**Beginning Veggie Gardeners Program**

1. Newsletter mailing list with possible link from our website

* Sign up for it at front tills, information and veggie information kiosk
* Bi-monthly, Wednesdays
* Including:

What to plant right now (and what is in stock at the nursery)

Links to care sheets for each these plants

Relevant seminars coming up

Simple tips for the time of year (insects and remedies, tomato trellising options, harvesting etc.)

Looking ahead- what to plan for

* I could be in charge of getting the material together and putting it up, I would ask for help writing and thinking of the gardening tips section
* An email address where people can direct veggie gardening questions?

1. In-Store Consultation

* 30 minutes with an employee, off the sales floor ($)
* Outline customer goals and intentions, create a plan for planting locations and times, soil health, and what they need to begin
* Create a checklist that employee can go over with customer and they can take with them after, including a place to draw in garden and make a rough planting diagram
* Sign them up for veggie gardener newsletter
* Create relationship so customer feels comfortable asking questions throughout the growing season

Sign up sheet:

Name Phone Email Newsletter? In-Store Consult?

**Goals of Program:**

* **Successful beginning gardeners**

Because gardening is really fun and great and we know that! Having at least moderate success is really exciting and crucial in the first year. It does not need to be super complicated, but there are some practical considerations and mistakes that are really common when starting. Many people like to be educated and informed when starting something new. This program will help them avoid getting stressed or overwhelmed at the nursery.

* **Loyal Customers**

Customers who are successful in their first year are likely to be hooked as gardeners in general, which is good for our industry. Creating relationships with employees and knowing our nursery as a place where they can come with questions will keep them coming here rather than other places around town. Having a plan set in place early in the season will help them schedule specific visits to us to pick up soil or veggie starts. They will be less likely to forget and pick some up somewhere more ‘convenient’ (like where they pick up their groceries….)

* **Promote our reputation as a retail company that values education**

We value education, love learning and love teaching. This is a specific need and an opportunity for us to share our knowledge with the community.

* **Engaged and excited employees**

It is inspiring to work and share with beginning gardeners. This program would create an environment where good, solid communication is always possible and encouraged. It will be an opportunity to engage with customers fully and have a set time to give them our undivided attention and the best information possible.