

Welcome Back To...



Welcome back to the third and arguably most exciting step in The 10 x 3 Garden Challenge...PLANTING SEEDS!

With Springtime well on its way, it is finally time (for some of us) to begin the direct sowing process and I just love this part of the flowering growing experience. Audrey Hepburn said it best when she said, "To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow." With sowing seeds comes the hope and anticipation of what's to come and I cannot wait for you to experience that firsthand!

Here in Zone 6a, we aren't able to plant our seeds outdoors just yet, but if you live in any area that is past your last threat of frost, you are ready to go! I'll be sharing a live look on my social media accounts when I plant my seeds if you prefer to follow along that way, but here in today's email, I'll be teaching you all you need to know to get those seeds in the ground and hope for tomorrow!

First, we will look at each individual flower you'll be planting and then we'll chat about how you can arrange them in your 10x3 space. If you already planted your seeds, don't worry if you didn't plant them in the same ways I teach in this phase. The beauty of gardening and the wonder of God's gifts to us is that we don't have to do it perfectly. Soil, sun, seed, and water is all that's required!

Let's dig in, shall we?



Cosmos

First up, is one of my most beloved varieties and arguably the easiest flower to grow, Cosmos! They make perfect cut flowers with a long vase life and are a great addition to any flower bed simply because of their unique beauty.

You'll want to be sure that you direct sow these after your last frost date, once the soil temperature is above 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

After wetting your soil, use a pencil, or similar slender tool, to create holes about 1/4" deep 6" apart. For taller, fuller stems, you can plant your seeds even further apart, but I like to keep them close together to keep them from growing too high.

Lightly cover your seeds with the surrounding soil and believe in tomorrow.



Zinnias

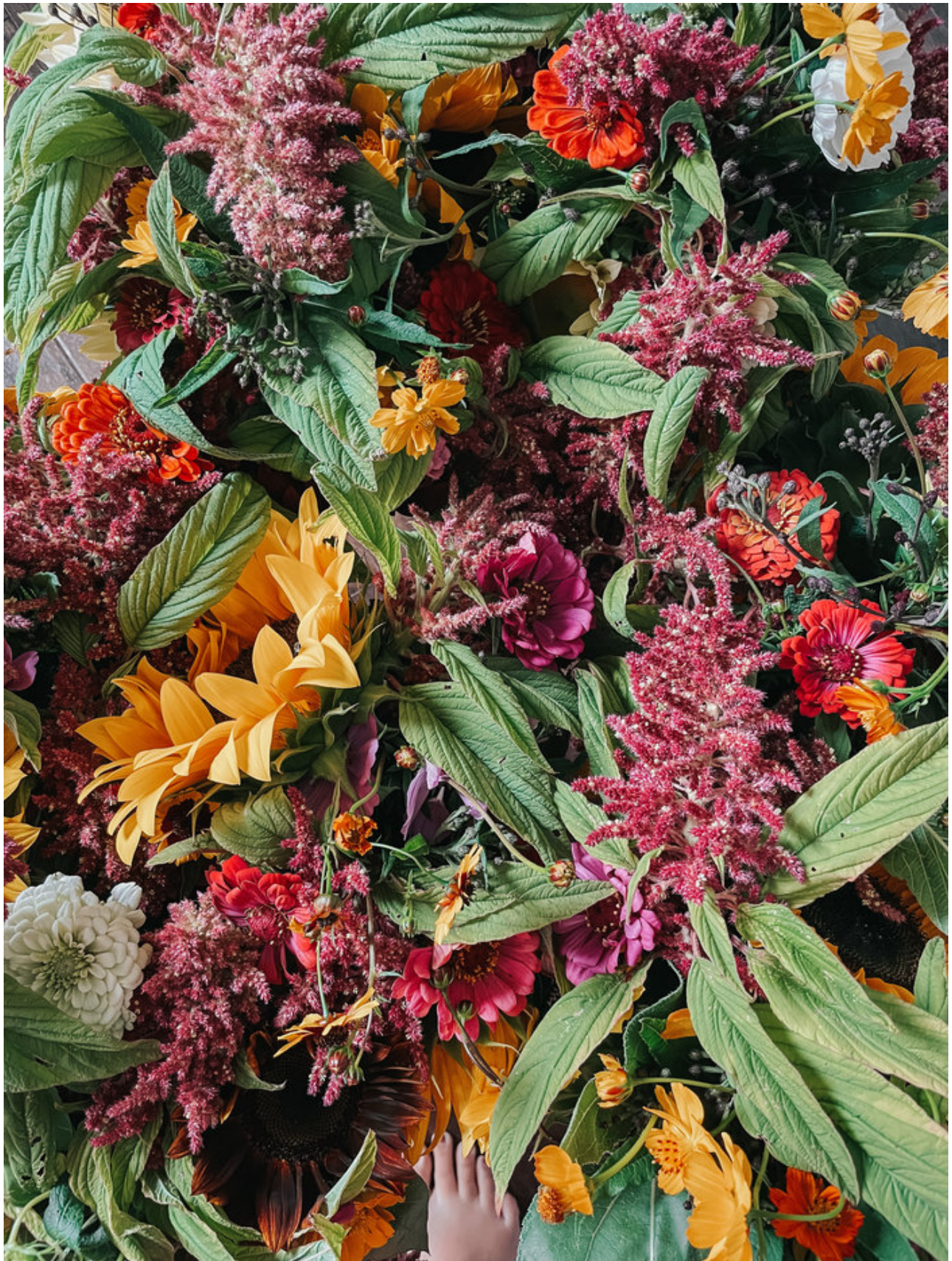
On to an equal favorite of mine for many of the same reasons as Cosmos, I am certain you too will fall in love with Zinnias.

