



**CORNELL
COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION OF
ONEIDA COUNTY**

HOME GROWN FACTS

121 Second Street Oriskany, NY 13424-9799
(315) 736-3394 or (315) 337-2531 FAX: (315) 736-2580

GROWING BOK CHOY



Also known as Pak Choy, Pak choi, Bok choi

No matter how you spell it, bok choy's mild flavor is a must for stir fries. It's not as finicky about heat and cold as Chinese cabbage, and the striking white petioles and green leaves make it a must for edible landscaping.

Site Characteristics

Sunlight:

- full sun
- part shade

Partial shade can help prevent summer crops from bolting.

Soil conditions:

- requires well-drained soil

Prefers well-drained, fertile soil high in organic matter, pH 6.0 to 7.5. Can tolerate slightly alkaline soil. Needs plentiful, consistent moisture.

Plant Traits

Lifecycle: annual

Biennial grown as an annual.

Ease-of-care: moderately difficult

Spring crops require good timing and careful pest control. Direct-seeded fall crops are easier to grow.

Height: 1 to 2 feet

Spread: 1 to 1.5 feet

Foliage texture: medium

Shape: cushion, mound or clump

Tolerates:

- frost - Spring crops may bolt prematurely if young plants are exposed to frost or a week of nighttime temperatures below 50 F. Wait until after last frost date to direct seed or transplant out.

Growing Information

How to plant:

Propagate by seed

Germination temperature: 50 F to 80 F

Days to emergence: 4 to 7

Helping You Put Knowledge to Work

Cornell Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities. NYS College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, NYS College of Human Ecology, and NYS College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University, Cooperative Extension associations, county governing bodies, and U.S. Department of Agriculture, cooperating.

Seed can be saved 4 years.

Maintenance and care:

While not as sensitive to heat and cold as Chinese cabbage, spring crops may bolt prematurely if young plants are exposed to frost or a week of nighttime temperatures below 50 F. Wait until after last frost date to direct seed or transplant out.

Start transplants inside 4 to 6 weeks before last frost date. Transplant 6 to 12 inches apart in rows 18 to 30 inches apart. Use the closer spacings for smaller varieties.

Plant direct-seeded spring crops ¼ to ½ inch deep and about 1 inch apart in rows 18 to 30 inches apart. Thin to 6- to 12-inch spacings. Use thinnings in salads.

For fall crops, direct seed ¼ to ½ inch deep in rows 18 to 30 inches apart in summer. Thin to 6- to 12- inch spacings. Or set transplants out at 6- to 12-inch spacings 4 to 6 weeks before first frost.

Mulch fall crops heavily and provide adequate moisture to avoid premature bolting.

Varieties

“Baby” varieties grow just 6 inches tall while others may reach nearly 2 feet. Some are more tolerant of heat and cold than others.

Varieties recommended for New York include:

- Mei Qing Choi -- hybrid
- Tropical Delight -- hybrid
- Two Seasons -- hybrid
- China Pride -- hybrid
- Jade Pagoda -- hybrid
- Dynasty -- hybrid

This publication may contain pesticide recommendations. Changes in pesticide regulations occur constantly, some materials mentioned may no longer be available, and some uses may no longer be legal. All pesticides distributed, sold, and/or applied in New York State must be registered with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Questions concerning the legality and/or registration status for pesticide use in New York State should be directed to the appropriate Cornell Cooperative Extension Specialist or your regional DEC office. **READ THE LABEL BEFORE APPLYING ANY PESTICIDE.**