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Roger Doiron question

Thu, 04/01/2010 - 13:09 -- Roger Doiron
Question:
My seedlings are getting too big for their pots but it's too cold to plant them outdoors. What can I do?
Image (optional):

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Answer::

You're right to be concerned about seedlings that seem too big for their pots. Chances are they're becoming potbound, which means that the plant's roots have filled all the space available in the pot. When this happens, the plants can become stressed, and they won't perform as well as plants whose growth is unchecked. The best thing you can do is to repot your seedlings, putting each one into its own 2"-3"/5-7.6 cm pot (choose a pot that provides about 25 percent more root space than the seedlings have right now). This goes for purchased seedlings as well as homegrown seedlings that have gotten a bit too large for their cell packs or pots. The plants benefit from the extra root room, even if they receive only a week of extra time for growing and hardening off before being moved to the garden.True, repotting is extra work, but it allows seedlings to continue growing without interruption, which means better transplant success and better yields

once plants are in the garden. If you can't plant outdoors on schedule and don't have time to repot, water with a half-strength dilution of liquid fertilizer. Reprinted from The Veggie Gardener's Answer Book Copyright 2008 by Barbara W. Ellis, with permission from Storey Publishing. Creative Commons photo credit:gezellig-girl.com

Question Details (optional):

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