

uncovered and the soil stirred. It will be unsafe to sow or plant treated soil until the smell of formalin has disappeared from the soil, which usually takes from 5 to 7 days.

Soil when put into seed boxes should be firmed evenly, particular attention being paid to the corners, so that finally the soil is about $\frac{3}{4}$ in. below the tops of boxes. Seed should be scattered over the soil not too thickly and covered with a thin layer of finely sifted sandy soil. This should be watered with a fine rose. The box should then be covered with glass with a sheet of paper on top and placed in a sunny, sheltered situation.

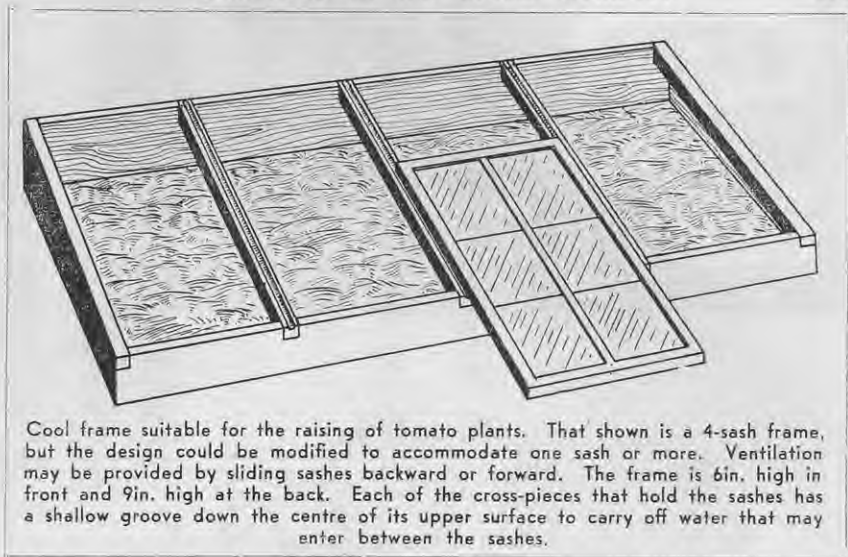
Seedlings will appear in from 7 to 10 days, when the covering should be removed.

Pricking out

As soon as the true leaves appear the seedlings should be pricked out into seed boxes similar to the box used for the sowing of seed. A suitable soil for pricking the plants into is one similar to that described for seed boxes, except that a sprinkling of superphosphate should be added. This soil should also be treated with formalin and the plants should not be set until all trace of the formalin has gone.

Seedlings should be planted in the soil up to the seed leaves and the soil firmed about their roots, but not tightly against the stems. Plants, which should be about 2 in. apart, must be handled carefully by the leaves, as the stems are very easily injured and should not be handled between finger and thumb.

If the weather is bright, the plants should be shaded until the following day. When they have straightened up they should be watered through a fine rose. After the first watering plants should be given no more than is sufficient to keep them growing. They should be placed in a well-sheltered,



Cool frame suitable for the raising of tomato plants. That shown is a 4-sash frame, but the design could be modified to accommodate one sash or more. Ventilation may be provided by sliding sashes backward or forward. The frame is 6 in. high in front and 9 in. high at the back. Each of the cross-pieces that hold the sashes has a shallow groove down the centre of its upper surface to carry off water that may enter between the sashes.

sunny position. In about 5 or 6 weeks the plants should be 6 to 8 in. high and ready for transplanting to their permanent positions outside. Plants when removed from boxes will carry soil with them. Even at this stage they must be handled with great care to avoid injury.

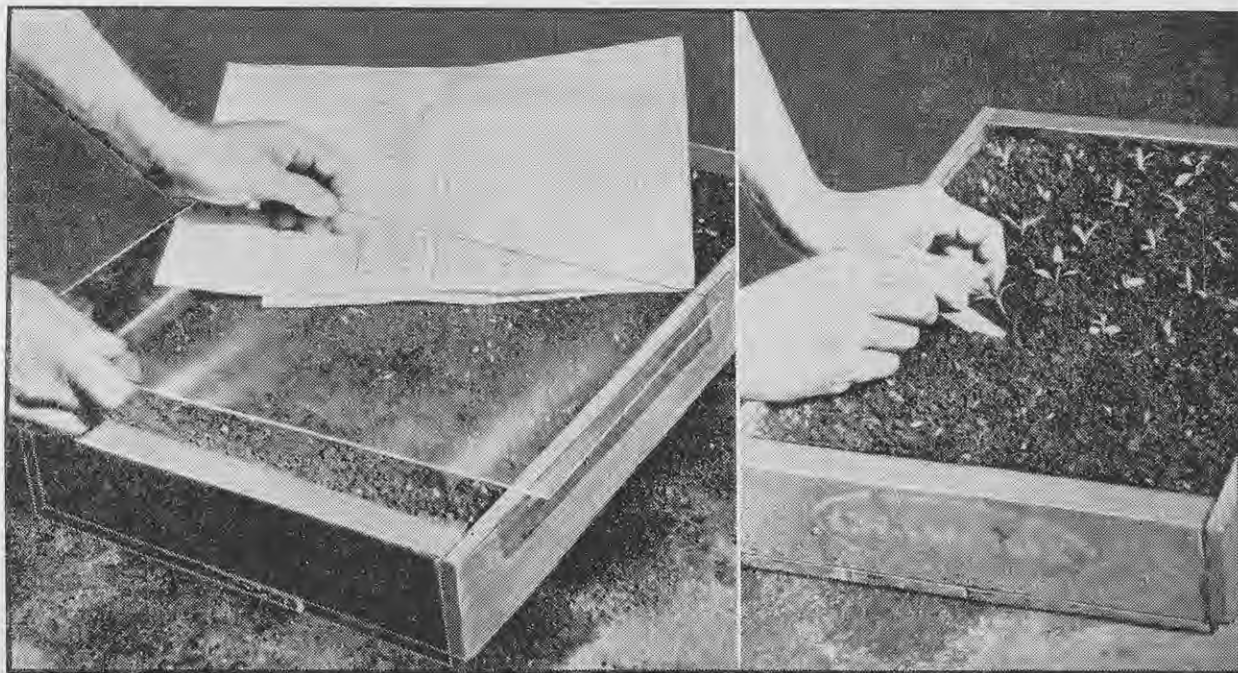
Bought Plants

Bought plants should be stocky and well grown and about 6 in. high; spindly, long-stemmed plants which have not been properly hardened off should not be accepted. Hardening off is the process of subjecting the plants gradually to conditions similar to those

they will have when planted out. If bought plants appear to be very tender, it is advisable to harden them off at home before planting them out in the open.

Soil Preparation

A well-drained, warm, sheltered position is desirable and the soil should be dug deeply. A good fertile soil is essential for high production and stable manure, compost, or a green crop can be used to improve the soil. Where a green crop has been grown it should be dug in 4 to 6 weeks before tomatoes are planted to allow time for the green material to decompose.



Raising plants. Left—A piece of glass should be placed over the seed box to hasten germination and to hold moisture. A sheet of paper can be placed on the glass to reduce the intensity of sunlight, but it must be removed as soon as the seedlings appear. Right—Pricking out seedlings.