

Improved Seed Germination Environment[®]

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INTRODUCTION

I have chosen to share a simple method to create a germination environment that helps to provide stable moisture content, relatively warm temperatures, and physical protection for very tiny seedlings.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

- Plug flats are sown and watered in, then set out on benches.
- Vertical tags are removed and laid on the soil surface.
- We use inexpensive transparent polyethylene drop cloths, approximately 0.5-mil thickness, from the paint supply department of the hardware store. Lightweight sheeting works best because it conforms to the plug flats better, thus providing a more favorable microenvironment.
- The flats are covered closely and well tucked in.
- The covering remains in place until germination is considered complete, possibly until first true leaf. Further irrigation is usually unnecessary.

Some genera that have responded favorably include: *Lobelia ×speciosa*, *Lychnis ×arkwrightii*, *Rudbeckia fulgida*, *Bergenia cordifolia*, and *Heuchera sanguinea*.