



DIRECTIONS FOR GROWING MICROGREENS

Microgreens are easy to grow. The materials needed include:

- **Soil**, ideally a high quality fine grain potting soil, which can be easily flattened prior to seeding.
- A shallow **container** to put the soil in. This can be a container that is recycled from another use. An off the shelf container (such as peat pots) also works well.
- A **tray** to put the container in and **dome** to cover the tray. The dome should be perforated with several holes.
- **Seed**. Seed can be obtained from a variety of sources. It is best to purchase it in bulk as it is less expensive.
- A **plastic teaspoon** for spreading the seeds.
- A **cup** for use in watering the seed.
- **Paper towel** to cover the seed right after it is planted.

Specific suggestions for these materials are provided below.

Steps to growing a crop of microgreens.

- (1) Put soil up to the top of the container.
- (2) Pour water on the soil so it is damp throughout, and add more soil if needed to reach the top of the container. A simple cup can be used to add the water.
- (3) Flatten the soil as much as possible, as this makes for a good seed bed. Putting a dry paper towel over the soil and tamping it down works well. Add more soil if needed.
- (4) Spread seed densely on top of the soil – the seeds can be touching one another. For a single container that is 4” by 10”, about two teaspoons will provide adequate coverage. (Tiny seeds such as red amaranth may require more.)
- (5) The seeds do not need to be covered in soil, but it helps to push them lightly into the soil using, for example, the dry piece of paper towel.
- (6) Place the planted container in the tray.
- (7) Soak a paper towel in water and place it over the container.
- (8) Place the dome on top of the tray (make sure the dome has holes in it).
- (9) Place the tray on the shelf of the unit.
- (10) Turn on the light, which should be placed about 7” above the top of the soil level. Manually, or using an automatic timer, turn the light on for 14 hours and off for ten each day.
- (11) Allow the seed to germinate for 2.5 to 3 days.
- (12) Keep the soil and the paper towel damp. One cup of water poured over the 4” by 10” container should be okay and normally this is needed only once every one or two days.
- (13) After 2.5 to 3 days, carefully remove the paper towel. As you remove it, if needed, use your finger or a knife to gently make sure the seeds are removed from the paper towel and left in the growing container.
- (14) Water the seedlings carefully (one cup of water should do), and place the dome back on the tray (without the paper towel).
- (15) Place the tray back on the shelf.
- (16) Keep the soil damp as needed, but the seedlings do not need to be overwatered – the dome will normally retain water efficiently. If watering is not planned over a period of more than a day, extra watering ahead of time is usually adequate to maintain growth (for instance over a weekend).
- (17) The microgreens are typically ready for harvest as soon as four to six days after planting (or 1.5 to 2.5 days after the paper towel is removed).
- (18) Harvest the microgreens by cutting them with a clean scissors about ½ to 1” below the leaves.
- (19) As with any leafy vegetable or garnish, carefully wash the microgreens before they are served. They are best used right away, but can be stored in a plastic bag and refrigerated for 3-4 days.
- (20) Clean the tray and dome before reusing. If the container is reused it should also be cleaned. It is recommended that new soil is used for each crop, as even in several days the root structure of microgreens is quite well developed. Soil can be reused, but care should be taken to sterilize the soil by, for instance, putting it in a microwave oven (see, for example <http://www.colostate.edu/Dept/CoopExt/4dmg/Soil/sterile.htm>).

Specific Sources of Materials

Soil. Any soil can be used. A fine grained potting soil that is easy to work with is Miracle Gro Moisture Control Potting Mix. One 8 quart bag is enough to grow about ten crops.



Seed. Microgreens are simply young seedlings of vegetable seeds – they are not a special species or variety. Seed can be obtained from various retail and online vendors. Growingmicrogreens.com has a good and well-priced selection. Even as little as 1 oz of seed plants many microgreen crops – only about two teaspoons are needed for each crop. Larger sizes result in less expensive seed per unit.



Containers. Any container that can hold soil and is of the right size can be used to hold soil and grow microgreens. Egg cartons work well. If pots specifically designed to grow seedlings are preferred, Jiffy Strip Peat Pots can be purchased in the garden section of Home Depot.



Tray and dome. Any tray and dome that fit in the unit will work. Consider recycling containers used for salads or some airline meals. If you wish to use an actual planting tray and dome, Parkseed.com has durable trays and domes that are well suited to the unit:

Perma Nest Plant Trays 12x8x 3/4 inch; and matching Humidity Domes.

