

GROW TO EAT





“TO PLANT A GARDEN IS TO BELIEVE IN TOMORROW”

Gardens root us to nature, to each other and to happiness. Plants are at the heart of any garden, and people nurture them wherever they are: rooftops, yards, community gardens, allotments, balconies, window boxes or living rooms. For many, plants and gardens provide their main connection with the natural world, offering respite from the stresses of a complicated world, and they bring pleasure and great joy. If you have plants, you are a gardener.

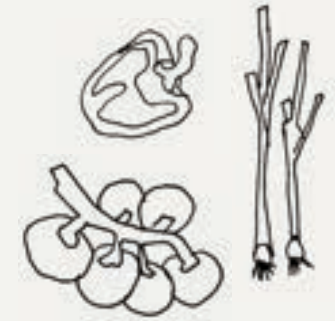
Grow to Eat is a health and wellbeing programme run by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS). In 2023, the RHS partnered with North East Health Improvement Team, Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership and Cranhill Development Trust to deliver workshops that allowed local residents from Cranhill to develop their horticultural skills. They applied these techniques as they planted, grew and harvested produce from small productive plots at Cranhill Community Gardens.

This publication offers a snapshot of the Grow to Eat programme and features tips and advice on how to grow your own produce as well as some tasty recipes developed by the cooking group at Cranhill Development Trust. The photographs throughout the publication feature the wonderful community of growers at Cranhill Community Garden.



SUMMER PASTA SALAD

WITH FILLINGS OF YOUR CHOICE



SERVINGS: 2

PREPPING TIME: 10 MIN

COOKING TIME: 10 MINS

INGREDIENTS

100g dried pasta and any of the following fillings:

1/4 pepper
1/4 courgette
4 cherry tomatoes
Handful of olives
Spring onion
Chunk of parmesan
Few basil leaves
Few mint leaves
Chicken fillet

For the dressing

Olive oil
Lemon
Mustard
Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Cook pasta - bring a pot of salted water to the boil. Add pasta and cook for 6 minutes or until you are happy with the firmness
2. Drain and set aside

Using chicken?

1. Slice into strips or cubes
2. Place frying pan over a medium heat and add some oil
3. Add chicken to pan and allow to fry, stirring often
4. Chicken is cooked when white all the way through - no pink - check after 8 minutes
5. While cooking, clean your chopping board, knife and workspace then prep your veg

Going veggie?

1. Thinly slice pepper and courgettes
2. Chop spring onion, basil and mint
3. Half the cherry tomatoes

Toss everything together in the frying pan and stir to combine. Grate in your parmesan and stir through. Make your dressing, stir through and serve up.





POTATO AND LEEK SOUP

SERVED WITH SANDWICHES



SERVINGS: 2

PREPPING TIME: 15 MIN

COOKING TIME: 30-40 MINS

INGREDIENTS

1/2 onion
2 vegetable stock cubes
250g potatoes
1/2 leek
75ml double cream
1 tablespoon of oil
500ml boiling water
salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Peel onion, dice onion, leek and potatoes
2. Place pot over a medium heat and add oil
3. Add onion, leek and potatoes and leave to cook for 5 minutes
4. Prepare your stock - stir stock cubes into a pint of boiling water (in jug or big mug)
5. Add to soup pot and bring to the boil
6. Add salt and pepper
7. Reduce heat and leave to cook
8. Meanwhile, prepare your sandwiches!
9. When potatoes are soft, either whizz with a blender or enjoy chunky with your sandwiches.

Propagation

Plants can be propagated by seed (sexual propagation) or vegetatively (asexual propagation). Various techniques are used dependant on the type of plant, the plant material available and time of year.

Quick facts

Vegetative propagation

Compost with good drainage will give best results.

Choose healthy non flowering stems for soft wood and semi ripe cuttings.

Root cuttings cannot be used to propagate variegated plants as the new offspring plants will have plain leaves.

Possible problems

Propagation techniques should not be carried out in hot weather as cutting material may wilt and never recover. To prevent wilting ensure cut plant material is stored in plastic bags to retain moisture.

