

**Join the beet renaissance!**

The owner of Botanical Interests, Inc, our seed packet supplier, has this to say about beets:

"*Of course, a lot of vegetables taste different/better home grown than from a grocery store, but beets probably have the most dramatic difference. After harvest, sugars in beets decrease dramatically - rendering them with a flavor not nearly as good as home-grown. No wonder many people didn't like beets as kids*!"

Beets are increasing in popularity in restaurants and stores are carrying more and more varieties of them. Couple that with all their nutritional value and it's no wonder the National Garden Bureau declared 2018 the Year of the Beet!

Why grow beets?

1. Beets contain significant amounts of fiber, potassium, folic acid, and vitamin C, in addition to the betalains, powerful antioxidants, that give red beets their hue.
2. A colorful variety of different beets with subtly different flavors are available, including gold ('Golden Boy'), white ('Avalanche'), and striped ('Chioggia').
3. Beets take up very little garden space.
4. Beet leaves are delicious and one of the most tender greens.

Beet growing tips:

* Soak seeds for 2 to 24 hours before sowing to hasten germination.
* Ten feet of beets can yield about 30 beets!  Fresh beets keep about a month; sow more for canning or juicing!
* Beet "seeds" are actually dry fruit containing many seeds that often germinate in clusters, so proper thinning is very important.
* Sow 2 to 4 weeks before average last frost, when soil temperature is at least 45°F. Also sow 6 to 8 weeks before first fall frost for late summer/fall crop. Growing during hot temperature periods should be avoided. Mild Climates: Sow fall through winter.
* For early spring sowings, harvest beets before summer heat. For late summer sowings, harvest before first heavy frost. For winter sowings in mild climates, harvest in early spring. Harvest when roots are anywhere from 1"-3" in diameter. **Do not let them get too big;** the smaller they are, the more tender. Beet greens are even more nutritious than the roots. Greens are most tender when small, so harvest starting when they are 2" tall. You can take as much as one third of a beet plant's outer leaves without harming the root crop.



 