

Hydroponic seed starting

One of the most gratifying projects is to grow your own plants from seed.

Advantages:

- Grow what you want.
- Cost effective.
- Once germinated your seedlings already have roots adapted for drawing up nutrients directly from the hydroponic solution.
- Sow multiple seeds per pot (saves space).
- The new seedlings are your babies and not some strangers which have been store purchased.

Disadvantages:

- Time, it normally takes between 4 and 6 weeks for the seedlings to get to a transplantable size.
- Not all the seeds germinate.
- Too many plants, sometimes germination is so successful that there are too many seedlings germinated for the size of the hydroponic system.

Equipment needed:

- Small bucket, 5 or 10 litre bucket will do.
- Block of compressed coco-peat.
- Water.
- 7.5cm propagation pots, (5cm pots will also work)
- Seeds.
- Hydroponic system.

Let's begin:-

Step 1:

- Place the compressed block of coco-peat into the bucket and add water.
- Add enough water to allow the coco-peat block to disintegrate completely.



Step 2:

- Pack the propagation pot with the loose coco-peat to just above the solid section of the pot and tamp down.



Step 3:

- Sow the seeds over the top.



Step 4:

- Cover the seeds with a layer of coco-peat approximately 5mm thick.



Step 5:

- Place the pot into your hydroponic system and wait for your babies to germinate.



Here multiple pots can be placed close together to save space and they will not yet be competing for sunlight until they have germinated and become bigger.



Once this stage has been reached the seedlings are ready for transplanting into single pots, spaced further apart in the hydroponic system, to allow for growth and have less competition for sunlight.



The next tutorial will show how to prepare and plant shop bought seedlings in the hydroponic system.

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