

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

Gardening season has begun or almost begun depending on where you live. And if you are looking for a reliable source of seeds, look no further than true leaf market. I discovered this company last year when I was on the hunt for cover crop seeds and I am beyond impressed with them. They have a huge selection of affordably priced veggies, flowers and microgreen seeds and they have a ton of organic heirloom and non-GMO varieties. Head on over to theprairiehomestead.com/seeds to have a look around and grab a packet or 12 to complete your seed stash for the year.

Speaker 1 ([00:42](#)):

Welcome to the old fashioned on purpose podcast. So here I am again diving full speed ahead into my seed. Starting this year it kinda cracks me up because every single year I just get so excited and I have all this passion and all this fervor and then by the end of the year like come September, October, I feel like a battered, broken woman from all of the weeding and watering and preserving. And I just want the garden to die already, which I sound so horrible, but it's true. It's how I feel every single fall. But then again, I like every spring it's like, I forget all that happened. I kinda think it's like having a baby. If you're a mom, you can relate to this. Right after you give birth, you're like, I'm never doing that again. Holy moly. And then you literally forget and you do it again. So that's how gardening is for me.

Speaker 1 ([01:38](#)):

Anyway, all that to say, I had a great question come in the other day from a listener and she asked, what is the best way to start my garden? Cause she was feeling a little bit overwhelmed with the idea of, you know, starting seeds indoors or direct sowing seeds into the soil or just buying seedlings at the garden store and she wanted to know which one is best, which one is most recommended. So we're diving into that topic today. I'm your host Jill Winger. And this is the podcast for the trailblazers, the Mavericks, the makers, the homesteaders, the modern pioneers and the backyard farmers. If you've ever found yourself just a little bit disenchanted with conformity and you kinda like to swim upstream while the rest of the society rides the river of least resistance, well you have found your tribe. So I'm pretty pumped. We're going to be hitting the gardening topics hard this month.

Speaker 1 ([02:39](#)):

I am thrilled to have true leaf market sponsoring this episode. I got to know them last year. I got to talk to Parker from True Leaf market back on episode. I don't remember the number, it's about cover crops. If you go back through the episode library, you'll find it. But true leaf market is a literal like a virtual seed rack, they have an extremely user friendly website, tons of organic, heirloom GMO free varieties. Just a really solid source. If you need some seeds, which I'm guessing you probably do. So go check out True Leaf Market, over at theprairiehomestead.com/seeds and that'll take you to their website and you can shop your little heart out. So a couple other episodes where we talked about some gardening basics. Episode 81 I dove into what I'm personally planting this year and kind of give you a rundown of the varieties I've chosen.

Speaker 1 ([03:38](#)):

Episode 76 if you're a newbie, definitely go listen to that one. It's all about how to start your very first garden and episode 73 dove into why I love heirloom seeds. That's pretty much all I plant and all I have planted for the last, I don't know, decade or so. So, more topics to come. But those are some good ones that are in the library for you to go have a listen to. But this question is a good one. Which do you start with: seeds indoors, direct sowing or buying seedlings. And honestly, there isn't a right or wrong answer

to this question. You might actually end up using all three of these options or maybe just one. And it really depends on your goals and what you have available to you in terms of room in your house for starting seeds or what your local garden stores have available.

Speaker 1 ([04:34](#)):

So here's how I like to break it down. And here's kind of how I think of these category categories of, getting plants or seeds to get your garden off the ground. All right, so number one, starting seeds indoors. I've talked about this quite a bit. I have, I think a video on it. I'll drop the link to that. I have a blog post on it. But I love starting seeds indoors because it saves me a lot of money and it's kind of a necessity for, I would say most of you listening are probably gonna need or want to do this at some point because I think, I don't know a growing a growing zone in the United States where you wouldn't need to start something indoors to give it a headstart. Maybe in the deep South, I don't know. But for those of us, those of us in the Northern States or who have shorter growing seasons, we need to start plants indoors or in a greenhouse in order to get them to work.

Speaker 1 ([05:37](#)):

Where we live, examples of this would be tomatoes, peppers, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, different herbs. They all need, you know, quite a few months to go from seed to mature fruit bearing plant. And most of us just don't outdoor growing seasons that are long enough, which is why we start them ahead of time. The good news is that most seed packets will have instructions for if this variety needs to be started ahead of time. Like I think on my cabbage seeds, they'll say start, start these seeds six to eight weeks ahead of time, indoors before you transplant outside. So if you, as long as you're reading your seed packets, you'll be just fine. I think in knowing what needs to be started ahead of time. Anyway, that's what I do. I plant at least a couple hundred seedlings in my basement under grow lights every single spring.

