



**CORNELL
COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION OF
ONEIDA COUNTY**

HOME GROWN FACTS

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GROWING RADISHES



Also known as spring radishes, summer radishes, winter radishes, Oriental radishes, Daikon, Japanese radishes, Chinese radishes

Easy to grow and ready to harvest in just 3 to 6 weeks. Make plantings of cool-season spring radishes every week or two for a continuous harvest until hot weather hits. Don't forget winter varieties that produce large, fall-harvested roots.

Site Characteristics

Sunlight:

- full sun
- part shade

Yields best in full sun.

Soil conditions:

- requires well-drained soil

Prefers well-drained, loose soil, high in organic matter, free from stones, with pH 5.8 to 6.8. Needs plentiful, consistent moisture.

Plant Traits

Lifecycle: annual

A few winter radish varieties are biennials.

Ease-of-care: easy

Height: 0.5 to 1.5 feet

Spread: 0.5 to 0.75 feet

Foliage color: medium green

Foliage texture: medium

Shape: cushion, mound or clump

Tolerates:

- Frost

Growing Information

How to plant:

Propagate by seed

Germination temperature: 55 F to 85 F

Days to emergence: 3 to 4

Seed can be saved 4 years.

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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.

Maintenance and care:

Grows best in cool (50 F to 65 F), moist weather. Hot weather reduces quality and increases pungency. Late plantings may bolt before edible root forms.

About 3 to 6 weeks before average last frost, direct seed ½ inch deep, 1 inch apart, in rows 12 inches apart. Thin to about 2-inch spacings. Crowded plants may not produce high-quality roots. Use thinings in salads.

For continuous harvest, make additional plantings every 1 to 2 weeks until temperatures average in the mid 60s F, or plant varieties with different maturity dates in a single planting. Resume planting when weather cools in fall.

Plant most winter varieties so that they mature around the first fall frost date. (Frost improves flavor and texture of most winter varieties.) Larger winter varieties need more space than spring varieties, so thin to about 6-inch spacings, depending on variety.

Keep soil moist for uninterrupted growth and best quality.

Adding nitrogen fertilizer or nitrogen rich manure close to planting may produce lush tops and small roots.

Can be sown in the same row with carrots, parsley, parsnips and other slow germinating crops. The radishes help to break soil crust for the weaker and later-germinating crops.

Because they mature quickly, radishes make a good intercrop along with slower growing crops, such as other cabbage family crops, or tomato- or squash family crops. Or follow radish harvest with summer succession crops such as beans, or fall-harvested crops.

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

Pests:

Cabbage root maggots - Use row covers made of nonwoven fabrics. Hoops can be used to make a tent area over rows or as floating row covers. For fresh radish, weekly plantings can be made. Some will avoid maggot attack.

Diseases:

Clubroot - Locate new plants in part of garden different from previous year's location. If that is not possible, remove infested soil and replace with fresh soil. Remove and destroy entire infested plant along with immediately surrounding soil and soil clinging to roots. If soil is infested, add lime to raise soil pH to 7.2.

Varieties

The familiar spring radishes are small and fast-growing - usually ready for harvest in 3 to 4 weeks. Select varieties based on size and shape (globe or cylindrical), color (including red, purple, white and combinations) and bolt-resistance.

Summer radishes are similar, but take slightly longer to mature -- usually in about 6 to 8 weeks.

Winter radishes (*Raphanus sativus* var. *niger*) grow more slowly (usually 2 months or more to maturity), produce larger roots (usually cylindrical), and hold their quality much longer than common varieties. They are also known as Oriental, Daikon, Japanese, Chinese, or Spanish radishes. Most are biennials that do not bolt as readily in response to long days, and only develop seedstalks after exposure to cold temperatures. They are usually planted in summer for fall harvest.

Varieties recommended for New York include:

Champion

Cherry Belle

French Breakfast

Icicle

Scarlet Knight

Sparkler

Source: <http://explore.cornell.edu> 2006

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