

How to Grow Rhubarb

Rhubarb is a versatile, delicious vegetable that is often overlooked. It is a long-lived perennial that is commonly used in pies, cakes and other desserts.

Rhubarb prefers:

Light:	Sun-part shade
Soil:	Well-drained
Fertility:	Medium-rich
pH of:	6.0-6.8
Temperature:	60-65 degrees
Moisture:	Average
Fertilizer:	Sidedress with compost or manure and apply 10-10-10 fertilizer yearly
Yields:	High yielding, amount depends on variety of rhubarb

Rhubarb is grown from tubers or roots, and is a very easy to grow perennial vegetable once established, living upwards of 20 years! To begin preparing for planting, choose a location with plenty of sun and fertile, well-drained soil. Choose a large area, as each rhubarb plant will spread to fill out a 4-foot area (depending on the variety you choose to plant). Make sure that you choose a variety that will work for you, as the size, appearance and taste can vary from variety to variety. After all, you will have these plants for a very long time!

In the fall before you plant your crop, loosen the area and amend with compost, manure, grass clippings and other organic matter to prepare the soil. The following spring, remove all of the weeds from the area and plant crowns after the frost-free date in your area. Plant the crowns about 2" deep; fertilizing and watering well are recommended after planting the crowns.

After planting, it will take at least two years for your rhubarb to be productive. Waiting until the third year after planting will make for a healthier, more productive plant. However, you may do a light cutting the second year if desired.

Rhubarb does best with regular fertilizer applications. In the spring, about a half pound of 10-10-10 fertilizer should be applied in a 2-foot circle around the base of each plant, and then be slightly worked into the soil. This fertilization will help to provide you with a spring, summer, and perhaps even a fall crop before winter.