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KNOW YOUR VEG Discover broccoli

Here's the chance for you to discover some of the basic facts about Broccoli 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: Brassica Oleracea

Appearance: Fleshy green flower heads arranged in a tree-like fashion on branches sprouting from a thick, edible stalk

Popular varieties: Arcadia AGM (summer crop) and Rudolph (mid-winter crop)

Interesting fact: George H W Bush, the former U.S.A. President made a negative comment in public about Broccoli and was sent several tons of it direct to the White House from the Agricultural Lobby

Nutritional value: Fat-free; Vitamin C & E, fibre and iron

When to grow: Mid-spring (early varieties); mid-summer (late varieties)

Grown from: Seed or young broccoli plants

Likes: Full sun; rich & firm soil; netting to protect from pests & pigeons; plenty of water; cooler weather

Dislikes: Hot summer weather; slugs and snails

Harvest time: When flower shoots are well developed but before being open; mid-summer (earlies) and late-autumn (late varieties)

cooking tips: Boil and eat with a roast dinner or on its own with butter

Essential Growing Tips for broccoli



- The limegreen, white and purple colours make broccoli a colourful sight on the vegetable patch.
- Sprouting broccoli has masses of small heads which are produced from late winter onwards. It can take a long time to grow, spending nearly a year in the ground before harvesting. It is the hardiest type of broccoli and lasts well.
- Calabrese or green sprouting broccoli can be harvested the same year as planting. From a spring sowing, it is ready for picking by autumn. This type of broccoli has one big head which can be divided into smaller pieces.
- There are some very pretty forms of Calabrese such as Romanesco which has lots of close-packed pointed spears forming one large head. The heads appear in November and it has a lovely taste.
- Sow small amounts of calabrese seed at regular intervals to avoid gluts. 2 or 3 seeds should be sown at each spot about 15cm apart. This avoids having to move seedlings - calabrese does best if it is not moved around. Rows should be 30cm (12") apart, sow seed 1cm (0.5") deep.
- Broccoli seed should be sown mid - spring also 1cm (0.5") deep. Broccoli seedlings should be thinned out to give them space to grow once they are big enough to handle without causing damage. Put the seedlings at least 60cm (24") apart, in rows 60cm (24") apart.
- Keep well watered. They do not like to get dry.
- Broccoli shoots may need soil being pulled up around the stem as it develops. This is essential in windy areas as the plants need a lot of stability. Broccoli likes firm, fertile soil.
- To protect against slugs we recommend the organic method of applying biological Nemaslug pest control, using slug copper rings or eco-friendly recycled ring boards. Nemaslug contains nematodes that are tiny microbes which have to be watered into the soil and attack the young slugs as they grow.

**For further information call 0845 402 5300, or visit
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