Speaker 1 ([06:40](#)):

I think we're actually going to be doing that tonight. In fact, I have my seed trays, I have my seeds ready to go. That will give us, let's see, it's March, beginning of March, the time at the time of this recording. So we plant the end of May. That's going to give me three full months for most of my veggie plants to get going. It's a great option. So I do recommend that for probably most of you, unless you have a teeny tiny house and it's absolutely there, there's no room to have seeds, it's going to be cost effective and just make sense. Okay. Number two. Another method that you would grow a vegetable would be to direct sow the seeds right into the soil. And the good news is there's a lot of well loved vegetables that do extremely well being planted right into the soil and they can grow to maturity even in a very short growing season like mine.

Speaker 1 ([07:35](#)):

Examples of that would be beans, you know, green beans, peas, greens like kale or lettuce, squash do really well. Most squash, pumpkins, corn, stuff like that. Like those are your traditional vegetable garden things you can stick them right in the soil after the danger of frost has passed for, for us, that's Memorial day weekend most of the time. And they grow and I get plenty of harvest before the frost hits again in September. So some of these, like, you know, you might see squash plants available at your local nursery or you may see even lettuce available as a seedling at your local nursery. And you might wonder, Oh my gosh, well if those are being sold in seedling form, do I need to to plant them ahead of time? And really you don't need to. I would say those things are usually sold at the garden store just for

folks who, might just want to grow a handful of, they don't understand that you can just as easily grow from seed or if they got a really late start.

Speaker 1 ([08:39](#)):

But there's a number of things I've noticed like squash plants for me don't transplant super well, so it's better if I just direct sow them right into the soil and it's super simple. So, I would say most of you are going to go the direct soil route for the bulk of your garden or at least a good portion of it, even if it's your first year. Okay. And option number three would be buying seedlings at the store. And this is the one I tried to probably avoid the most just because it can get pricey pretty quick. It's kind of my last minute catchall option. Namely for things that I might not have much luck starting from seeds. Like, I can't start Stevia, cilantro or Rosemary for the life of me, I cannot get them to grow in my basement. So I usually will buy a couple plants of each of those at the, at the nursery.

Speaker 1 ([09:39](#)):

I'll buy if I see some sort of vegetable that, is new, like an artichoke for example. I've never, you know, gotten artichoke seeds, so if I'm at the garden store one year and they have artichoke something or other, I will potentially grab a couple to give it a try. If, if something seems novel or interesting to me or if my dog eats a bunch of seedlings, which may or may not have happened last year, I might need to go to the garden store and grab some replacements. But for the most part, I'm trying to start everything I can at home just because if you fill your shopping cart with seedlings from the nursery, it really gets pricey. So I will spend, I dunno, usually between 50 to \$75 a year, on herbs or flowers or something special at the garden store. But I kind of try to cap it at that cause I don't want to have four or \$500 worth of starts in my garden budget before we even get started because those are some expensive vegetables.

Speaker 1 ([10:39](#)):

But that's it. That's, that's kinda how I do it. It's a, it's a combination of all three, I suppose. It just kind of depends on where you live and what you have available to you. But it just doesn't have to be complicated. And I think my biggest recommendation for you listening to this episode is don't overthink it. I, I've just been getting a ton of messages from people who are really hesitant to start the garden and they're feeling really nervous and they're, they're kind of just wanting to all be perfect before they pull the trigger. And just let me reassure you that you've got this like imperfect action is okay and you're probably going to kill some things this year and it's just how it goes and it's part of the learning process. So don't sweat it. Get a packet of seeds. If you mess it up, it's fine. The good news about gardening is number one, it's forgiving. Number two, it doesn't cost a lot or it doesn't cost as much to make a mistake in gardening as it can in other areas. So be willing to be a beginner dive in, fail if you need to. And before long you'll be growing vegetables left and right.

Speaker 1 ([11:52](#)):

Yeah. So maybe you're not quite digging out in your garden just yet. I know I'm not because there is still snow on the ground, but odds are you're likely in the thick of planning and dreaming and buying seeds. And to make that process just a little bit easier for you, whether you're a newbie or an experienced gardener. I've put together a little pack of garden planning principles as well as a list of some of my favorite veggie varieties, and you can grab the whole thing for free over at theprairiehomestead.com/gardenplan and that is it. Don't forget to hit subscribe, so all the new episodes show up automatically in your podcast player. And if you enjoyed today's episode, I would be

so grateful if you could pop over and leave a quick review or rating. That just helps more people find the podcasts and bring homesteading into their lives. Thanks so much for listening and we'll chat again next time on the next episode of the old fashioned on purpose podcast.