Water loss and fungal problems are the biggest problems when taking leaf and stem cuttings. Cut any leaves in half and cover the container with a plastic bag or propagator lid but remember to air the plants frequently to prevent fungal problems.

Seed propagation creates a plant that bears characteristics (features or colours) of both parents. See the Seed Sowing-Indoors and Seed Sowing-Outdoors information overleaf to learn more about these techniques.

Vegetative propagation uses part of a parent plant (leaf, stem or root) to produce offspring plants which are identical to the parent plant, also known as clones. Depending on the technique and plants chosen propagation can be carried out nearly all year round but it may take weeks or months for cuttings to develop roots and grow into new plants.

Types of vegetative propagation:

- » Leaf cuttings can be taken from the leaves of many house plants
- » Stem cuttings, taken as softwood, semi ripe/greenwood or hardwood
- » Root cuttings taken from some herbaceous perennial plants
- » Division of established plants
- » Layering, bulb scaling and grafting are advanced techniques not covered by this guide

Easy plants to propagate from:

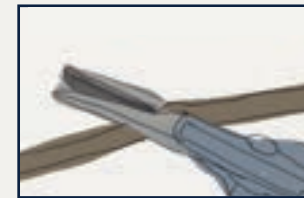
Leaf cuttings – African violet, Streptocarpus or Begonia
Soft wood cuttings – Mint, Pelargonium, Buxus, Fuchsia, Hydrangea, Penstemon and Sage
Semi ripe cuttings – Sage, Rosemary, Cotoneaster, Pieris and hebe
Hard wood cuttings – Dogwood, currants and Hedera
Division – Chives, Marjoram, Ajuga and clump forming grasses
Root cuttings – Perennial poppies, Primula, Acanthus, Anemone and Robinia



Leaf Cuttings whole or part leaves are used to create new plants at any time of year. Only a small number of plant varieties can be used for this method, many of which are houseplants.



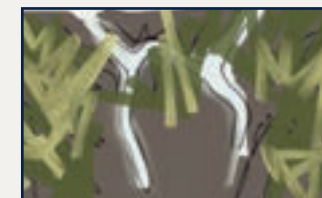
Soft wood and semi-ripe cuttings easy way to propagate woody herbs, shrubs and most evergreen plants. This type of stem cutting should be taken in late summer until mid-autumn.



Hardwood Cuttings taken in late autumn from hardy plants with woody stems once they have dropped their leaves. Cuttings can be placed outdoors in containers or directly in the ground.



Root cuttings taken in late autumn or winter from plants which naturally produce suckers.



Division of summer-flowering plants is carried out in spring or autumn. Spring is more suited to plants that are a little tender or which do not like a wet winter. Spring-flowering plants, such as irises, are best divided in summer after flowering when they readily produce new roots.





STOVETOP FRITTATA



SERVINGS: 4

PREPPING TIME: 10 MIN

COOKING TIME: 25 MINS

INGREDIENTS

6 eggs
1.5 tablespoons of milk
1 teaspoon of salt
1 cup of grated cheese
2-3 cups of chopped
veggies of your choice
1 tablespoon of olive oil
3-4 potatoes
A handful of soft herbs
from the garden

DIRECTIONS

1. Cut potatoes into bite-sized pieces enough to fill a layer of your frying pan
2. Par-boil potatoes: fill a pan with hot water and salt. Add potatoes and cook for 5 minutes. Drain and set aside
3. Chop any veggies you are using - these can be fried off before building out frittata
4. While veggies are cooking, crack 6 eggs in a bowl and add grated cheese, salt and pepper. Stir to combine
5. Add cooked potatoes to the pan and pour in the mixture
6. Leave to cook over a medium heat - don't stir. If feeling brave, flip to brown both sides
7. Frittata is cooked when you can pierce with a knife and the knife comes out clean. Slice and serve with salad from the garden.

