



## 8 Steps to Planting a Garden:

**Prepare the Site – The Advance Team.** Over the winter a garden space can get trampled and weedy. We want to pull up all the weeds, fluff up the soil so roots can grow down into it, decide where paths go, and measure the planting bed areas so the other groups know how much space we have to plant vegetables. This group will also take a soil sample back to the Structure Group.

1. **Test the Soil – The Testing Team.** Plants, like people, need certain nutrients to grow well. Does the soil in the CFA garden have those nutrients? Does it have a neutral Ph that will allow the plants to absorb nutrients from the soil? The testing team will find out and report to the Amendment Group.
2. **Plant Seeds Inside – The Seed-Starting Team.** Some sensitive plants – like peppers and tomatoes – need a head start. We will plant their seeds in the greenhouse and take care of them until they grow into strong seedlings ready to go outside into the garden.
3. **Improve the Structure of the Soil – The Structure Team.** Plants grow best in soil that is not too sandy and not too heavy – soil that drains well but also holds moisture and nutrients. They like rich, dark, fluffy soil the texture and color of crumbled chocolate cake. To get that, we will first observe the sample and measurements from the Advance Team and then harvest as much compost as we think we need fix the CFA planting beds up right.
4. **Add Nutrients to the Soil – The Amendment Team.** The CFA planting beds might need more nitrogen, phosphorus or potassium. They might need to have the Ph of their soil adjusted. The Testing Team will tell us what is missing from the soil, and we will figure out (using the measurements from The Advance Team) how much of each nutrient we need to add. Then we will mix those amendments into the soil in the CFA beds.
5. **Plant Seeds Outside – The Sowing Team.** Tougher plants like beans can be planted right into the ground outside (once all the other groups have fixed up the soil!) The Sowing Group will plant those seeds in the CFA beds. We will also set up supports for plants that will grow really tall, like pole beans, so those can climb up the supports as they grow.
6. **Transplant Seedlings -- The Transplanting Team.** In late May, when the sensitive plants started in the greenhouse are strong enough and the weather warms up, we will move the little plants outside into the CFA beds.
7. **Label – The Signage Team.** We will create labels with information about each plant, and make the labels into signs to mark the plantings other teams have made in the garden. The signs are really important because volunteers who look after the garden in the summer need to know what is what, how to take care of things and when to pick the vegetables!