

Frisco ^{PUBLIC} Library

Activities at Home

Winter Garden Project

Growing season is all year long in North Texas and winter is a great time to focus on cole crops which are plants like broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage and kale.

What you will need

- New soil – more than dirt, this is loose and filled with organic materials
 - Seeds
 - A sunny south facing window
 - Water in a spray bottle
 - A seed tray
 - Liquid fertilizer
1. Start by checking out the planting guides for [Growing Cole Crops](#) or [The Old Farmer's Almanac's Planting Calendar](#) or our [Vegetable Gardening Book List](#) for ideas of what to plant by which date. Plant the seeds for cole crop plants indoors 6 weeks before transplanting them outside, or early in February.
 2. Now make a garden plan. Determine the space your outdoor garden has with good drainage and the time you want to spend on your spring garden before planting those first seeds. The more plants you have the more work you will do when it comes time to transplant, water, fertilize and weed around them. These plants are transplanted when we generally get good amounts of rain in Frisco. You can plant one seed or fill the whole tray (I recommend planting at least 3 to 5 seeds because sometimes you just get a dud). This is also the time to decide what cool weather flowers you will plant nearby to attract pollinators. Pansies are a hearty cool weather flower.
 3. Place the new soil in the seed tray and moisten the soil so it is nice and damp, but not soggy and clumpy (a spray bottle works well for this). Plant the seeds according to the package directions, usually about a half inch deep. Cover with soil, spray with fertilizer and then place plastic wrap over the tray (this keeps moisture in).
 4. Place the tray in a sunny south facing window in a room that is kept between 70 – 75 degrees Fahrenheit. You should get sprouts within 8 to 14 days and should remove the plastic wrap at that time. The soil should be kept moist.
 5. In 5 weeks prepare the plants to move outside permanently by placing them in a nice sunny spot outside that is protected from the wind for several hours a day and bring them inside at night.

6. In 6 weeks transplant them to the garden keeping the appropriate space between plants. Water the hole before planting, and keep the seedling plug even with the soil you transplant it into. Apply fertilizer.
7. Keep a regular eye out for pests and remember to water. Fertilize again after 4 weeks.
8. Harvesting cole plants is approximately 55 to 100 days from transplant time, so be sure to keep the seed packet information handy and give yourself some calendar reminders for the important plant specific steps like blanching for cauliflower.

We hope you enjoy your homegrown vegetables and that you will share a photo with us!