

How to sow native seeds

For single species: Perfect for gardeners that would like to start many species separately, with the goal of transplanting seedlings into the garden or sharing with friends.

You will need:

A container or garden bed with soil
Optional: milk jug
Work gloves
Your seed mix
Popsicle stick and permanent marker for labeling

1. **Prepare a several pot with good drainage.** Fill it with moist potting mix. Optional: try planting your seeds using the “milk jug method” -- a quick google search turns up many how-tos.
2. **After Dec 1st, sprinkle the seeds of a single species on top of the soil in your pot.** Do not cover with soil. Place a thin layer of leaves on top.
3. **Label each pot with the species and date of planting.**
4. **Leave the pots outside during the winter.** Your pots should be outside at least as many days as indicated on the stratification requirements on the label. Bringing them in sooner may lead to poor germination; leaving them out longer is not a problem.
5. **Your seeds will naturally germinate in spring** (be sure to remove the leaves in late-March). Let your seedlings establish in the pot for a month or so. Transplant them into a bigger growing area when they get crowded.

TPI Tip: Many seeds have certain environmental requirements in order to germinate. They must be “stratified” according to their particular needs. Stratification requirements:
0 days = plant in fall or spring
30 days = plant in fall; must receive 30 days of cold (40F) moist conditions
60 days = plant in fall; must receive 30 days of cold (40F) moist conditions



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For seed mix: Perfect for first time gardeners: this option is best if you'd like to germinate many species together, and create a "meadow of wildflowers" in a container or garden bed

You will need:

A container or garden bed with soil
Work gloves
Your seed mix
Popsicle stick and permanent marker for labeling

1. **Prepare your planting area in Fall 2022.** This can either be bare soil in the ground, or a container filled with potting mix. Ensure that the area is free of weeds and roots. If you are not sure, we recommend starting your seeds in a container with fresh potting mix.
2. **Wait to plant your seeds until after Dec 1st.** Your seeds will germinate prematurely if the temperature is too warm.
3. **Sprinkle your seeds on top of the moistened soil.** You do not need to bury your seeds below the surface (and many seeds require light to germinate). You can cover your bed with a thin layer of leaves to prevent the seeds from blowing away or being eaten by birds.
4. **Wait until spring.** Remove the leaves in late-March. Your seeds will germinate in mid/late April.
5. **Water them well, 2-3 times per week.** Your plants may not bloom in the first

TPI Tip: starting a pollinator garden from seeds is more challenging than starting a pollinator garden from mature plants. For the greatest success, we recommend that you plan to supplement your seed mix with already established plants that you can pick up at a nursery or our summer plant sale!



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