

# Garden Transplants Need Protection From the Elements



Newly transplanted vegetable starts really benefit from some protection against the wind, sun and cold for at least a week after planting. Wind can dry out tender young plants and temperature changes can shock, dry out, freeze-damage or even kill them. Young plants are also vulnerable to sunburn.

Gardeners can protect plants with materials found around the house. The following methods are for protecting young transplants:

- Place a shingle or similar type of broad, flat object in the ground on the windward side of the young plant. Or use the shingle to protect from the afternoon sun.
- Use old tires to surround heat-loving pepper and tomato transplants, planted after the last potential frost. In the foothills, this is generally around May 15, or later at the higher elevations.
- Cut the bottoms out of gallon plastic milk or juice containers and place them over individual plantings.
- Arch old newspapers over rows of plantings to form a protective tent, with the centerfold in the newspaper forming the peak of the tent. Anchor the outer ends of the newspaper pages touching the ground on either side of the plant row with stones or other heavy objects.
- Place large cans with the tops and bottoms cut out over individual plantings to provide wind protection. A large plastic or paper cup with the bottom cut out would work as well.
- Form a long tent or cloche with plastic sheeting over rows of plantings. Make small hoops out of half-inch PVC pipe. Or drive stakes into the ground at either end of the row and string a piece of rope between the stakes so it is suspended over the row about a foot off the ground. Then drape the plastic over the rope and anchor it to the ground on either side of the row with stones or other weights. Be aware that plants may be damaged if the day is hot.
- Use spun row cover material, such as Remay, over young plants. These new materials protect from wind and cold, as well as some pests. As with plastic, spun row cover material must be secured tightly.

This article adapted from Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, USDA. Please contact the Farm Advisor's office at [cdcalaveras@ucdavis.edu](mailto:cdcalaveras@ucdavis.edu) or 754-6477 with your agricultural questions. Talk to a certified Master Gardener every Wednesday, 10:00-12:00, 754-2880.