



**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 BRUSSELS SPROUTS



This cool-season crop is most flavorful after it is “kissed” by frost. Keep plantings moist and well-mulched during the heat of summer, and you will be rewarded with sprouts until Christmas or beyond.

Site Characteristics

Sunlight:

- full sun

Can tolerate light shade but will slow maturity.

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

Requires good soil, timely planting and protection from pests.

Height: 2 to 3 feet

Spread: 1.5 to 2 feet

Foliage color: medium green

Foliage and sprouts have bluish cast.

Foliage texture: medium

Shape: upright

Tolerates:

- frost - Frost improves flavor. Harvest continues until Christmas or even later in some warmer areas.
-

Growing Information

How to plant:

Propagate by seed

Germination temperature: 45 F to 85 F - Will germinate at soil temperatures as low as 40 F.

Days to emergence: 5 to 8

Helping You Put Knowledge to Work

Maintenance and care:

Grow in summer for fall harvest, similar to a fall cabbage or broccoli crop.

Direct seed about 4 months before expected fall frost. Plant seed 3 to 4 inches apart, ¼ to ½ inch deep in rows about 30 inches apart. Thin plants to about 18 inches apart.

Start transplants in late May and transplant in late June or early July. Space plants 18 to 24 inches apart.

Plants have shallow root systems. Avoid even shallow cultivation. Mulch to protect roots, reduce weed competition and conserve moisture.

Use floating row covers to help protect from early insect infestations.

To help reduce disease, do not plant Brussels sprouts or other cole crops in the same location more than once every three or four years.

Pests:

Cabbage aphids - A hard stream of water can be used to remove aphids from plants. Wash off with water occasionally as needed early in the day. Check for evidence of natural enemies such as gray-brown or bloated parasitized aphids and the presence of alligator-like larvae of lady beetles and lacewings.

Cabbage root maggot - White maggot larvae tunnel in and feed on roots of plants. Damage causes wilting early on, death of plants later on.

Cabbageworms - Handpick and destroy. Row covers may be useful on small plantings to help protect plants from early damage. Put in place at planting and remove before temperatures get too hot in midsummer.

Flea Beetles - Use row covers to help protect plants from early damage. Put in place at planting and remove before temperatures get too hot in midsummer. Control weeds.

Cutworms - Control weeds. Cardboard collars around each plant give good protection.

Other pests: Cabbage loopers, Slugs, Nematodes

Diseases:

Clubroot - Locate plants in a part of the garden different from previous year's location. If that is not possible, remove infested soil and replace with fresh soil. Purchase healthy transplants or start seed in sterile potting mix or fresh ground. Rogue plants. Remove and discard or destroy infested plants along with immediately surrounding soil and soil clinging to roots. If soil is infested, add lime to raise pH of soil to 7.2

Varieties

Shorter plants tend to mature earlier and be more cold tolerant. Days to harvest varies from about 80 to 130 days.

Varieties recommended for New York include: Oliver, Rubine Red

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.**