Seed Sowing Outdoors

Seed sowing outdoors is also known as direct seed sowing and is used for a wide range of seeds.

Good ground preparation is essential for success with outdoor sowings as any large lumps or stones in the soil could prevent a seed from successfully developing.

Seeds need a soil temperature of 7 degrees Celsius to germinate so sowing outdoors is not suitable during the winter months.

Quick facts

Check seed packets for details of when to sow and planting depth.

Consider using a dibber to plant large seeds rather than digging a trench.

Sowing in rows makes it easier to see which seedlings are the crop and which are weeds.

It is good practice to write labels before sowing seeds especially if sowing more than one crop. Remember to include the name and date.

Possible problems

Heavy rain can cause a cap of hard compacted soil which seedlings can not emerge through. Prevent this by covering seeds with potting media such as peat-free multipurpose compost.

Pigeons and other birds can dig up seeds and eat seedlings. Cover sowings with netting or fleece to prevent this from happening.

Slugs and snails will eat young seedlings, destroying crops. There are numerous controls available including slug pellets, beer traps, barriers and nematodes.

Seedling Aftercare

All seeds need water to begin the germination process.

For small seeds water the ground before rather than after sowing to avoid the seed being disturbed or washed away.

All other seeds should be watered using a watering can with rose. As seedlings emerge they need light and a continual supply of water, but take care not to overwater as this can damage roots.

Seedlings need the correct spacing so each seedling can develop fully and produce a crop or display of flowers.

Thinning is carried out once seedlings are large enough to handle. Excess seedlings are removed by hand, reducing competition for light, water and space.

Sowing depth This image illustrates a range of sowing depths- generally small seeds are sown on the surface whilst larger seeds are sown at varying depths. Check seed packets for the correct depth for your crop.



Outdoor Sowing Techniques

Sowing techniques and depths are dependant on the size of seed to be sown – check seed packets for specific information on the crop you wish to sow.

Sowing in rows:

1. Mark out the row with canes or string.

Make a drill with a hoe or back of a rake to the correct depth.

If sowing small seeds water the row with a watering can before sowing seeds.



2. Sprinkle seeds along the drill or place at appropriate spacings for the crop.
3. Use a rake to cover the seeds with soil and fill in the drill. Label the row and gently water using a watering can with rose.



Sowing in stations:

Medium or large seed can be sown using a dibber. Mark out the row and make holes with a dibber at the correct spacing and to the correct depth. Drop a seed in to each hole and cover with soil.

Label the row and gently water using a watering can with rose.







BROCCOLI PESTO PASTA



SERVINGS: 2

PREPPING TIME: 15 MIN

COOKING TIME: 30 MINS

INGREDIENTS

Small broccoli
Fresh peas from the garden
Pasta - any shape
Olive oil

For the pesto

Handful of pine nuts
Handful of fresh basil leaves
50 grams of parmesan
2 garlic cloves
150ml olive oil
Lemon

DIRECTIONS

Prep the pasta

1. Prepare the pasta - add boiling water and salt to a pan over a medium heat
2. Add pasta and cook for 5 mins
3. Slice and add broccoli to the pan. Once pasta is cooked to your firmness, drain and set aside

Prep the pesto

1. Using a frying pan, lightly toast your pine nuts
2. Place basil, pine nuts, parmesan and garlic in a food processor. Add a squeeze of lemon and blitz
3. Whizz until smooth - add olive oil if too dry

Cooking

1. Add broccoli, peas, pasta and a few tablespoons of pesto to the frying pan and combine



Seed Sowing Indoors

Sowing seeds indoors is carried out for a number of reasons:

- » Plants which are attractive to slugs and snails can be grown indoors or under cover until they are of a reasonable size before planting out.
- » Tender plants can be started indoors so they are ready for transplanting once the frosts have finished.
- » Difficult to germinate seeds can be provided with optimal conditions.
- » If space is at a premium seeds can be started off indoors or under cover ready to transplant into the garden as space becomes available.

