

Lamorinda OUR HOMES

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*Hiring Licensed or Unlicensed Contractors: What You Should Know
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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian **Weed, Seed, Feed!**

By Cynthia Brian

"Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap, but by the seeds you plant." - Robert Louis Stevenson

When is the right time to plant seeds? This is a question I have often been asked as I travel throughout the country speaking on gardening issues. Over the years I have embraced the age old farmer's timing technique for planting seeds in any climate, anywhere: if you can sit on the ground with your bare bottom and not feel too cold or wet, it's warm enough to sow!

This year the ground was especially warm earlier than usual and already I have tomatoes, peppers, and squash sprouting. Winter seemed to skip by Lamorinda as we went from autumn to spring. Weeds are not as ubiquitous as they have been in the past, yet before we sow our spring seeds, it is imperative to carefully edit and amend our gardens. If you planted cover crops such as vetch, clover, or fava beans, turn them over to add the much desired nitrogen and nutrients to the soil. Other weeds need to be manually pulled and either added to compost piles or put in the green bin. Once we have made sure our soil is rich and ready, it's prime time to buy the seed packets or six packs and start digging.

Arugula was my top pick for growing greens this season. I have planted runway serrated, rustic organic, true Italian organic, and, of course, my very favorite... wasabi. A jewel-toned blend of beets as well as purple and rattlesnake pole beans are already in the ground. A healthy crop of radiant radishes garnish our plates and butter lettuce is already curly and luscious. To add a bit of pretty to



Delicate butter lettuce is ready for the table.

Photo Cynthia Brian

the scene, I have sowed nigella mulberry rose, larkspur Parisian pink, Echinacea purpurea starlight, and rainbow poppies. They are not yet large

enough to photograph but I anticipate a complement of colors.

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