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The summer garden is still in the seed packages, so let us talk about lettuce. Of the many different kinds, we grow a lot of the Batavian type. These are the summer crisp lettuces which hold up well in hot weather.
A cold frame was prepared in early April. An equal part of soil, compost and sand were thoroughly mixed up and put into a box six inches deep. Handfuls of rock phosphate and kelp were racked in and shallow furrows formed six inches apart.
I pour seed into the palm of my left hand and grab a pinchful with my right thumb and forefinger. By rubbing them, a steady flow of seeds thinly falls into the row. They need to not be piled up thickly, but about an inch apart.
The side of my hand pushes the seed down, and my fingers rake dry soil on top. I don't water it. There is plenty of moisture in the soil, and by firming the soil and seed together they will swell up and sprout, and they grow faster then vegetables.
Once the lettuce is up, fingers tickle the loose soil in the beds. The sand really helps keep the beds easy to work. In about a month the plants are five to six inches tall and ready to transplant.

A well-composted garden bed is prepared and the plants are dug up. One person drops and another person plants. The left hand pulls the soil open, and the right hand picks the lettuce plant up by the leaves. Once the root is in the hole both hands firm it in and down the row we go. Afterward we give them all a splash of water.
Nevada, Concept, Magenta, and Sierra are the Batavian lettuces lining the beds. We grow the Romaine varieties, Paris Island Cos and Winter Density. Buttercruch and Little Gem are Bibb varieties we also grow, and I like the Iceburg type called Prizehead.
Now all they need is a bit more tickling with that hoe about once a week and watch them grow. Lettuce quickly jumps up and covers the bed. They are set out about a foot apart in rows 18" wide, so as they mature their leaves touch and shade out the weeds.
Lettuce is cut when the heads have formed and then it is dipped in cool water. T his takes away the heat and keeps them from wilting. They are shipped quickly to a cooler cellar and then off to the customers.
The cool weather suits lettuce just fine. Soon it will warm up and we'll plant everything else. But the ground has to dry up first. Then we'll talk about something besides lettuce.