

## 13 – How do we plant our seeds?



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- Do you remember the things a garden needs? (good soil, sunshine, protection, room to grow)
- For seeds to germinate, they also need warm temperatures. If the outdoor temperature is staying warm enough, seeds can be planted outside. If it is too cool outside, plant them in small containers.
- Make a small hole in the soil with your finger that is the right planting depth for that seed (see packet). Place the seed in the hole and then cover with soil.
- Moisten the soil with water and keep it moist, but not wet, as your seeds germinate!

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**God's Word:** <sup>24</sup> I tell you the truth. A grain of wheat must fall to the ground and die. Then it makes many seeds. But if it never dies, it remains only a single seed. John 12:24

\*If we don't put the seeds in the ground, they will never grow and produce fruit or vegetables or flowers. And if we don't let our own wrong thoughts and attitudes and actions be buried with Christ, we will never grow the Fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

**Activity:** If it is too cold outside to plant seeds directly in the ground, or if you just wish to watch the germination process more closely, choose either Activity Card A or B, depending on the resources available to you.

## Activity card Ls. 13A

**Starting seeds in an egg carton:** materials needed – Styrofoam or paper-pulp egg carton, good soil, seeds, scissors, pencil

### Step 1 - Egg carton

Obtain a 12 egg styrofoam container. This is also a valuable lesson in recycling products for multiple uses and minimizing the waste we put into our garbage landfills.

### Step 2 - Preparing the carton for use

Trim the lid and flap from the base of the container. The flap can be disposed of, while the lid will be useful as a drip container placed under the soil-filled carton.

### Step 3 - Drainage holes

Using the scissors or pencil, poke a small hole into the bottom of the 12 compartments of the container. This will allow excess water to drain from the soil and roots to grow through.

### Step 4 – Fill each compartment with soil.

Fill the 12 compartments with the soil medium you have selected, and moisten the soil with a sprinkling can.

### Step 5 - Planting seed

Using a pencil (eraser end) poke a 1/2 inch depression into the moist soil. Place 1 or 2 seeds into the depression and compress soil over the seed. Sprinkle the planted seeds lightly with water. CAUTION: Do not keep seed overly wet! Once planted and sprinkled in, you can add water to the drip pan and the soil will absorb what it needs from the bottom.

### Step 6 - Plants like light to grow

Now that you have the egg carton planted with the drip pan, place it in a sunny location where the children can view it for changes and growth.

### Step 7 - Transplanting young plants

When the plants have grown for 10-21 days (depending upon the species and growth rate) they will be ready for transplanting into the soil outside, or into large containers. The first leaves on a plant (cotyledons) will drop off when the first pair of adult leaves begin to function. When your plants have two pairs of adult leaves they should be strong enough to transplant. Make sure the last threat of frost is past before you plant outside.

### Step 8 - Disposing of the twice used egg carton

The styrofoam used in making the egg carton will last many, many years if tossed into a landfill. It is made from petroleum and should be placed into a recycle bin or it could be useful again for growing plants. If you are using paper-pulp egg cartons (a paper-pulp egg carton is also useful though less durable) paper pulp can be planted directly into garden soil. Just cut the compartments apart and plant the whole compartment.

## Activity card Ls. 13B

### Making a Banana Leaf Pot

Materials – Banana leaf, pieces of tall grass, cup or small bowl, soil, seeds, water

#### Preparing the Pot:

1. Take one piece of banana leaf (approximately 8"x8") and wrap it around the bottom of a cup or small bowl.
2. Tie two pieces of tall grass (lemongrass works nicely) around the center to help keep its form. Let dry for one day.

#### Planting:

1. Remove the cup or bowl and fill the newly formed pot with soil.
2. Sprinkle lightly with water being careful not to overwater.
3. Plant one or two seeds  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep into the soil.
4. Label each pot with the seed type and date planted.
5. Place in a sunny location where the children can record observations of plant growth. Water lightly as needed. When the plants have grown for 10-21 days (depending on the variety) they will be ready for transplanting into the soil or large containers outside.