



Gardening News for Hopeman BALL Group

Introduction

Since we can't meet for a few weeks/months, and I said I would do some gardening tips, I have decided to write a kind of diary about what I am doing in my greenhouse and garden.

When I was about 5 years old, I had an Uncle Bert who was very disabled but loved gardening. I used to spend a lot of time with him just talking about anything. I especially loved the pansies which he grew. Our garden was not really well looked after, I used to often catch frogs and take them to my mother, but I desperately wanted to grow some pansies.

My uncle showed me the seed pods on the pansies and I was fascinated. He showed me how to take some pods and harvest the seeds. I took them home delighted with myself, dug a little patch amongst the weeds with a shovel (yes, a shovel) and planted the seeds. They were not very successful but I did get a few flowers. Germinating seeds has always been magic to me since then.

I am not a gardener who knows the answers, but just as a young child, I like to experiment.

Have you ever wondered which was the right way up to plant a seed or what happens if you plant one upside down? Have you tried it?



Here is a sunflower seed that I put in water to let you see how the seed grows. The root (the white bit) grows out of the pointy end. I am going to let this continue to grow in the water to let you see what happens. This seed had sat in the water for three weeks.

This sunflower seed will grow into a giant sunflower and I had planted enough for everyone in the BALL Group to have one so that we could have a competition to see who could grow the largest sunflower. I have grown one over 20 feet (yes) long. My neighbour, who was competing with me, grew a smaller one in height but it had a bigger flower head.

Do seeds from the largest sunflower grow similar sized plants next year?



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I planted 10 sunflower seeds in single pots on the same day that I put the previous one in water and stood them on a warming pad. It is a warming pad really for wine making but look at the results. 9 out of 10 of these seeds have germinated and I have now moved them to the greenhouse to a cooler environment to stop them getting leggy which they already are. If anyone would like one to grow on, let me know and I will leave one outside your door.



This is the warming pad, not beautiful but it works. These are some basil seedlings from seeds I planted last week. I always have trouble growing basil and although I have tried many things, I have never yet been very successful. I understand basil needs a lot of water and warmth and the seedlings don't like being uprooted to plant on. I will leave them on the warming pad and water them often. I will let you see what happens.

Let me know if you have any tips to make my basil grow better.

Some seeds naturally germinate more quickly than others. I planted these Californian poppies and these Cosmos on the same day. Look at the results.



Californian Poppies



Cosmos

Both of these plants are annuals. Why do you think I plant them in my greenhouse ?

Coming next time: Planting beetroot, annual, biennial and perennial plants.



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