



SPRING INTO GARDENING !

Presented by Shari Petrucci



WELCOME
APRIL

Topics

- The Garden Bed
- Thin Seedlings
- Hardening Off Plants
- Planting Guide Zone 5
- Direct Sow
- Transplanting
- Garden Recipes



Wear loose fitting long sleeve shirts and pants to protect from biting insects and sunburn



Gloves! Gloves! Gloves!

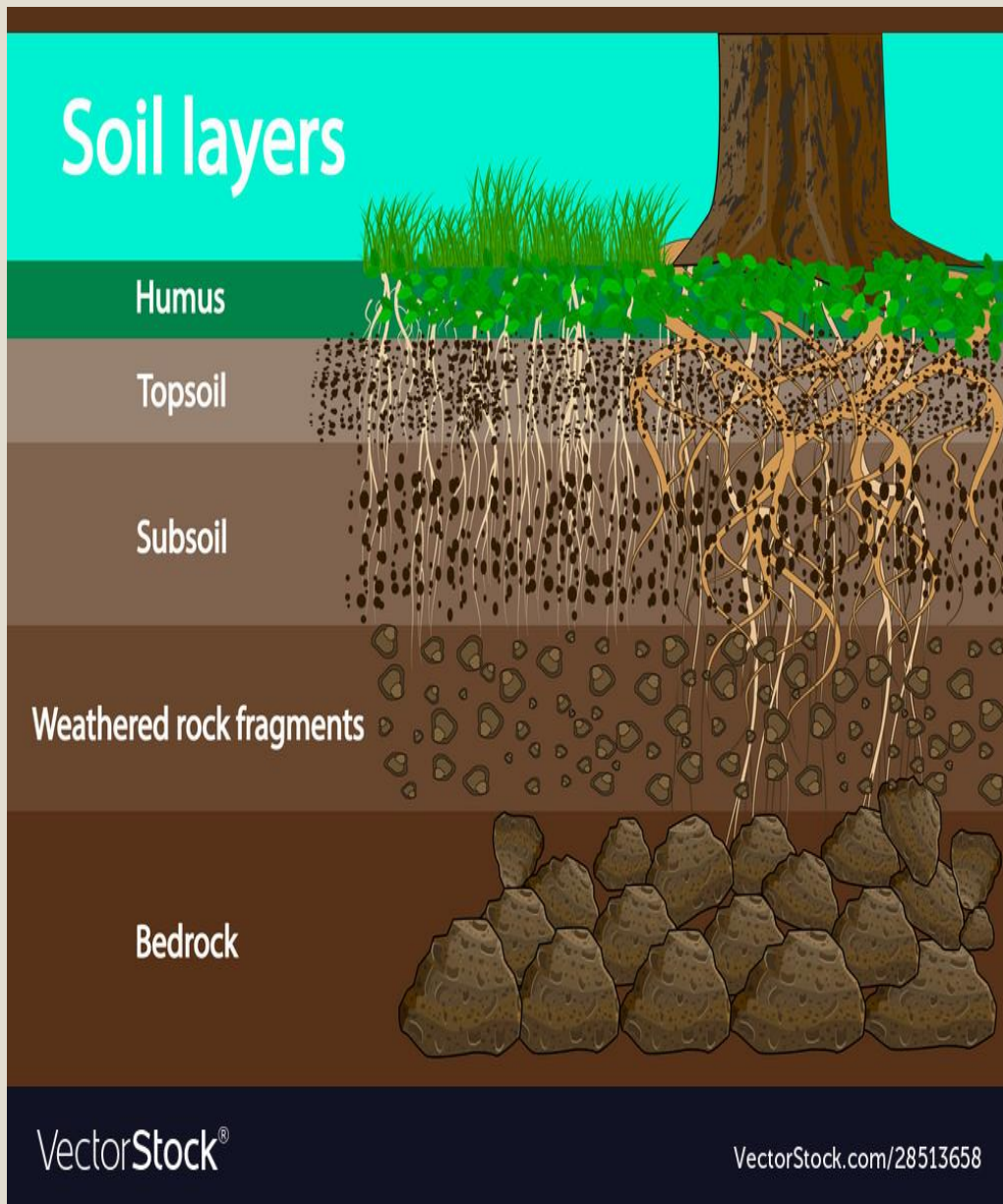
Wearing gloves is not just to keep your nails clean and hands callous free. You are protecting the skin from cuts, scrapes, and dirt that can carry harmful bacteria living in soil such as *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*.

What To Wear

Wear a hat to protect your eyes, face and scalp from damaging sunrays. Skin cancer in your later years is no joke!