I like to say that Zinnias and Cosmos are the confetti of flower growing. I truly believe you could throw handfuls out into your garden and come morning you would have a flower meadow. Obviously, that's a slight exaggeration, but you are going to love how easy it is to grow and maintain these gorgeous flowers.

You'll want to be sure that you direct sow these after your last frost date, once the soil temperature is above 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

After wetting your soil, use a pencil, or similar slender tool, to create holes about 1/4" deep 6" apart. You can also sow your zinnia seeds thinly in rows if you want to have shorter stems that produce fewer flowers. I like to space them out for larger blooms, but either method is perfectly fine.

Lightly cover your seeds with the surrounding soil and believe in tomorrow.



Amaranth

You are going to love growing Amaranth. Partly because it's so easy to grow, but mainly because it is a stunner both in your garden and throughout bouquets! Plus it looks as if it's a very high maintenance plant that is actually incredibly low maintenance.

You'll want to be sure that you direct sow these after your last frost date, once the soil temperature is above 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

After wetting your soil, you are going to want to simply place your seeds thinly on your soil and then top very lightly with additional soil and believe in tomorrow. Don't worry if you lay too many seeds down on the soil, we can thin those out at a later date!

How many times is too many times to use the word soil?!



Lemon Basil

Not only is Basil the perfect addition to any bouquet to add greens and filler, you are also going to love the sweet smell of citrus and basil combined.

You'll want to be sure that you direct sow these after your last frost date, once the soil temperature is above 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

After wetting your soil, use a pencil, or similar slender tool, to create holes about 1/4" deep 3" apart. Again, with all seeds, the closer you plant them the smaller they'll grow, the further apart you plant them, the taller and fuller they'll grow. It's all dependent upon your personal preference, there is no right answer.

Firmly cover your seeds with the surrounding soil and believe in tomorrow.



Orlaya

Now, Orlaya is a dainty white, filler flower, not a grass as shown above, but we are new to growing Orlaya and don't have a picture from our farm to include. So we're going to learn together this year how to grow Orlaya, but I think we're both up for the challenge!

You'll want to be sure that you direct sow these after your last frost date, once the soil temperature is above 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

For Orlaya blooms all summer long, I suggest planting half of your seeds now and then planting the second half of your seeds in 2-3 weeks. This is called succession planning and simply ensures that you have this particular flower all summer long as it is not considered a cut and come again flower as the rest of our varieties.

After wetting your soil, you are going to want to simply place your seeds thinly on your soil and then top very lightly with additional soil and believe in tomorrow. Don't worry if you lay too many seeds down on the soil, we can thin those out at a later date!



Where to Plant What

How you want to arrange your flowers in your garden bed is entirely up to you. You can plant, front to back or left to right, but I do want to share a little tip on the best way to plant for optimal results.

If you are planting front to back, you want to plant your smallest plants in the front and your tallest plants in the back to ensure they all receive adequate sunlight. But because spacing plays such a huge role in the height of your plants, I always suggest planting left to right to avoid this issue altogether.

Stand facing your 10x3 plot, with the sun to your back. That's where you want to be to envision your plants being planted left to right. So for example you can plant a few vertical rows back of cosmos, then beside that, plant a few vertical rows back of zinnias, and so on and so forth down the line until you've planted all 5 varieties.

For me, I plan to take the 120" inches (10 feet) of my flower bed and divide it into five equal sections, planting roughly the same amount of each plant. But as always, this is your experience. If you think you're going to love Zinnias most of all and you want more of them, plant more of them! If you don't think you're going to want much filler in your bouquets, plant less Basil.

This is your personal growing adventure. Plant as much or as little as any flower. There are no rules here!

If any of this isn't making sense in written word or you simply want to run your ideas for planting by me, please don't hesitate to reach out! I would love to talk through this with you so you feel confident in your plan! But no matter what, simply know you can't mess this up! God created seeds for the sole purpose of growing and thriving and they will do just that!

Just be sure to water your soil regularly after planting so that it doesn't dry out and in a few days, I am certain you will see new life begin to form!

I hope you have the best time planting your seeds and believing in tomorrow! Be sure to tag me @forwesaltandlight so I can celebrate every step of this journey with you! I can't wait to see how you grow!

With Salt + Light,
Mallory

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