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Developing Positive Minds & Healthy  
Bodies for a Brighter Future!



# KNOW YOUR VEG

## Discover broad beans



Broad Beans

Here's the chance for you to discover some of the basic facts about Broad Beans as well as some essential growing tips. Use these to decide whether you want to grow the vegetable, whether you are able to and what you need to do or look out for in order to grow a bountiful crop!

**Other names:** Vicia Faba

**Appearance:** Grown in fat waxy pods on rigid and erect plants that also produce dense flowers; the bean is the seed eaten from inside and has a thick texture that tastes floury

**Popular varieties:** The Sutton AGM & Aquadulce Claudia AGM

**Interesting fact:** History suggests that the growing of broad beans goes back to 6000 BC

**Nutritional value:** Rich in protein, high in riboflavin (vitamin B) and vitamin C

**When to grow:** Seed directly into the ground in either early spring or autumn

**Likes:** A sunny or sheltered site with well drained soil; warm soil using polythene covering, particularly important if planting in autumn; regular watering; taller plants or those exposed to windy conditions like support with stakes or canes

**Dislikes:** Weevils in early spring; aphids

**Harvest time:** Early summer for spring planting; late spring for autumn planting

**Watch out for:** Pests - protect all young plants with netting or fleece material; mildew in dry conditions

**Cooking tips:** Eat raw or cooked when the beans are young and fresh

# Essential Growing Tips for broad beans

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Broad Beans

- These are the hardiest type of beans to grow. Young plants can survive being outside all winter as long as they are not attacked by birds and mice. Cover with anti-bird netting or fleece. Beans sown in the autumn and left to grow outside or in pots in cold frames will give the earliest crop.
- Seeds can also be sown in spring for a late spring/early summer crop. Plant seeds about 3cm (1.2") deep and about 23cm (9") apart. Rows should be 23cm (9") apart.
- Tall growing varieties will need staking. Put posts at either end of the row and stretch string between them. Shorter varieties can be supported by twigs.
- Broad Beans like good, heavy soils but it must not be waterlogged. Do not grow broad beans in the same spot two years running as it can cause a build up of diseases in the soil. Choose a sunny spot. Add some fertiliser about one week before sowing.
- The biggest problem with broad beans are insects which gather on the growing tips of the plants. If this happens, the only solution is to break off the growing tip - with its insects - and destroy it. We would encourage the use of biological pest control to fend off aphids and weevils as it is much better to be proactive than reactive.
- The black and white flowers are fragrant and very pretty. The pods which follow the flowers may be short and broad or long and narrow.
- Pick broad beans when they are the size of a little finger. The scar on the bean's edge should be white or green. If the beans are left unpicked, the skins become leathery and tough.
- When harvesting is complete, dig the plants into the soil. This will provide the soil with a rich, nutritious green manure.

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