

**HOW TO PLANT AND WHAT TO  
DO WITH THE CROPS. TOGETHER  
WITH VALUABLE HINTS FOR THE  
FARM, GARDEN, AND ORCHARD**

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How to Plant and What to Do with the Crops. Together with Valuable Hints for the Farm, Garden, and Orchard by Mark W. Johnson

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**MARK W. JOHNSON**

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## INTRODUCTION.

A book giving brief and simple directions for planting all field and garden crops, trees, vines, roots, etc., seems to be generally needed, judging from the numbers of enquiries the writer has for something of the kind during the planting season of each year. The writer has been unable to find a full and comprehensive work of the sort, hence takes upon himself the task of writing such a book. He promises the reader that in these pages he shall find instructions sufficient to guide him in planting every seed and tree or vine known to the field, orchard, or vegetable garden. The author does not propose to give a full description of varieties and their uses, as this volume would then become too large. The object is to give brief and correct instructions as to when and how to plant and sow. Every human being should devote a part of his or her time to producing something from the soil, even if it be only some lovely flower. The poet commands us to sow, after the following manner :

“Sow in the morn thy seed,  
At eve hold not thy hand.  
Thou knowest not which shall thrive,  
The late or early sown.

“And duly shall appear,  
In verdure, beauty, strength,  
The tender blade, the stalk, the ear,  
And the full corn at length.”

The Supreme Architect of the universe, our Great Creator, in Holy Writ, commands us to sow and till the ground, for in His revealed word we find, viz. : “In the

sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."—Gen., 4th Ch., 19th v. "The Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden to till the ground."—Gen. 3 Ch., 23 v. "Noah planted a vineyard."—Gen., 9th Ch., 20th v. "And Isaac sowed in that land and found in the same year an hundred fold," etc.—Gen., 26 Ch., 12, 13 v. "Elisha plowed with twelve yoke of oxen."—See 1 Kings, 19th Ch., 19th v.

Elisha no doubt was a good and successful planter, for he evidently broke his land deep. "The ploughman shall overtake the reaper," etc.—Amos, 9th Ch., 13th to 15th v. "But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig tree," etc.—Micah., 4th Ch., 3d and 4th v. "Behold, the sower went forth to sow," etc.—Math., 13 Ch., 4th and 5th v., 31st and 32d v.

# HOW TO PLANT.

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## SOME PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

### TIMES FOR SOWING AND PLANTING—COVERING THE SEED.

It is the wish of the author to make this work national in its scope and useful in all parts of the country. Being primarily designed to aid his fellow cultivators in the Southern States, the times for sowing and planting the various crops are indicated by naming the months proper for these operations. Of course, while February or March may be a suitable time for sowing a certain seed in Georgia, in the Northern States the ground in these months is usually frozen solid. The difficulty in indicating the times for planting in a manner that will answer for both extremes of climate, may be overcome by the planter if he considers a few simple facts. All the plants of cultivation, whether in the field or garden, fall into one of two classes: Tender and Hardy, and if one knows to which class a given plant belongs, there will be no difficulty in ascertaining the proper time for sowing or planting it. If the seeds of tender plants are sown before the soil is well warmed, they will make a poor stand, or fail to appear at all, all the seeds having rotted in the cold soil. Beans, bush and pole, melons, squashes, and all of that family; the tomato, okra, and others are tender plants. Our chief tender plant is Indian corn, which is cultivated throughout the country. Each locality, whether in the far East or far West, whether upon



the Gulf of Mexico, or on the borders of the great Lakes, has its time for planting corn, fixed by years of observation and experience, and which, in a series of years, varies but very little. Corn requires a dry and warm soil, the weather should be well settled, and the season of cold storms past. Wherever these conditions are found, without regard to the month, corn may be safely planted, and with it, all other tender plants.

It is more difficult to fix upon the time for hardy plants. Cabbage, and all of its family, peas, turnips of all kinds, beets, parsnips and others are hardy. Whenever the frost is out of the ground and the soil is dry enough to work, the seeds of hardy plants may go in. In all the Northern States, "as soon as the ground is in good working order" is a sufficiently definite time for planting the seeds of all.

#### COVERING THE SEEDS.

The proper covering of the seeds, after they have been deposited in the drill or row, has much to do with the success of the crop. If in covering the seeds are buried



BOARD FOR COVERING SEED.

so deep that the germ, the little plant within the seed, can not reach the surface, it dies. Though the seed may have been perfectly good, there will be no crop. Among the various devices for covering seeds, is one principally in use by cotton planters, and is the one referred to in this work, when after sowing seeds it is directed to "cover with a board." This implement is made of strong, tough timber, one inch thick, about eighteen or twenty inches long, and six inches wide, slightly curved underneath as in figure 1. This board is attached to any

common, single one-horse plow stock, by using the same heel bolt that is used for fastening on the plow steels (scooters, shovels, bull-tongues, etc., as we call them.) When the soil is fine and free from rocks, stumps, etc., this board covers beautifully by running it over a furrow in which cotton seed or corn has been dropped or sown. If the soil be of a tenacious nature and liable to bake or harden after a rain, it is not best to use this board, but in its stead use a two-pronged or forked plow, which straddles the furrow, leaving a slight ridge over the seed, and in case of baking, this can be knocked off, leaving a loose soil for the seed to come up through.



## FIELD CROPS.

We commence with suggestions as to the planting of field crops.

### ARTICHOKE, JERUSALEM.—(*Helianthus tuberosus*.)

The White French and Red Brazilian are the principal varieties. The plant is cultivated as a root crop, for the sake of its tubers, which are principally used for feeding swine. Ground that will bring good potatoes will suit this crop. Break the ground thoroughly and deeply, lay off rows three feet apart, break the artichokes into pieces containing three or four eyes, drop one of these pieces every eighteen or twenty inches in the drill, and cover three to four inches deep. Plant early—as soon as the soil is in working condition. Cultivate the same as Indian corn. The tubers may be dug after frost or may be left in the ground to be dug as needed. They keep better in the ground than any where else, provided the soil does not freeze over three or four inches deep. The tubers are

good for pickles, and not bad cooked as Irish potatoes, and seasoned in the same manner.

THE BEET.—(*Beta vulgaris*.)

Among the many varieties of the beet, the Mangel-



MANGEL-WURZEL BEET.

Wurzel may be regarded as a field crop. Plant in February, March, or April, as soon as the soil is in working order. Pulverize the soil fine and deep, manure highly unless naturally rich, lay off rows two feet apart and one to two inches deep; in these rows drill the seed thinly, about four pounds per acre, and cover half an inch to an inch deep. When the plants are up, thin out to five to eight inches apart. Cultivate and keep the ground clean until the plants are old enough to take care of themselves. Before winter, dig, and at the South, bank the same as sweet potatoes. In the colder states they must be pitted and covered with sufficient straw and earth to exclude frost. Good for man or beast. Non-ammoniated, or old, thoroughly decayed manure, or non-ammoniated fertilizers are best for this crop. Use as other beets while young. For cattle, boil or cut to pieces and feed.

BEANS, BUSH.—(*Phaseolus vulgaris*.)

The dwarf, or bush beans are also called White Marrow, Kidney, Navy or "Yankee" beans.

Plant during May or June, or whenever it is safe to plant corn, in rows two feet apart, dropping three or