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Time and space

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When we moved to France last year I was very excited to start my own kitchen garden and could not wait to get the first vegetables in. But moving house takes a lot of time and we had no patch of land prepared and ready for planting. We did however have an old feeding trough and a narrow strip of flowerbed were no flowers grew and a I managed to hack away 1 m2 turf. It was late May and past the planting season for most vegetables. Our local hardware store is also the place for seeds and soil and they had still some tomato and courgette plants left that looked more than ready to be planted. I bought 2 tomato´s and 2 courgette found one pepper and a aubergine and was very content with this handful to start off our kitchen garden. When I went to pay for them and the 3 sacks of soil, the very jolly owner of the store helped me to load the heavy bags into my car and asked me to wait a moment. `Here` he said handing me a box full of plants `I?d rather see them planted than go to waste` A little overwhelmed I thanked him in my best French and went home trying to contain my curiosity to find out what was in the box. After unloading the sacs of soil I carefully took out the plants: 2 bell peppers, 1 melon, 1 pumpkin, 4 courgette, 1 aubergine, 3 tomato?s, one plant without a label, and 1 rosemary in dire need of a drink. With no time to dig up more turf I planted them in the little space I had, found some containers and filled those and hoped for the best. Most of the tomato?s found a place in the containers and in the old feeding trough. And most of the courgette found their new home in the m2 in the of freshly dug up turf, alongside the bell pepper and the melon. I did do some thinking about the arrangement, I planted the melon on the outside hoping it would crawl onto the lawn and the peppers in the back against the wall where they would get the most sun and some warmth from the stone wall and 4 courgette in the middle because it looked neat. A few days later my neighbor brought over her first crop of courgette for us to enjoy and with some pride I showed her our vegetable patch that was now scattered all over our garden. In rapid French she commented on our garden but she fell silent when she saw my m2 of courgette that were now growing fine, she gave me a brought smile and invited me over to her garden: ?here? she said, ?these are my courgette I looked at the enormous plants and it slowly dawned on me and my jaw dropped. My neighbor saw the light bulb go on in my head and patted me on the back ?now you see Madam Courgette?? I looked again at here courgette plant that took up more than 1m2 and saw her grin. My tomatoes and peppers did very well en even my courgette managed to produce teeny tiny courgettes, the rosemary grew out of its container and I grew in to my nickname Madam Courgette, but we never did find out what the unlabeled plant was.

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