



Kane County Master Gardeners

Microgreens – year-round edible greens to grow at home

Seed Selection

- Fast and easy choices: arugula, kale, radish, broccoli, mustard, broccoli raab, bok choy, Asian greens, and cress
- Slower to germinate choices: amaranth, beet, nasturtium, Swiss chard, cilantro, basil, pea, sunflower, spinach, and cabbage
- To speed germination, you can soak your seed for 6 to 24 hours before planting



Seed Quantity *(approximate, varies based on seed size)*

- 3x6-inch growing container = 1 Tablespoon of large seed or 1 teaspoon of small seed
- 4x8-inch growing container = 2 Tablespoon of large seed or 2 teaspoon of small seed
- 5-inch round growing container = 1 1/3 Tablespoons of seed, 1 1/3 teaspoons small seed

Growing containers

- Recycle food containers. You'll need drainage holes.

Growing medium

- Characteristics:
 - Water retention
 - Light and friable texture
 - Sterile
- Two schools of thought with growing medium
 - Soil-less: usually comprised of peat moss, vermiculite & perlite without actual soil. Coir (coconut fiber) can be mixed in if available.
 - Potting soil: can contain chemical fertilizers/slow release or otherwise.
- Opt for the highest quality medium at lowest price point
 - Microgreens 0 to 15 days old need very little to no nutrients
 - 15 to 21 day old microgreens can benefit from a little more nutrient availability and seed spacing if first true leaves are desired. Can add:
 - Compost (finished) – add when planting
 - Leaf mold – add when planting
 - Fish emulsion (can be smelly) – can be watered through the bottom
 - Compost the used growing medium

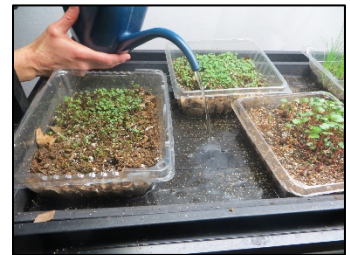


Lighting & Temperature Requirements

- Microgreens don't go through a complete life cycle so less than ideal conditions won't have a huge impact.
- Most seeds do not require light to germinate. Arugula, mustards and Asian greens will grow fine in low light or shade.
- Once germinated, expose to 8 to 12 hours of light per day via fluorescent lights, LEDs or sunny south-facing window.
- Ideal soil temperature: 73 to 75 degrees F. Ideal air temperature: 70-75 degrees F. Cooler temperatures will result in a longer growing period. Cool season plants can tolerate cooler growing conditions: peas, broccoli, kale, etc.

Moisture Requirements

- Keep seeds and top layer of growing medium moist at planting and until the seeds germinate by spraying/misting daily.
- After germination, water from the bottom to prevent mildew and fungus.
- Check moisture daily.
- Do not let soil dry out. You can test moisture levels by lifting the tray. If it's light, it is too dry.
- Do not let water puddle in bottom of trays.
- Watering needs will vary based on seed type, growing medium, season of the year.



Planting and Harvesting

1. Poke holes in bottom of a shallow produce tray/container for drainage. Fill with 1-1.5 in. of moist soil-less growing media. Tamp down the potting mix. Place the planting container in a shallow tray.
2. Sow seeds thickly and evenly on top of soil. Tamp down again to make good contact between seed & potting mix.
3. Mist to thoroughly moisten the top of the potting mix & seeds. Cover to keep warm and prevent the soil from drying out.
4. Continue to mist daily to keep top of soil moist until the seeds germinate.
5. Once the seed has germinated, move to proper light conditions.
6. Water lightly as needed from the bottom. Do not let the soil dry out.
7. When 1-3 in. tall, harvest with a scissors/knife.
8. Clean the microgreens.
9. Enjoy!

