



Cucumbers

It might seem like you hear it over and over again, but once you eat a home grown cucumber, the ones from the supermarket will never taste the same, or even taste good, again. Cucumbers are fairly easy to grow and do well in raised beds. If you want to grow cucumbers in containers, use a wide, short one for the shallow, spreading roots.

Start cucumber seeds outside if the soil has warmed to at least 60 degrees and the danger of frost is past. If you start them inside, use peat pots to avoid disturbing the roots. If you buy plants, do not try to get them out of the peat pots we sell them in. Just plant them, pot and all. Cucumbers like a soil pH between 6.0/6.5.

Select a site for your cucumbers that gets good sun. Cucumbers are a great vegetable to grow vertically. The long vines can be tied up on a trellis or fence to save space in the garden plus get your crop off the ground. A wealth of ideas for trellising your cucumbers can be found on line. If you plant in the garden and allow vines to sprawl, use mulch such as straw to keep your cucumbers dry and happy.

Make sure you can get good water to your cucumbers and do not allow the soil to dry out. The common complaint of bitter cucumbers is often the result of too little water. Make sure, however, that your soil has good drainage. Cucumbers do not like standing water.



The most common pest for cucumbers is the common cucumber beetle. They damage plants by chewing on them but can also spread diseases such as bacterial wilt and mosaic. When beetles are small they can be plucked off and squished. And as crazy as it may sound, a large infestation can be gently vacuumed off using a crevice tool. Organic insecticides can also be used to control beetles.



Lastly, pick your cucumbers!! If you allow cucumbers to yellow on the vine, the vine will stop producing. If you can't give them away, try to find time to toss them in the compost pile before they start to go bad.

Even our short growing season allows you to grow and harvest mature cucumbers during the summer. Both salad and pickling varieties do very well here. There are also some heirloom varieties that are fun to try. Cucumbers are loaded with vitamin C and potassium and have a very low calorie count. You really can't beat 'em so give them a try this year!