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KNOW YOUR VEG Discover carrots

Here's the chance for you to discover some of the basic facts about Carrots 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: Daucus Carota

Popular varieties: Adelaide AGM and Flyaway

Interesting fact: A story in World War 2 was created by the government that soldiers and pilots were fed lots of carrots to help them see in the dark – all to protect the invention of the radar!

Nutritional value: Full of vitamin A, other vitamins and minerals; good for eyesight, skin, hair and brain

When to grow: Late winter or early spring

Grown from: Seeds in pots and planted out when strong enough

Likes: Open and sunny site; sandy, light and well-drained soil; growing in a deep ground; being kept warm early on with polythene or cloches; hot weather; regular weeding; mesh netting to protect against the carrot root fly

Dislikes: Carrot root fly & aphids

Harvest time: Mid May until mid March

Watch out for: Tiny holes in the carrots – a sign of the carrot root fly

Cooking tips: Eat raw, in salads, boil or steam them before serving with a meal

Essential Growing Tips for carrots



Carrots

- Carrots can be grown most of the year. Nantes and globe shaped carrots are ready to eat during the summer; Autumn King varieties can be harvested in the autumn. Late autumn to early winter are good times to harvest stump rooted Chantenay types, while long rooted Berlicum varieties like Camberley are best harvested during winter and spring.
- For something different try coloured carrots. Carrots are not always orange - you can get purple, yellow, white and purple carrots with orange insides.
- Choose a sunny spot to plant carrots. If your soil is heavy or stony choose short rooted varieties.
- Seed should be sown straight into the earth. To grow well, the soil needs to be light, well drained and deep. Sow seed as thinly as possible about 1cm (0.5") deep and cover lightly. Baby carrots from a spring sown crop can be harvested as early as June.
- If the ground is very dry, water well before digging up roots.
- Carrot fly can be a big problem. Avoid it by taking simple measures such as using a long lasting fine mesh netting like our insect-mesh netting over hoops that also prevents caterpillars and birds. It's also a good idea to grow onions next to carrots. The scent of onions is said to mask the smell of carrots and stops the carrot flies from laying their eggs. Growing marigolds or love-in-a-mist between rows of carrots can also help hide the carrot smell.
- Use raised beds - carrot flies fly close to the ground, and do not fly upwards over obstacles. Raised beds also keeps the soil warmer and retains moisture that saves on watering. Covering early crops with fleece or using fleece tunnels will also help, especially in the winter.
- Sow quick growing types like Nantes which have to be sown in June. This avoids the main egg laying period. There are also some varieties which are more resistant to carrot fly such as Resistafly or Flyaway.

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