



Los Alamos Community
SEED LIBRARY

JANUARY GARDENING TIPS **BY LOS ALAMOS MASTER GARDENERS**

January is the month when gardeners dream, and the earth patiently waits.

- Continue to monitor the amount of precipitation in order to determine if trees and shrubs need additional watering. You can use either the soaking hose or the ice-melt method.
- January is the time to plan for Spring and place your seed order before stocks are depleted.
- As you look over your stash of seeds, be sure to put aside some and plan to attend the annual Community Seed Swap on Saturday, February 7th from 9 am to noon at the Unitarian Church.
- Assess the viability of older seeds by conducting a germination test. Place ten seeds on a moistened paper towel inside a sealable container or plastic bag and keep it in a warm location. Monitor the seeds for signs of germination. For many vegetable crops, germination will occur within two to three weeks. If few or none of the seeds germinate, obtain fresh seed. If germination is only moderately reduced, compensate by sowing the seeds more densely at the right time.
- Do you use fences or enclosures to protect your plants from wildlife? Choose a nice day to walk the perimeter of your fence and note areas that need to be reattached, replaced, or improved. Assess and prepare your supplies so you're ready when the next gardening whim strikes.
- You can start amending your raised beds with an organic compost and additional soil.
- Be sure to check out a few books from our county library's large collection covering vegetable and flower gardens and general landscaping topics.
- After Christmas cactus has finished blooming, prune back the plant about 1/3 of the foliage. Start new plants with the cuttings, or offer them to others to start their own.
- Mark your calendar and plan to attend the Sowing Wildflower Seeds presentation on Saturday, January 24th from 2-3:30 PM at PEEC. Participants will learn different methods of sowing wildflower seeds to get the most out of a small packet of seed mix, to recognize native and non-native wildflowers from their seeds and seedlings, and other tips to start their own pollinator habitats.
- Come to the next Seed Processing work party on Saturday January 3rd from 2-4 PM at PEEC to learn how to process, clean, package, and label donated seeds for the three Seed Libraries located at MPL, WR Branch, and PEEC. You can donate seeds as well as take away packets of seeds you can use, or join the ranks of Seed Stewards by simply adding your email address to an existing list.

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- You can start some seeds indoors now for cold-tolerant crops like lettuces, kales, arugula, spinach, and other brassica family. Be sure there's plenty of sunlight and good ventilation to keep them from getting too leggy since they won't be ready to be transplanted outdoors until early spring.
- Consider registering for the 2026 Master Gardening classes starting this month. Contact the Los Alamos County Extension Office (505)662-2656 for more information. 🌱

