



SET THE TABLE FROM YOUR GARDEN

February 2012: Starting From Seed



Growing from seed is not complicated and it's wonderfully satisfying to experience the whole growing cycle as you watch baby seedlings grow into sturdy plants. Visit our [Growing and Planting Help](#) for articles and how-to guides. Here's a selection of resources to help you start seeds early indoors this season:

[How to Start Your Seeds Indoors](#) - article

[Starting Tomatoes From Seed](#) - article

[Starting Tomatoes Indoors and Transplanting Seedlings](#)
guide with photos

[Starting Seeds in Containers to Transplant into Your Garden](#)
guide with photos

[Growing Sweet Peas - Starting Seeds Early and Transplanting](#)
guide with photos



February in the Trial Garden

by Lindsay Del Carlo, Trial Garden Manager



Renee has met with many of our seed growers over the winter, so I have been busy collecting the seed samples we are planning to trial for the upcoming 2012 spring and summer seasons. We will be growing and eating lots of new veggies, including broccoli, cauliflower, mini filet bush beans, German pointed cabbage, Swiss chard in great new shades, edible landscaping kale, red and green lettuces, taller snap peas, radishes in various colors, summer squash and winter squash (including pink and blue winter squashes from a new breeder) and an array of heirloom tomatoes in different colors and shapes.

The herb garden will have new flavors of basil, oregano and thyme. I'm looking forward to planting many flowers, include extra fragrant Dianthus from Japan, English trailing lobelia, bright nasturtiums, and several shades of beautiful blue container Salvia patens. We will be growing out zinnias in many different shades from a new Dutch producer - zinnias are one of our favorite summer flowers. As usual, we are looking for exciting new varieties, improvements on selections, and the best of old-fashioned heirlooms.

There will also be a good collection of varieties that are in their second or third-year of evaluation, so we can really get to know them before we offer them to our customers. One favorite is a wonderful mix of different colored echinacea (a.k.a. coneflowers). This mix has been growing and blooming for several seasons now and the flowers just get fuller and prettier every summer. The mix includes large white, purple, pink, deep peach and yellow blossoms, and they are beautiful both in the beds and as cut flowers.



Another favorite variety is Nasturtium "Hawaiian Mix", a custom blend of bright tropical colors that really light up the garden. In addition to their impressive colors, the flowers sit nicely on top of the foliage, a trait that we look closely for in nasturtiums. 2012 will be the final year of trials for these mixes in both our California and Vermont trial gardens. We plan to introduce both of them in 2013.



Recipe of the Month

Basque Chard, Lamb and Bean Stew

A wonderfully hearty but not too rich dish that shows off the traditional ingredients of Basque cooking.



On Renee's Blog

How Sweet It Is: Lindsay's Adventures in Beekeeping

Many gardeners have expressed interest in keeping bees, so I've asked our Trial Garden Manager, Lindsay Del Carlo, to share her recent backyard beekeeping experiences. I've been the happy beneficiary – the honey from her bees is absolutely delicious! [Click Here to view](#)



Queen Bee Cage



Lindsay's Yummy Honey

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Best Wishes,
Renee Shepherd



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