

Microgreen Instructions

Planting Guide:

1. Clean your seeds, throw poor seeds away. Then pour some water to soak seeds for 8-10 hours.
2. For too small seeds, you must place the germinating paper on the tray to prevent seed leakage. Get the paper wet by spray bottle, ensure the paper completely wet. (For large seeds, no need to use paper.)
3. After completing the soaking process, spread the seeds on the planting plate evenly, don't overlap them, and water with a spray bottle.
4. Cover the seeds with a germinating paper and spray with water 3 times every day.
5. Remove the top paper after seeds have germinated. Fill the bottom tray with water, please change the water 1-2 times a day. Note: Make sure the water level is not above the grid plate to avoid your seeds from getting water logged.
6. Sprinkle water 2-3 times daily, you can harvest with microgreens when they reach 3-5 inches, placed them in sunlight for 2~3 hours to increase chlorophyll.

Seed Sprouter Tray Use Guide



① Clean your seeds, throw poor seeds away. Soak the seeds in water for 8-10 hours.



② For too small seeds, you must place the germinating paper on the tray to prevent seed leakage. Get the paper wet by spray kettle, ensure the paper completely wet. (For large seeds, no need to put the paper.)



③ Spread the seeds on the planting plate evenly, don't overlap them, and water with a spray bottle



④ Cover with another paper and spray with water 3 times every day



⑤ Remove the top paper after seeds have germinated. Fill the bottom tray with water, please change the water 1-2 times a day. Note: Make sure the water level not higher the grid plate to avoid your seeds decayed



⑥ Sprinkle water 2-3 times daily, you can harvest with microgreens reach 3-5 inches, placed them in sunlight for 2~3 hours to increase chlorophyll.

Types of Microgreens

You can sprout multiple types of seeds, such as soya bean, mung bean, peanut, black bean, cat grass, okra, green pea, sunflower, buckwheat, Radish.



Since everyone know I'm a terrible writer I thought I would put the professional instructions first (Chinese), and then follow up with my own ramblings/experiences.

Microgreens

I decided to do microgreens and sprouts about a year ago. It was an on-again off-again process. I

was not very good at creating a planting schedule and keeping to it and I wasn't really consistent in my watering. But, I think the biggest problem I had was the mess, because when I first started out I was using dirt as a growing medium... and cleanup was a bitch. After I gave up on dirt, I then tried felt, and then layers of paper toweling. Each succeeding medium was easier to work with, but I still had a trash problem, i.e. my worms wouldn't eat the felt.

Inspiration

Then I ran across a video where the guy was testing out a new 1020 tray from Bootstrap Farmer. The tray had a bottom full of tiny holes and when you put it into a regular solid 1020 tray it makes it so you didn't need any other medium. No-muss no-fuss. At the end of two weeks you use your trusty 6" pudgy knife and cut off the roots from the top tray's underside and everything else inside the top tray just falls out. The roots and stubble from inside of the tray then goes into my/your worm farm. A perfect cycle of life. Note: if you have ever felt the soil inside a worm farm it is like silk.. but I regress.

Once I got the trays from Bootstrap Farmer (Amazon), the seed from Todds(Amazon)/JohnnySeeds, the sprouting lids from Amazon, and the Mason jars from Olsens grocery store I went to work. But, before I go into the step-by-step process of microgreens I thought I might write down some of the pros and cons of growing microgreens.

Side trip

Pros

1. I can do it inside the house, and since I bought some really nice wire shelves, I could do it standing up.
2. Microgreens don't take up much space and sprouts even less. A couple flats continuously rotated each week, can easily keep a small family in salad greens.
3. The growing season is roughly one week for sprouts and two weeks for microgreens. If you have a bad crop, just throw it out and start a new tray. With all the planting overlap, you probably have only lost a week of greens.

Cons

1. Only certain seeds lend themselves to microgreens. Obviously you can't grow tomatoes, or water-mellons microgreens.
2. You do have to be dedicated in your watering routine. It only takes a day of forgetfulness for a tray of microgreens to get stunted, and two days to go bad.
3. I have concentrated on only a couple of microgreens, mung beans and Sunflower seeds so the salads can become a little monotonous. But, remember microgreens can be used in a lot of different dishes. Personally I keep things interesting by creating a lot of spicy salad dressings.

