

# Timely Turf



**The weatherman is talking 60 degrees on Sunday, spring is on the way.** And that means that the sap will be flowing, so if making maple syrup peaks your interest check out the MN Department of Natural Resources site, [www.dnr.state.mn.us/state\\_parks/maple\\_syruping.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/maple_syruping.html), for maple syruping events in the area this month. Learn more by watching a video or click on the links for details of the history and process of making syrup. Stop at the mill for tree tapping supplies if you want to try it.

## Seed Starting Basics

**Soil:** For very best results, use a sterilized soil or potting medium. Check the seed packet to determine the coverage needed for the type of seed planted. Stop by the mill to pick up a bag sterilized soil. See the coupon below to save on the purchase.

**Light:** Young seedlings will need about 14 hours of direct light a day. This may be the biggest challenge in starting seeds indoors. The sun will move past even the brightest window in a home, causing the seedlings to stretch towards the light and become leggy. Fluorescent lights work well because they emit very little heat and will not dry out the plants. Using a light timer set at 14 hours automates the task of controlling hours of light.

**Water:** Water enough to keep the potting mixture moist. Consider using a spray bottle to mist the soil or use a plastic dome or plastic wrap to keep the moisture in. Once the seeds germinate, loosen the plastic wrap (domes can be kept in place) and move the tray into bright light.

**Hardening Off:** Once the seedlings have grown, they will be ready to move outdoors when the temperatures warm. It's very important to get the seedlings used to being outside by hardening off. To do this, simply set the plants outside, out of direct sunlight for about an hour on a calm day. Increase this amount of time every day until the plants have stayed out all day. After about 10-14 days, the plants will be ready to go in the ground after the threat of frost has passed.

**When to Start:** To get more detailed information about how and when to start seeds, the University of Minnesota Extension has this helpful link: <https://extension.umn.edu/planting-and-growing-guides/starting-seeds-indoors>



## Friendly Reminders for March

- **Time for spring cleaning of wood duck and bluebird houses.** The mill has cedar shavings for wood duck house nesting material.
- **Lovers of pepper plants.** Now is when Steve is preparing for the upcoming season. Make sure your favorite pepper and tomato plants will be available this spring. Call 651-429-3361 today and talk to Steve or email him at [steve@hugofeedmill.com](mailto:steve@hugofeedmill.com).
- **Repot root-bound house plants now.** Increasing length of day leads to new growth and pot-bound plants benefit with a larger pot. Use a pot 2" larger in diameter than the existing pot. At the end of this month, jumpstart all indoor plants with a water-soluble fertilizer mixed at half strength. The mill has the potting soil and fertilizer needed.

Previous issues of Timely Turf Tips newsletters are available at our website: [www.hugofeedmill.com](http://www.hugofeedmill.com)

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