



NO MILKWEED IN TEXAS = NO MONARCHS FOR ANYONE

Milkweed Sprout Harvesting Propagation Method (71-78% success depending upon type of milkweed)

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(My own personal limitation is space. I didn't want to tie up pots and put in the planting time for seeds that would not be expected to germinate. This method greatly increased my germination rate.)

1. Pour 4 cups vermiculite in zip lock bag.
2. Put seeds into dry vermiculite and mix, shake to distribute seed.
3. Make vermiculite slightly moist twice a few hours apart to achieve moist not soggy. (1-2 cups water total). *Goal is for all vermiculite to be moist, not dry, not soggy.*
4. Put in refrigerator for 3 weeks. I use 36 degrees exactly with seed placed to rear of refrigerator to minimize temperature changes.
5. Remove from refrigerator and place bag in sunny window or under fluorescent light source until you begin to see evidence of first sprouting (white sprouts).
6. Using 13 x 9 foil pan or plastic tray, slide entire mix into pan trying to keep same top orientation. Gently spread out into pan.
7. Lightly water with lukewarm water (replicate warm summer rain) I use spray faucet.
8. Cover tray/pan tightly with plastic wrap. Sit in warm, light location.
9. When the first white sprouts begin appearing, you can plant any seed that shows evidence of sprouting or leave in tray until it gets first two leaves. Save unsprouted seeds, cover with plastic. Pic below is second *Asclepias veridis* harvest. A third harvest may occur if unsprouted seeds are placed outside once temperatures allow.
10. Prepare seed starter medium. Starting with an over the counter seed starter mix (Miracle Grow or equivalent), add a fine top soil to replicate your native soil, add perlite, add vermiculite to potting starter mix. (4 part seed starter, 2 part local top soil, 1 part perlite, 1 part vermiculite) (I also try to borrow some soil from end location and mix with potting starter mix.)
11. Fill plug tray or 2" pots with starter medium. Water gently to avoid washing out mix. Soak soil through to bottom of pot. Sit aside to drip.
12. Using fingers or pencil/chop stick, poke hole in each moist prepared plug/pot gently lift sprouting seed from sprout harvesting tray, place in prepared hole, leaf side up. Press soil to surround root.
13. When planting sprouted seedlings the biggest danger is not planting deep enough. Watch your seedling and add soil if root becomes exposed.
14. Using an oscillating fan to simulate normal wind for the planting area will slightly slow height growth but strengthen the stem system. Watering with rainwater increases viability from about 78% to almost 85% or higher.
15. Do NOT frequently repot milkweed. Plant directly into 1 qt pot where plant should remain for 1st two years.

