

## CAUSE OF BAD FLOWER SEEDS.

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Many are the complaints made about seedsmen selling bad seeds; I sow hundreds of papers of them every year from different seedsmen and collectors but very rarely find them bad, even with the most minute seeds. There are two great causes for this failure, and the directions that I give, if attended to, will obviate the necessity of seedsmen inserting such clauses in their catalogues as that they will not be responsible for failures, and will also save them much annoyance.

In this section (Ottawa) it is time enough to make a hot-bed the last week in March or first of April. Sooner than this for half-hardy annuals is of no advantage, as planting out is not safe before the 24th of May, and should not be done before the first of June. Usually at this time of the year we are free from night frost and the cold, bleak winds of early spring. I shall suppose your hot-bed made of horse manure, heated and well mixed, the fresh with the more rotten, so that your bed will sink evenly, having the box fitted to within six inches of the top (don't leave it like a cellar). In a few days the bed will be warm enough to receive the soil, but if not sufficiently heated, a bucket of warm water will greatly facilitate matters. Put the soil close to the sash; if you have no prepared soil put in the frozen lumps, they will soon thaw out and leave you a nice pliable soil, in fact better than you can get in any other way. Allow the steam to escape by raising the sash. The prevailing method is to dig below the frost for material for the hot-bed, thereby getting poor wet soil, which bakes so hard that it is impossible to remove plants without the destruction of the roots. Always add sand enough to keep the soil open.

When your soil is warm rake it smooth, leaving it four inches deep. Place on the inclined sash, which should be made very sloping, in order to run off the water easily and prevent dripping inside. You will probably have more soil than wanted, which it would be well to sift over the entire surface of the bed half an inch deep. Pass a straight piece of board over the surface, drawing it level, leaving the surface uniform and smooth.

To form the drills, which should be three inches apart, take a lath or some such piece of wood the length of your bed inside; sharpen a little by taking off the corners. Press the narrow edge into the