





# Horticulture 101 Student Writing: Plant Propagation

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*Horticulture 101 students hail from multiple disciplines, including horticulture, turfgrass, architecture, landscape architecture, engineering, chemistry, psychology, plus others. Each week students connect to the lecture or demonstration and to the required readings by writing both a reflective essay and a scholarly paragraph. The reflective essay is personal—it tells the story of a past experience or a relevant moment in time. The scholarly paragraph strictly focuses on the subject matter and is written in the third person using APA style citations. This page contains a sampling of student writing related to plant propagation.*

## Reflective Essay: Planting the Seeds of Education

By Tyler McLemore

Well as they say in Hollywood, “The show must go on.” And Dr. Vincent, even in your absence, due to your presentation at the SCHI conference, we still had a great class day. I always really enjoy the material presented during class, especially those class days where we get to walk around, go outside, or do something with our hands. This class was really neat because I had the opportunity to plant my first seeds and start a new plant with a clipping. I am really excited about this; I hope I can keep my plants alive for a long time. It’s like having a really, really low maintenance pet.

But after I planted my seeds and watered them, we returned to the classroom for the second part of our lesson on propagation. This part was presented by another professor of horticulture, Dr. Adelberg, who was exceptionally entertaining. I really enjoyed his laid back demeanor whilst maintaining a professional atmosphere. Though this man spoke of the propagation of plants, he took an approach that was less biological and focused on the historical perspective. I found it very interesting that mankind, after foraging for many years, decided to plant their own plants and take care of them so they wouldn’t have to run around in pursuit of fruits and vegetables. He told us that the first tool man had was a sharpened rock used for digging. This enabled people to plant valuable plants in a location that was more convenient.

Another really interesting fact he hit us with was that most plants that we eat

today would die out if we were not taking care of them. We apparently conditioned the plants to grow without thorns and without protection and with artificial watering and irrigation. So if people die out, so do all the plants that have learned to rely on us to survive. I found this shocking because I’m something of an apocalypse theorist, so if farmers die, so do a lot of maintained fields. Where would the surviving few find food? But anyway, I really enjoyed this lesson on plant propagation.

## Plant Propagation

By Hannah Medlock

I was fascinated with the plantings we did in class on Thursday. The seed germination made me nervous—I’m still really concerned about the seeds not sprouting. Anything where I have to start from scratch makes me nervous, and I hate failure. I can only hope that I heard all of the information correctly so that my plants can grow. I used to help my grandmother tend to her roses in her garden, but I’ve never grown plants from seeds like this. So seed germination is intimidating to me. I’ve also never hoped plants would grow from cuttings. I was really nervous my whole trip home because I was terrified I was going to pull the cuttings out of the soil. I was glad when I realized how important the nodes were in allowing the roots to grow. I was also really proud for remembering to identify the leaves on the Swedish Ivy as opposite leaf configuration instead of alternate or whorled. I feel like I’m learning the material! Just as a side note, my Swedish Ivy has, in fact, begun to root in the soil. I am incredibly excited about it! Hopefully I can keep it alive!

## Reflection Assignment: My First Herb Garden

By Jamie Russell

One of my favorite class experiences to date, was getting to plant my own little herb garden. I never actually thought, we the students, would be able to get our hands dirty. Last Thursday’s class was the first time I had ever heard of putting plants in plastic bags to create a greenhouse effect. I am crossing my fingers and hoping that my garden will survive the rest of the cold winter as well as the looming presence of my rowdy roommates. After being told the simple ingredients to growing my own plants, I am looking forward to the day my plants will see the spring sunshine.

## Plant Propagation Facts: Scholarly Paragraph

By Jamie Russell

When propagating plants, there are simple facts that one should know. To begin with, it is important to know what form the plant should be propagated from. For instance, cilantro (*Coriandrum sativum*) is propagated by seed (Walters, 2007). Some other plants, however, may be propagated by clippings from a full grown plant (S. Halloran, demonstration, February 3, 2011). Another important factor when propagating plants is seed depth. Cilantro seeds must be planted quite shallow in order for the plant to grow properly. The final factor is to create optimal growing conditions by giving the plant the right amount of water and sunlight. Cilantro is best grown in full sunlight and should be given about an inch of water per week (Walters, 2007). If these actions are taken, one is likely to grow a healthy plant.

**Works Cited:** Walters, A. (2007, June) Southern Illinois University Carbondale horticultural factsheet 4, cilantro. Retrieved February 7, 2011, from <http://psas.siu.edu/faculty/pubs/Walters-71637CilantroNews2>.