



Directorate Communication



National Department of Agriculture

## Vegetable production: sowing seed and planting seedlings

Vegetables can be planted in 2 ways. You can either sow the seed directly in the seedbed, or you can buy and plant seedlings.

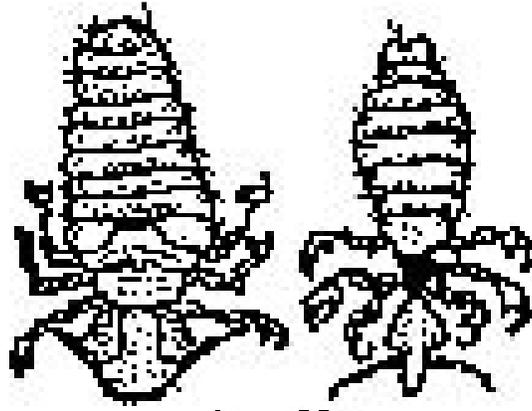
### Sowing the seed



There are 3 ways in which seed can be sown directly into the bed:

### *Plant the seeds one by one*

Plant big seeds, such as those of pumpkins, cucumbers and sweet melons, far from one another (2 handwidths). These plants are runners and need lots of space. Make a separate hole for each seed.

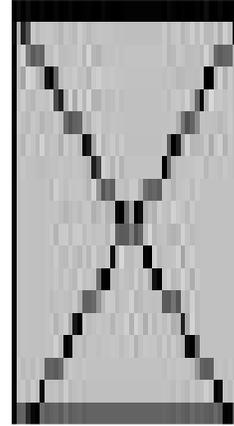


Plant the seeds 5 times deeper than their size, all of them exactly at the same depth. In sandy soil plant them a little deeper so that they do not dry out. In clayey soil plant them a little closer to the surface.

### *Plant the seeds in furrows*

Plant smaller seeds, such as those of beetroot, spinach, maize and beans, closer to one another.

Make a furrow in the soil and sow the seeds in the furrow.

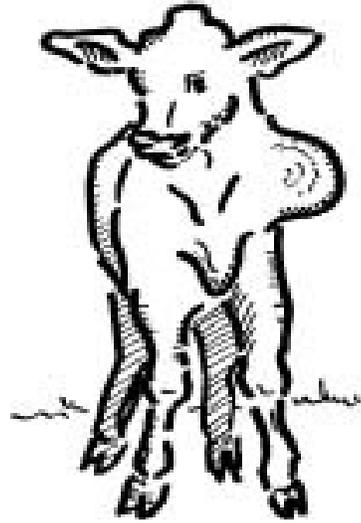


### *Scatter the seed*

Scatter very small seeds, such as those of carrots and lettuce, evenly over very fine soil. Cover it with a thin layer of soil.



After sowing the seed, water the bed immediately with a watering-can. Keep the soil moist until the shoots appear. The seedlings must be thinned out if the stand is too dense.



### *Planting seedlings*

Buy seedlings or grow them yourself.

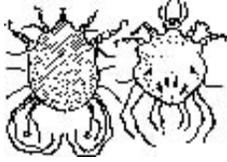
Water the plants well before transplanting them. If possible, choose a cloudy, cool day.



On warm, sunny days seedlings should be transplanted late in the afternoon so that they can recover overnight.

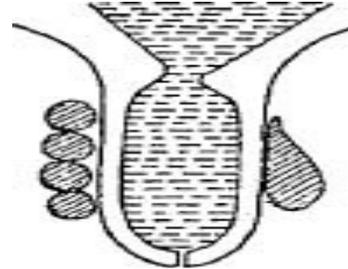
Make a hole in the soil deep enough so that the plant roots fit easily into it. Plant the seedling without damaging the roots.





Press the soil firmly but carefully down around the plant and cover the soil with a mulch such as straw, grass or leaves to keep it moist. Do not cover the plants. (Read the Info Pak *Vegetable production: mulching*).

Water the plants thoroughly after they have been planted.



For further information contact the ARC-Roodeplaat  
Vegetable and Ornamental Plant Institute  
Tel (012) 841 9611 or your nearest extension officer

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Compiled by Directorate Communication, National Department of Agriculture  
in cooperation with the ARC-Roodeplaat Vegetable and Ornamental Plant Institute

Printed and published by the National Department of Agriculture  
and obtainable from Resource Centre, Directorate Communication  
Private Bag X144, Pretoria, 0001 South Africa



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