable guide available to growers

NEWARK, Del. — The 1980 edition of "Commercial Vegetable Production Recommendations" is now available to Delaware farmers.

This production guide was prepared by the Extension Service and is intended for the commercial vegetable grower who has to make numerous managerial decisions over the growing season.

Although final decisions as to variety, pesticide application, equipment, fertilizer and cultural practices used are up to individual farmers, recommendations contained in the bulletin should facilitate decision-making.

These recommendations are based on research on vegetable crops at the University of Delaware, University of Maryland, Rutgers University, Virginia Truck and Ornamentals Research Station, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and the

U.S. Department of Agriculture, combined with industry and grower knowledge and experience.

The publication includes information on soil management, testing, liming and fertilizing; production of transplants; irrigation; air pollution injury; pesticide formulation and application and the means to improve pest control; detection and control of soil pests; pesticide safety; as well as specific recommendations regarding production of 37 different commercial vegetable crops.

These include all the major vegetables grown in Delaware, plus many specialty items.

The publication is not for use by home gardeners. Commercial vegetable growers interested in obtaining a copy should contact their county agent in Newark, 302/738-2506; Dover, 302/678-4675; or Georgetown, 302/856-5250.

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