

## Early Start: Seeds to Start in January and February



**Alpine Strawberries:** Plants started in midwinter will often start producing strawberries during the first summer. Transplant your seedlings outdoors in mid-April. These make an excellent border for vegetable or herb beds.

Annuals: **Geraniums** (Pelargonium), **Petunias**, and **Impatiens** take a long time to grow from seed. Start early, but wait to transplant until the soil warms in May. Cool season annuals such as Pansies and Snapdragons should be started early and set outside as soon as the soil is workable in April.

**Artichokes:** You're unlikely to get any unless you start your plants early. Start in 4" pots so they have room to size up before transplant. They can be transplanted in mid-April after hardening off. **Cardoon** is close cousins with the Artichoke and can be treated the same way.

Herbs: Some of the slower growing herbs can be started early for better growth. **Rosemary, Lavender, Sage, Rue, and Thyme** can all be transplanted as soon as the soil can be worked in April. Rosemary and Lavender also make good patio plants that can be moved back into the house when it gets cold in the fall. **Steveia** is a slow growing plant as well, and needs warmth to thrive. The longer it has to grow, the more you will have to harvest. Wait until Memorial Day to move outside.

**Onions, Leeks, and Shallots:** All can be started indoors quite early for early spring transplant. This will encourage larger bulbs of onions and shallots, and thicker succulent leek stems.

Peppers: Some of the longer season hot peppers produce much better from larger transplants. This is especially true for **Habanero, Fatali, Ghost, Lemon Drop, and Carolina Reaper**. These varieties can also make impressive specimens if brought in for the winter.

Perennial Flowers: Many perennial flowers can flower the first year if you start them early enough. **Dianthus, Purple Coneflower, Black Eyed Susan, Ox Eye Sunflower, Lavender Hyssop, and Little Bluestem** can all be started just as you would start a tomato or pepper. **Butterfly Weed** and **Columbines** sprout best after a few weeks in the fridge in moist peat or vermiculite.

*Please call us with any questions. The Bruce Company of Wisconsin, Inc. (608) 836-7041 and ask for the Greenery Dept.*

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