

# EXTEND GROWING SEASON . . .



Plant-Grow earlier in the spring and later into the fall using **Row Covers and Cold Frames**.



**Row covers** can be purchased or built using a variety of cover materials, e.g. fabric, clear plastic, netting, screening, that are securely fastened to support arches of plastic or metal rods. Such row coverings protect early or late season plantings from cold wind, night chill and frost. Covered areas can be 15 degrees or more warmer than outside. Rising temperatures, blossoming and/or tall plants will require that row covers be removed or opened to avoid overheating wilt and to allow pollination during the summer season.

**Cold frames** can be built or purchased to be fixed or mobile but need to be south facing for the most sun warmth in early spring and late fall. Cool weather crops, i.e. lettuces, can be started from seed and raised in the frame. Warm weather crops, e.g. peppers, can be started from seed in early spring too but will need to be transplanted for larger growth. The lids must be closed against the night chill but opened to vent the afternoon heat. Glass, Plexiglas or clear plastic allow light into the plants. However, once the Spring nights stay above freezing without frost threat, the lids will need to remain fully open. If possible, the Cold Frame should be moved to a less sunny spot facing north to shelter cool weather crops from the heat of the summer sun.



Both row covers and cold frames offer frost protection as well as added warmth for seed-plant growth.

And, row covers can provide the added benefit of insect pest protection! However, please note that some crops, e.g. peppers & tomatoes, that need their blossoms pollinated to produce fruit, will need the cover removed when the plant flowers. Other crops, i.e. beans, squash, cucumbers & melons, that need pollination can have covers opened daily from 8 am till noon and then be re-covered to deter insect pests.