Though rare in backyard gardening, be educated about pathogens that can live in soil. [Tuberculosis](#) [Leprosy](#)



Soil is a living and life-giving natural resource

By the first week of April plan on getting your garden bed finished so it may settle and cure before you introduce seeds directly or transplant your seedlings.

Turn the **Humus Layer** over with a shovel or garden fork. Let it be clumpy for at least a week. This allows for oxygen to find its way down and aerate the soil. It also disrupts the development of plant diseases, pests, and weeds. This will improve drainage from heavy periods of rain helping to prevent root rot. Let it sit for one week. If you notice the farm fields in our area, deep tilling is a common spring practice.

***Over tilling can cause serious complications to the health and viability of soil. Read More here... [The Secrets of Soil](#)**

The aim of amending the soil is to help your plants grow better. After a week of curing begin adding amendments to the soil. Compost, manure, and peat are the most common and will benefit everything you grow. Add at least 3 equal parts to cover 1 inch of the soil. Or, you can use gardening soil in bags that is already pre-mixed for you. When mixing my own, I like to put my amendments into a wheelbarrow and mix them in there, then dump them into the bed and lightly work them in.



Rake over the amendments until they are evenly distributed, breaking up the clumps and raking it smooth and level. Remove stones that magically seem to appear every spring, rising from the substrate above the bedrock. At this point, do not walk on the garden bed. Only disturb it to plant seeds or transplants.

WHAT TO PLANT WHEN

2nd through 3rd week of April
Direct Sow into the garden bed

Beets, Carrots, Green Onions, Lettuces,
Peas, Radish, Spinach, Turnips

Last week of April
Homegrown or store bought Transplants

Basil, Broccoli, Brussel Sprouts, Cabbage,
Cauliflower, Celery, Kale

- Note that all perennial herbs can be planted as soon as the soil is workable. (Mint, Sage, Thyme), I like to plant them in corners of beds or at the end of rows letting them grow large and draping.
- **Mint is invasive! Grow it in a pot!** I Have more than one pot to accommodate many varieties! My favorites are chocolate, pineapple, and spearmint.
- Plant the annual herbs in their dedicated spaces from your planting guide following the companion planting suggestions. (Basil, Parsley, Chervil, Cilantro, Dill, Marjoram, Summer Savory.

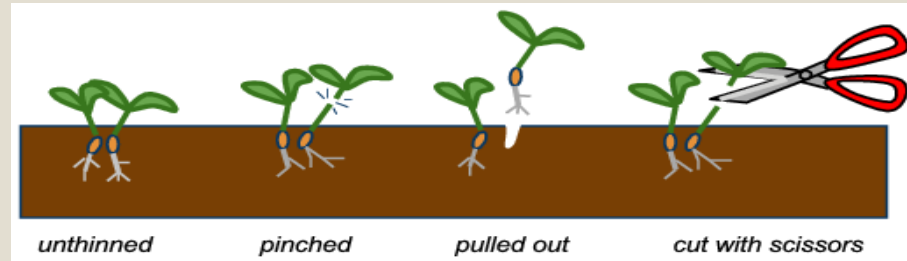
When to Plant Seedlings in the Garden

Follow the guidelines of what to plant early or late in April either by direct sow or transplanting. The guidelines for zones 5 and 6A have a 90% average last frost date late in April. By mid May there is only a 10% chance of frost. That's why within one month our climate feels like it went from winter to summer in a snap!



Transplant or Thin

After large seeded seedlings have emerged, thin to 1 or 2 per pot by pinching off or carefully pulling out extra plants. After the new seedlings from **small seed** crops have formed a couple of sets of leaves, do one of the following: (1.) transplant to individual pots or (2.) thin to make room for each seedling to have its own space, not touching its neighbor.



Hardening Off

About one week prior to planting cold crops in the garden, gradually expose seedlings to longer periods of time outdoors. At the same time, reduce watering to a minimum, but don't let the plants wilt. This process will help the plants adjust to outdoor conditions and is called "hardening off".





No matter how large or small your garden , you can grow a variety of food to suit your culinary needs. You can grow plant choices just to accommodate your pallet!

Herb Garden
Kitchen Garden
Salsa Garden
Pizza Garden
Mediterranean Garden

Top your garden with mulch to conserve water and deter weed growth. Sources of mulch are hay, leaves, and grass clippings. The mulch eventually breaks down and adds nutrients back into the soil

Mulch also helps prevent the splash up of rain from the soil. Rain transfers mud all over the plants which carries mold, mildew and bacteria to the vegetables, foliage and stems.