Side note

But people say to me, but you are using all those seeds and you're not allowing them to grow to maturity, isn't that wasteful? Think of all the seeds you are eating the next time you have corn on the cob, or think of all the seed from the vegetables you eat, that usually end up in the garbage (or hopefully in a compost heap or a worm farm).

I have tried a lot of different seeds, but because of their different sizes, growing rates, and harvesting

times it became too difficult for me to manage. Thus I have decided to concentrate on mung bean, raddish seeds for sprouts, and sunflower seeds and possibly peas for microgreens. The mung beans are easy to sprout, the raddish sprouts add a lot of flavor, and the sunflower seeds have a great nutty flavor if they are harvested just before they get their second set (true) leaves.

Step-by-Step

Setup and Daily routine

1. Wash out all the trays. The trays from Bootstrap Farms are pretty thick so with care you should be able to use them over-and-over again. I used to use the sink with soap and water to clean out the trays, but I have had several bad experiences with mold, so I now have a 5 gallon drum with a mixture of water and bleach to scrub each tray. Rinse well with fresh water.
2. I have several 2lb plastic coffee cans for soaking the seeds. The sunflower seeds are the only one you really need to soak. Some people say 12 hr, while others say 24 hrs. I usually soak my sunflower seeds for 12 hrs. They swell so cover them with an extra couple of inches of water.
3. Place one of the Bootstrap Farms perforated (mesh) 1020 flats inside one of the solid 1020 flats.



4. Strain the sunflower seed



5. Shake the sunflower seeds into the 1020 stacked flats. Use the 6" pudgy knife to spread the seeds evenly around the flat. You only want a single layer of seeds. Use your fingers if that works

better for you.

6. Next, use the kitchen sink sprayer to gently water the flat of seeds. I usually spray the seeds twice. After the first time I tilt the bottom tray down to empty it of water while keeping the top tray of seeds level.
7. Do a second spraying of water, enough to fill the groves of the bottom tray, but not enough to touch the upper tray.
8. Put the tray in its final location, where it will get light, but not direct sunlight that will dry out the seeds.

Daily Maintenance

For approximately the next two weeks repeat steps 6-7-8 twice a day. Gentle spray the seeds in the top tray, dumping the water out from the bottom tray, and then respraying the seeds to fill the groves in the bottom tray. Do this once in the morning and once in the evening. You will start to see the root appear, go through the mesh bottom of the top flat, and in week 2 create a solid mat of root in between the flats.

Harvesting (roughly in 2 weeks)

Some people harvest the entire tray and keep what they don't immediately use in the refrigerator. I usually harvest over 4 days (1/4 of the tray each day). Some people use a sharp knife to harvest, I usually use kitchen scissors and cut about 1/4 inches up from the tray surface. I like to use as much of the plant as I possibly can and the stems are just as sweet. I used to pull the whole sunflower plant out roots-and-all and eat the entire plant, but then I realized the worms, in my worm farm(s), would probably love the roots.



Fun Fact: a pound of red worms (approx. 1000 worms) can eat/recycle/compost half their weight in vegetable waste each day.

Cleanup

Once all the microgreens have been harvested I take the 6" pudgy knife to the roots on the bottom of the top perforated flat. The root usually shave off cleanly with little effort. Once the roots have been removed the remaining stems inside the flat just fall out. I gather all the waste and feed it to my worms, they love the stuff.



Wash the flats in a weak bleach solution, rise with fresh water. Repeat the whole process over again.

Since I eat one flat every 4-5 days I typically will have 4-5 microgreen flats going at all times at different stages of development, i.e. 4 day increments.

Sprouts



Sprouts are easy:

1. Put approximately two tablespoons of seeds into a Mason jar and fill it with cool water. Put on the screen lid. When starting off I usually allow the seeds to soak for 4-5 hours, then rinse the seeds and drain them well.
2. For the next week you will rinse your seeds twice a day, once in the morning and once at night. After about a week start eating the sprouts. I usually put my finished sprouts in a plastic bag in the refrigerator so I can recycle the jar faster.
3. Clean out the jar with regular soap and water and start the whole process over again.

Again, I usually have 4-5 Mason jars going at any one time, each in a different state of sprout growth, i.e. every 2 days.