Quick facts

- » **Seeds sown indoors into growing media rather than garden soil reduces the weed, pest and disease problems.**
- » **Always water sowings with tap water to minimise the risk of the fungal disease 'damping off' which can kill seedlings.**
- » **Don't let seedlings become too leggy (caused by low light levels) a seedling height of 2-4cm is ideal.**
- » **It is good practice to write labels before sowing seeds especially if sowing more than one crop. Remember to include the name and date.**

Possible problems

Slugs and snails

These prolific pests can munch their way through pots of young seedlings. They can get into greenhouses, cold frames and polytunnels. There are numerous controls available including slug pellets, beer traps, barriers and nematodes.

Mice

Will not only eat emerging seedlings but also dig up and eat seeds of crops like peas before they emerge. There are various traps and baits.

Damping off

This fungal disease is more likely to occur in dense indoor sowings of seedlings. To avoid: sow thinly, water with tap water and use clean pots.



There are a wide range of composts available to buy for seed sowing or you can mix your own growing media (see information overleaf).

Seed compost (e.g. John Innes No.1)

Low in nutrients, free draining and fine texture.

Beneficial for germinating smaller seeds.

Multi-purpose compost Has a medium texture and some nutrients. Suitable for seed sowing of medium/larger seeds, pricking out and potting on.

Soil-based compost (e.g. John Innes No.3) Processed loam based soil, fine tilth and high in nutrients. Generally not used for seed sowing as it is heavy and fertile so more suited for plants remaining in pots for a long time e.g. potted fruit trees.

Coir Growing media made from recycled coconut husk, low in nutrients and light to carry. Often used in growing media mixes for seed sowing but does dry out rapidly.

Peat free media Peat-free potting composts contain mixtures of organic materials (composted bark, coir, wood fibre and green compost) and inorganic materials (such as grit, sharp sand, rock wool and perlite).

Peat based compost Although widely used in the horticultural industry peat extraction from bogs and fens is not sustainable and damaging to wildlife habitats.

Perlite/vermiculite/grit/sand can be added to compost mixes to improve drainage or aid water retention.

Indoor Sowing Techniques

Sowing techniques and depths are dependant on the size of seed to be sown – check seed packets for specific information on the depth of planting and timing.



1. Mix growing media for seed sowing.

Fluff up the growing media, breaking up big lumps before overfilling your container. Tap the container twice on the bench to level the compost surface and wipe the edges to remove excess soil. You can use a presser board to consolidate and level the soil before sowing.



Small or fine seed

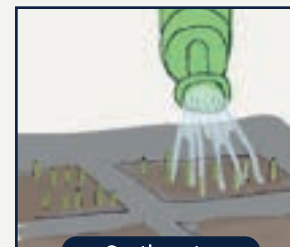


Medium seed

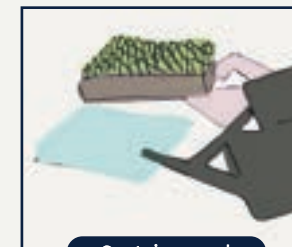


Large seed

2. **Small or fine seed:** sprinkle small seeds thinly over the surface before covering with vermiculite, perlite or sieved compost. **Medium seed:** Place medium seeds on the surface before covering with up to 1cm of vermiculite, perlite or sieved compost. **Large seed:** Place large seeds on the surface before using a dibber (or your finger) to push to them to the correct depth.



Gently water



Container soak



Examples of propagators

3. Label the crop and gently water using a watering can with rose or bottle topped waterer to avoid disturbing the seed. An alternative method of watering, especially suitable for fine seeds is to place the container into a tray of water allowing the water to soak up through the soil as required. Germination is encouraged by maintaining moist conditions which can be achieved by covering with a propagator lid. As seedlings emerge remove the lid and ensure continued warmth, light and a regular supply of water.

The Grow to Eat programme was documented by Coulson & Tennant (Saskia Coulson and Colin Tennant) who were commissioned by Street Level Photoworks (Glasgow) in partnership with Open Eye Gallery (Liverpool) through the Social Engaged Photography Network.

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