

Asparagus

GROW&GIVE
Clippings

Asparagus

Asparagus officinalis is a perennial spring vegetable with many nutritional benefits. Asparagus' green, purple, or blanched white varieties have been popular for 3,000 years.

Plant it where it can stay

Plant this perennial in full sun with well drained soil. Expect your asparagus to be in this location for 15-20 years.

Prepare the soil

Amend the soil with compost before planting your asparagus crowns. Bare-root asparagus are sold as buds and roots, called "crowns".

Work 4 inches of compost in to a depth of 12 inches of soil. The best time to prepare is the fall prior to spring planting, but amending and planting in the same spring works too.

Dig a trench

Dig a small trench in the prepared soil 5 inches deep. Carefully lay the crowns end to end in the trench. This should give you the proper distance between plants as they grow. Gently turn the crowns so the growth buds are pointing skyward.

Cover in stages

Cover the crowns with a layer of soil 2 inches deep. When you see the new growth poking up through the soil, add another 2 inches of soil. Repeat until the trench is filled and the crowns are buried by 5 inches of soil.

Planting from seeds

Plant your asparagus seeds indoors twelve weeks before time to harden them off and plant outdoors in the spring.

Growing Asparagus

Apply fertilizer once in spring when the sprouts are up and once in the summer. Use a balanced fertilizer.

Water with drip irrigation or a thorough soaking every 1-2 weeks.

Harvesting Asparagus

Be patient! It takes 3 years before you get a full harvest. First year, no harvest. Second year harvest only for the first 2 weeks of the season. Third year, harvest until no later than June 17th. Harvest by snapping or cutting the spears close to the ground.

After harvest allow the plants to grow and produce the fernlike foliage for healthier plants next season.

Recommended Varieties

Jersey Giant, Jersey Knight, Jersey Supreme, Purple Passion and Millenium are reliable producers.



Proper crown spacing. Photo: Univ. of Minn. Extension

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