

# Winter Sowing Instructions 2025

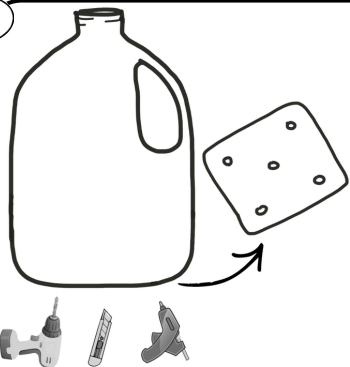
- Wait until the Winter Solstice (December 21st, 2025) to prepare your containers
- Find out which plants are right for you at [CapeCodNativePlants.org](http://CapeCodNativePlants.org), [plantfinder.NativePlantTrust.org](http://plantfinder.NativePlantTrust.org), and/or [DrawnFromSeed.com](http://DrawnFromSeed.com)
- Purchase seeds online at [WildSeedProject.net](http://WildSeedProject.net), [NortheastSeedCollective.com](http://NortheastSeedCollective.com), or [PrairieMoonNursery.com](http://PrairieMoonNursery.com)
- Garden marker recommendation: [Staedtler Garden Marker](#) (available on Amazon)
- No-cost labels can be made by [cutting up yogurt containers](#)
- Sow seeds that require 90-days of cold stratification no later than December 21<sup>st</sup>
- Sow seeds that require 60-days of cold stratification no later than January 10<sup>th</sup>
- Sow seeds that require 30-days of cold stratification no later than February 8<sup>th</sup>
- Good luck... and don't forget to have fun!

1



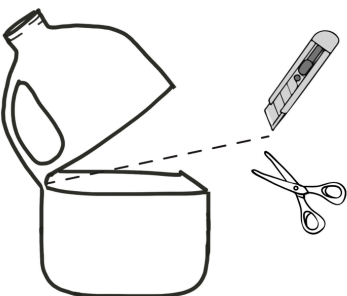
Gather containers. You can use milk jugs, vinegar containers, or the bottoms of salad greens containers. Wash the containers with soapy water then rinse well.

2



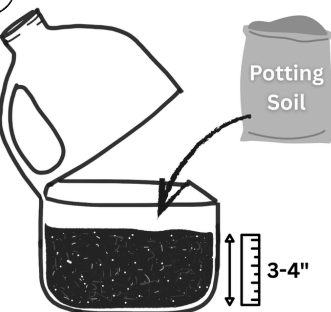
Open 5-6 drainage holes. For milk jugs and vinegar containers, you only need drainage holes on the bottom, as rain and snow will come in through the bottle mouth. For salad greens containers, you'll need to open drainage holes on the bottom and watering/ventilation holes on the top as well. Good tools to use to open holes are a drill, a utility knife, or a hot glue gun (to melt a hole) - be careful!

3



Cut the container in half but leave the handle attached. The bottom part should be at least 3.5" tall so you have enough room for soil. Good tools to use are a utility knife and/or a pair of scissors. Skip this step if you're using salad containers.

4



Fill the bottom part with 3-4" of really wet potting soil. Try to use potting soil that doesn't have too many large twigs as this can potentially interfere with seedling root growth. Don't use seed starting mix, soil from your garden, or pure compost because you might have issues with moisture retention, compaction, and weed seed competition. Best to use new, regular potting soil.

5



Sow seeds according to the packet instructions. The number of seeds you sow will depend on how many plants you want. Assume at least 50% of seeds will germinate, so plan accordingly. It's best to grow only one species per container, so there's no confusion later on as to what species you have. Also, don't forget to label your containers!

6



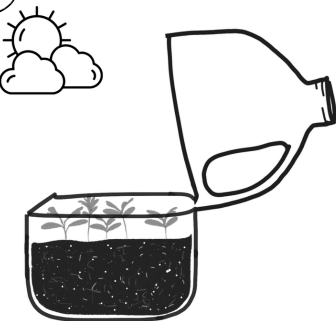
Tape the container shut using duct tape. If using a milk jug, make sure cap is off. If using salad containers, make sure the drainage holes on the top and bottom are not covered by the tape.

7



Place containers where they will be exposed to the elements and where they can drain (not a place that floods). Keep them in a mostly shady spot until March, then move them to a place where they get morning sun and afternoon shade. If you experience a dry winter, check them once a week or so. Pick up the containers, and if they feel very light, water them from the bottom by placing them on a tray with water for 10 minutes.

8



In the Spring, when temperatures get to 65°-70° during the day, open the containers so your seedlings don't cook. Close them at night to protect against cold temperatures until the last frost passes.

9



When your seedlings have at least one set of true leaves and are at least 1-2" tall, you can divide and transplant them to pots or the ground. If transplanting to pots, start with small pots first and once they outgrow those, move them to slightly bigger pots and so on. This gives them a better chance of accessing water and nutrients as they grow.