

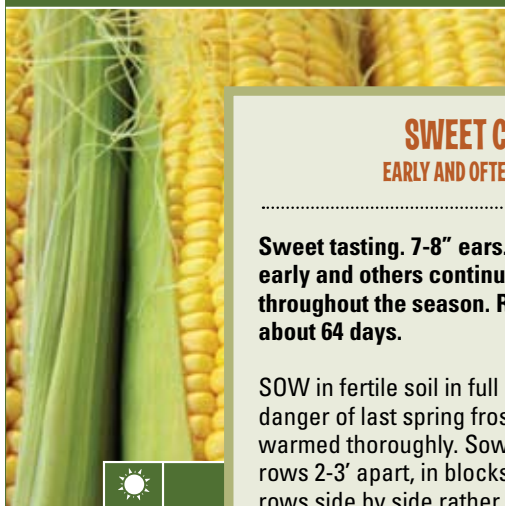
FROM SEED TO PLANT



Most garden plants start as seeds. Some vegetables – such as corn, green beans, lima beans and others – are usually planted straight into the garden. Other vegetables, however, need a period of warmth before planting, so they are started as seeds inside or in a greenhouse, then transplanted outside.

Seeds:

If you buy a packet of seeds from a garden center, carefully follow the instructions on the packet. This is an example of what you're likely to see:



SWEET CORN EARLY AND OFTEN HYBRID

Sweet tasting. 7-8" ears. Some mature early and others continue to mature throughout the season. Ready to harvest in about 64 days.

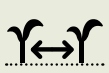
SOW in fertile soil in full sun after all danger of last spring frost and soil has warmed thoroughly. Sow 6-10" apart in rows 2-3' apart, in blocks of at least 4 rows side by side rather than in one long row. This ensures pollination and full ear development. Cover with 2" of fine soil. Seedlings emerge in 7-14 days.



Full Sun



2 in.



6-10 in.



64 days

Transplants:

While most plants come from seeds, in some cases, it's better for the beginning gardener to use "transplants" or young plants that have already germinated and have been potted individually. Good examples of transplants are tomatoes, squash, broccoli, cauliflower and peppers. These particular vegetables need very warm temperatures to grow, about 70 to 90 degrees. It's best to start them indoors, by placing the seed into warm, moist, soil and planting more seeds than necessary. Finally, you would "thin out" the growth to select and individually pot the best, most healthy transplants. That's what you will plant in your garden. Since this early



process takes time and effort, many gardeners simply buy the plant after it has germinated at a nursery or garden center.

Whether you use seeds or transplants, in Kentucky, the process normally starts in March. After 4-10 days, the seed swells and breaks apart. The roots start growing down into the soil, taking food from the soil, while the plant sprouts through the soil and reaches for the sun. This is called germination.

As a plant grows, its leaves branch out and get thicker. The plant needs good soil, water, sun and food, or nutrients, to grow. As the plant grows, it gets energy and food from the sun and the environment in a process called photosynthesis. Photosynthesis means “making things with light.”

Plants use energy from the sun to turn carbon dioxide into oxygen in the atmosphere and water into sugars and starches, which feed the plant.

In the next few weeks, the plant grows taller, more leaves branch out and thicken, and tiny flowers start to grow. These flowers will be where the actual fruit will grow.

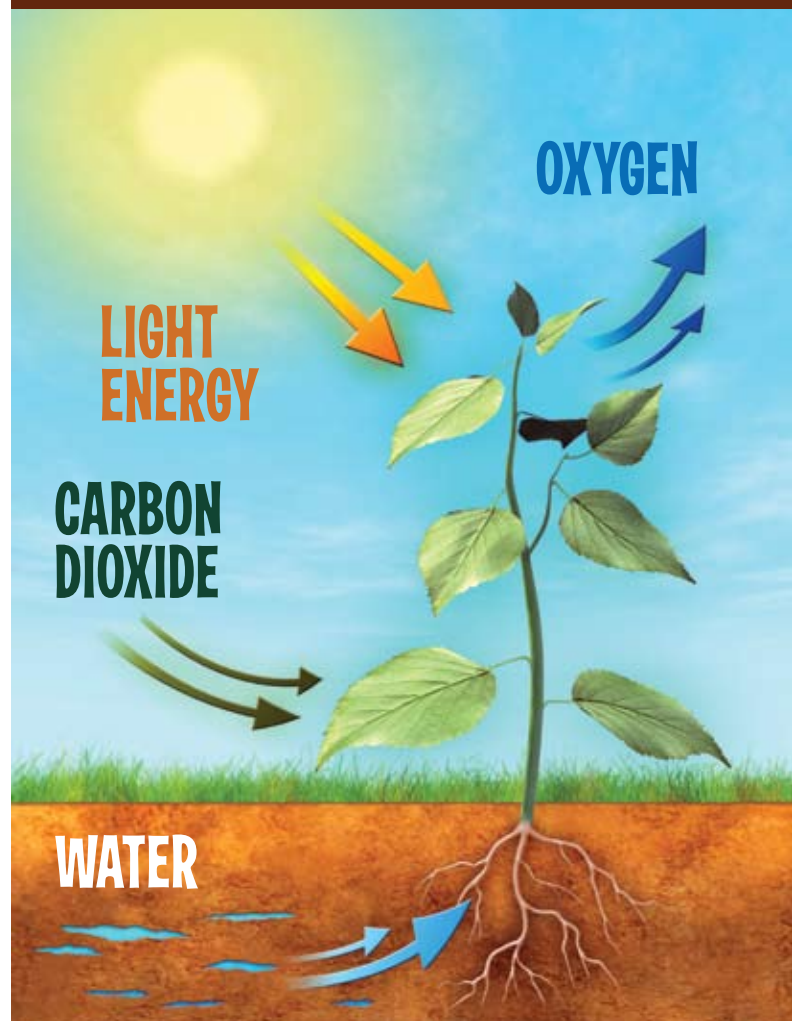
The flower releases pollen, which bees or winds carry from one plant to another. This fertilizes the plant and the vegetable’s fruit can start growing.

With most plants, you’ll first see a small green ball or knob, which grows constantly over several days. When the fruit is ripe, it will harden and, depending on the vegetable, change color.

At that point, it is ready to pick and eat. The whole process, which started in March, takes on average about 90 days to complete. It’s pretty amazing, so enjoy watching your plant grow and enjoy eating the vegetables!

Remember, throughout the growing process, you’ll have to keep weeds and grass out of the

PHOTOSYNTHESIS PROCESS



garden during this time. You may pull them, or cut them out with a hoe. It’s important to keep the garden’s soil soft, and hoeing will help keep it in shape. You’ll also have to water occasionally if the garden gets dry and you’ll have to watch for insects and diseases that can damage your plants. If you see insects or diseases, your parents may need to help you control the problem.

Find helpful links to pest control solutions on our website, www.kyproud.com/readyssetgrow.