

# Information for Farmers

## Seed Storage

“Seeds are smart” - Flutterby

To ensure long term viability of your seed stock, we recommend storing your seed in a dry and dark place with cool temperatures (ideally 40-45°F). Temperature fluctuations, light, or humidity all can have detrimental impact on seed viability. Freezing or refrigerating seed stock is not advised. To ensure optimal seed vigor, we recommend using seeds within 2 years of purchase.

## Starting Seed

We highly recommend germinating seeds under ideal conditions and transplanting into the field as opposed to direct sowing. This will improve odds for germination and survival of seedlings.

As our varieties respond greatly to the sun's photoperiod, we recommend a vegetative growth period of 10-12 weeks which generally means an outdoor planting date of no earlier than June 1st.

Seeds shall be germinated 4 weeks prior to planting date. We recommend germinating seeds in well drenched light soil - ideally formulated for seedlings topped with a light layer of coarse vermiculite. Plant seeds 1/4 inch deep in soil 65-70°F. We don't recommend applying any nutrients in the first week. After 10 days some nutrients can be used to aid growth.

We recommend supplementing light on a 18/6 light cycle. In a greenhouse, we recommend shading 20-30% of shade with adequate signal lighting, such as compact fluorescents. Alternatively, overhead lights can be used. Lights should be supplemented morning and evening and depending on cloud cover. Lack of lighting can induce early flowering early, or produce tall spindly starts, reducing potential yield and viability of the starts.

Keep temperatures between 75-85°F for fastest and highest germination rates, seeds will not consistently germinate until soil temperatures reach 68°F.

We recommend germinating seeds in 50 or 72 cell starter trays. Water trays gently, soil should be moist but not wet. Over watering can cause seeds to rot,

while underwatering will prevent the seeds from sprouting. Remain vigilant in maintaining proper moisture until seeds germinate, as this is the most critical period of the entire season.

Seeds should breach in 2-10 days, under ideal environmental conditions, with a 90-95% germination rate. Keep in mind they will not begin to sprout until soil temperatures warm, so if conditions are less than ideal it can take longer and result in sporadic germination. To avoid disposal of any viable seed stock we recommend not tossing any trays for up to 4 weeks.

Water plants as necessary. Seedlings are still incredibly fragile. Misting the soil is the safest means of watering. Once seedlings have breached, temperatures can be lowered to 60-80°F. For fastest vegetative growth maintain around 60-70% relative humidity.

Do not expose young seedlings to freezing or above 100°F temperatures. As plants grow, trays may need to be watered multiple times a day to prevent roots from drying out, especially in greenhouses. Be sure to keep an eye on air flow as well as fans may cause seedlings to dry out quicker. Check them multiple times a day, especially during heat waves.

We recommend transplanting when plant roots have reached the bottom of the tray, and starts are between 6"-8" tall. You may want to foliar feed with a nitrogen fertilizer if leaves are yellowing.

It is critical to water as soon as possible post transplant.