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KNOW YOUR VEG

Discover Sweet peppers

Here's the chance for you to discover some of the basic facts about Sweet Peppers 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!



Sweet Peppers

Other names: Capsicum Annuum

Appearance: Bell-shaped and green in colour when immature but changes to red, yellow, orange or purple when ripe; tastes succulent with sweetness varying according to colour

Popular varieties: Gourmet AGM & Gypsy AGM

Interesting fact: The name "pepper" was given by the famous explorer Christopher Columbus who brought the vegetable to Europe

Nutritional value: Vitamin A and C; Antioxidants (vitamin E)

When to grow: Seed into pots in late winter to early spring; transfer to larger pots as the roots grow and then into tubs or growbags; plant out in early summer into the ground when late spring frosts have passed

Likes: Sunny site, shelter and high temperatures achieved by a polytunnel or large protective frame; needs a well drained and moisture retentive soil; well rotted organic matter dug into ground before planting; general liquid feed fertiliser when growing; fleece to keep plants warm and protected from pests

Dislikes: Cool conditions and wet soil; humid air in greenhouses; red spidermite; aphids

Harvest time: From early summer; pick when small, before any swelling of seeds and snap off the plant

Watch out for: Lack of air in greenhouses where high humidity leads to rot and promotes activity from pests

Cooking tips: Crisp and refreshing when ate raw on its own or in salads; can be roasted and stuffed; used to add flavour in sauces, stews, relishes and casseroles

Essential Growing Tips for Sweet peppers



Sweet Peppers

- Choose your seeds with care. There are different types - sweet peppers are large fruits. Chilli peppers are smaller and much hotter. Sweet peppers can be picked when they are green or they can be left to turn red.
- Peppers are easy to grow, especially in pots. They need a sunny site. If you are using grow bags push them against a sunny wall to provide extra warmth.
- The stems will need supporting from canes or wires. Growing tips do not have to be pinched out like cordon tomatoes.
- Seed must be sown indoors using pots or trays. In late winter, sow the seed about 1-2cm (0.5"-1") deep, and cover lightly with soil. They will have to be left in a warm spot where the temperature reaches around 70°F, 21°C.
- When the seedlings appear they can be left to grow in a temperature of between 12-15°C, 55-60°F. The seedlings should be separated into individual pots when they are about 5cm (2") high. Gradually lower the temperature around the plants, getting them used to outdoor temperatures. They can be planted in a permanent position in the vegetable plot when the first flowers appear.
- Alternatively, keep moving them into increasingly larger pots. Do not put more than three plants in a grow bag. Fruits can be picked in late summer and through into the autumn.
- Plants need to be kept supplied with water and fed regularly if growing in pots. When the plants are about 38cm high, gently take off the growing tips of each plant. This will encourage it to stay a manageable size, and increase its production of fruit.

For further information call 0845 402 5300, or visit
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