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# Homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE



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U. S. Department of Agriculture

TUESDAY, August 4, 1942

ANSWERS FROM

plant scientists of  
the U.S. Department  
of Agriculture.

QUESTION BOX

Why pea vines turn yellow and die?  
How save vegetable seeds?  
When plant raspberries?  
Plant now for fall green vegetables?

---ooOoo---

Today the questions from gardeners take first place for answers from scientists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

First question comes from a gardener who would like to put in garden peas for a fall crop but hesitates because she had such hard luck with those she planted this spring. She writes: "I made three plantings of green peas this year and none of them produced any peas. Each time the vines made a good growth at first and then the leaves began to turn yellow and finally the plant died before more than a couple of pods had formed. I should like to grow a fall crop of peas but don't dare until I know why the spring crop failed."

Scientists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Plant Industry suggest that the most likely cause is one of the numerous root rots which grow on young pea roots and eventually may kill the vine. These molds or fungi are in the soil. Rotating crops--that is, planting different kinds of vegetables after each other instead of the same vegetable over and over--helps cut down the destructive molds in the soil. But in small gardens where you have no room to rotate crops, these rots increase in the soil and sometimes destroy an entire planting. Sometimes you can beat the mold by giving the vines a head start. If they have plenty of plant food, they may be able to grow roots faster than the molds can rot them off.

Here are a few ways to avoid root rot when you put in your peas this fall.

First, be sure to use enough fertilizer in your garden, but don't let any chemicals



touch the seed. Second, plant the peas in a part of the garden where other vegetables have been growing, not where you planted them this spring. Third, wait to plant until the strong heat of midsummer is past unless you live in one of the more northern states where you must plant now to get a crop of peas before frost.

So much for garden peas. Now a question about storing vegetable seeds. A home gardener says: "I am going to have considerable leftover vegetable seed this year which I want to store safely for next year's use. Will you tell me the best way to store the seed to keep it in good condition?"

The scientists say that seeds of parsnips, onions and sweet corn are difficult to store so that they keep their vitality, but beans, peas, carrots, parsley and peppers will keep more easily. Other kinds of seeds you can often store for as much as 4 or 5 years with fair success.

Seeds keep best in a dry but cool place. In general, the higher the temperature and humidity--that is, the warmer and moister their surroundings--the shorter the time vegetable seeds will keep. Well-dried seeds will keep at ordinary room temperature for next season's use if the air of the room is also kept dry. But to keep seeds alive for several seasons--even the long-lived ones--seal them in glass jars or other containers, and store them in a cool place. Be sure they are perfectly dry when you put them in the container, and be sure the container is perfectly dry. You can learn more about storing vegetable seeds from a new leaflet published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. The leaflet is No.220 and called "Storage of Vegetable Seeds."

Now a question from a gardener who wants to grow raspberries. She says: "What season is best for planting raspberry bushes, and how long will the bushes bear?"

The horticulturists of the Department of Agriculture say that in general spring is the time to plant raspberries, but the red varieties you can plant in the



fall as well as the spring. With good care the planting should last from 10 to a dozen years.

Red raspberries are somewhat more hardy than the purple or black raspberries. In parts of the country where the temperature goes to 20 below zero, only the hardiest varieties will survive. Raspberries will grow on many different soils. There are varieties well adapted to the climate in the northern parts of this country. In the home garden red raspberries need very little spraying to control insects and disease---a great saving of labor and expense for the home gardener. But a disease causing spots on the canes affects the black raspberry. It is called anthracnose. Spraying for this disease may be necessary. Your State college or experiment station will tell you the best choice of varieties for your locality and the proper control measures for insects and disease.

Perhaps you'd like to know how many bushes to put out. Well, a hundred plants kept in good condition should produce at least 50 quarts of fruit a year. The plants will produce more berries as they become well established. A hundred plants should produce plenty of berries for the average family.

Here's another question about the fall vegetable garden. This letter says: "We usually run short of garden vegetables, especially green vegetables, in the early fall while the weather is still good for growing. Will you tell me what vegetables we can put in in summer for fall crops?"

The answer to that question depends partly on where you live. In parts of the country where the weather is very hot and dry in midsummer, you have to wait until later in the season to put in fall crops. But in more northern parts of the country, you can start putting them in right now--in fact, you must put them in now to have crops before the frost catches them. Good vegetables to put in first for fall greens are kale, collards, endive, leaf lettuce and turnips. All those start off well even during warm weather. You can also sow seed for Chinese cabbage, and in cool sections, for spinach. Green snapbeans can go in now for a fall supply.

You can also put in vegetables for winter storage--beets, turnips, carrots. It's always a good idea to wait until a shower has moistened the ground before planting seeds in summer.

That's all the questions and answers for today. More on Thursday.

