

# *Early Spring Garden Update*



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**We're in the middle** of a cool spell but don't let that stop you from moving ahead with your garden. Right now you can plant any kind of lettuce, any cole crop (cabbage, collards, broccoli, cauliflower, kale, and kohlrabi), Swiss chard, arugula, and many herbs such as thyme, sage, parsley, chives, lavender, and others. Onion sets or plants can be planted now. Also, garlic, spinach, mustard, celery, and Brussels sprouts can all go in now. That should keep you busy. In the world of ornamental annuals, you can safely plant pansies, snapdragons, petunias, dusty miller, and ornamental cabbage.



**Tomato “Early Girl”**



**Tomato “Little Bing”**

All of the above we now have available as starter plants. But there are many things you can direct sow from seed right now, too. Beets, radishes, onions, lettuce, cole crops, and more. Our average last frost date is April 27. But don't worry about that. All the plants just listed can easily tolerate frost. If you're really worried about it, you can cover your plants with straw if the weather is threatening.



**Jalapenos**



**Jalapeno plant, over  
4' tall**

You recall the pepper plants that we're overwintering in pots in the greenhouse? This is something we're trying for the first time, just for fun. The ultra hot peppers weakened and we got rid of them, but the jalapeño peppers are doing very well. They bloomed earlier in the winter and are now producing fruit. They're over 48" tall. My son, Dave, planted up some new ultra hot peppers. They'll be way ahead of those we sell in spring, but they're only about six inches tall now. We're not planning on over-wintering peppers in pots on a large scale, we just like tinkering in the greenhouse. The tomatoes we started in January are doing well. We sowed the seed on January 10th, about three weeks earlier than usual. I'm thinking we'll have fruit in May. It would be earlier, but they're in a cool greenhouse, with temperatures ranging from 58-67 degrees. Ideally, it should be warmer for tomatoes. But, in a greenhouse where many crops are growing, compromise is a fact of life.



## **Basil plant at one year old**

In an earlier blog, I mentioned the pot of basil that I was overwintering in a warmer greenhouse. It continues to thrive, now as a little shrub. Its been sheared back a number of times to keep it from flowering and to keep it from getting gangly. I like to prune it just to enjoy the basil scent.



**Edi-Bowls**



**Typical 3" tomato**

Due to weather issues, we were unable to get the trial garden prepared on schedule so no greens have been planted outdoors here yet. We hope to do so very soon. I also want to put in some onion sets and radishes. I've put a couple of "edi-bowls" on the porch at home. Those are greens growing in a bowl, for folks who don't have a garden. It's simple and easy. Our bowls have different types of greens in them. Something for everyone.



We are now stocking the retail greenhouses with the first crop of just about everything. The first crop is the smallest, but it's plenty broad. There are over 80 kinds of tomatoes, for example. It's way too early to plant them outside, of course, but people want a little taste of spring. You'd be surprised how many people tell me they have a little greenhouse, cold frame, or sun porch where they can grow their plants. Come visit—the greenhouses are beautiful right now.



Please email me ([kevin@milaegers.com](mailto:kevin@milaegers.com)) with your questions and comments!

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