

Pot Ready Vegetable Plants

GROWING INSTRUCTIONS

Your young plants have been grown under ideal conditions and they will develop best if these directions are followed closely.

On Arrival

Remove the plants from the box as soon as they arrive and check that the compost block is adequately moist, watering if necessary with tepid water. Leave them on a shaded windowsill or in a greenhouse for a few hours to settle before further handling, ensuring a frost-free non-draughty situation.

Potting On

These plants should be potted on as soon as possible, but they will keep quite well for 2-3 days if necessary, provided they are kept in a warm light place and are not allowed to dry out.

Use 10cm (4") pots and a good quality moist proprietary compost. Jiffy 7's should be planted intact, leaving the net in position around the root ball.

Before planting make sure that the root ball is not dry, water well an hour or so beforehand, if necessary.

Set the plants so that the top of the root ball is about 1cm (0.5") below the compost surface.

Growing On

After potting, give a thorough watering, but thereafter take care to avoid overwet conditions, particularly as the young plants become re-established. Grow on in a light, humid position, and maintain an initial temperature of 16-18°C (60-65°F).

Ventilate when possible to improve air circulation, but take care to maintain adequate temperature.

Glasshouse Culture

When the 10cm (4") pots are well filled with roots, transfer plants one to a 25-30cm (10-12") pot or 2 to a growing bag. Whether grown in pots, or growing bags, the compost must be kept moist at all times, but never waterlogged.

Maintain humid conditions by regularly damping down the greenhouse floor. The greenhouse should also be shaded to avoid exposure to direct sunlight.

Capsicum/Chilli Pepper & Aubergine

Support the growing plants with a 90cm (3') cane and tie in as they develop. No sideshooting or thinning out of stems should be necessary.

Cape Gooseberry

This dwarf variety will eventually require potting into a 40cm (16") pot. Alternatively grow in the greenhouse border or 3 plants to a grow bag. Once the danger of frost has passed the plants can be stood on a sunny patio. Keep the compost moist and apply a liquid fertiliser once a week.

The fruit should only be picked when fully ripe and orange coloured. If the fruit is to be stored for later use, they should not be removed from the husks. They can be used in salads, chutneys, preserves or stewed.

Cucumber

Train the central stem vertically up a cane or wire, finally pinching out the growing tip when the roof has been reached. Side shoots (laterals) will develop freely, these should be supported as necessary and pinched out two leaves beyond the first female flower.

It is advisable to remove all the fruits from the first 60cm (2') of stem to allow the plant to become established. Further fruits will quickly appear and then should be picked regularly to achieve maximum production.

The Cucumber supplied is an all-female variety (each flower produces fruit), but under certain conditions of stress, e.g. cold conditions, poor light, inadequate watering, some male flowers may appear which should be removed. Male flowers are easily identified as they have no immature fruit behind the petals.

Tomatoes

Adequate support will be required from an early stage and the main stem should be tied in as the plants develop.

Side shoots, which appear where the leaf stalks join the stem, should be removed by pinching out when they are about 2.5cm (1") long.

Alternative Culture

Capsicum/Chilli Pepper

Peppers can be grown quite successfully in 25-30cm (10-12") pots on a sheltered sunny patio. Care should be taken to ensure plants are hardened off prior to being left outside, once all risk of frost has passed.

Provide a cane for support in the early stages and do not allow the plants to dry out.

Tomatoes

Once the risk of frost has passed tomatoes will perform well in the garden if planted in a sunny sheltered site. Space the plants 45cms (18") apart and provide adequate support. Pinch out sideshoots as per glasshouse culture.

Tomato F¹ Tumbler and Tumbling Tom Red & Yellow are the “Hanging Basket” Tomatoes and therefore ideally suited to container growing where their tumbling habit can develop freely. These are bush varieties therefore side shoots are not removed.

When the 10cm (4") pots are filled with roots, transplant into baskets or tubs placing one plant to a 30-35cm (12-14") diameter container.

Tumbler & Tumbling Tom may also be planted direct into the garden from the 10cm (4") pot stage. Ideally, siting plants in a raised bed or similar position that will accommodate their tumbling habit.

In either case, ensure plants are carefully hardened off and that all risk of frost has passed, before planting or placing containers outside.

Water well, particularly during dry spells - remember hanging baskets can dry out very quickly and may require watering 2 or 3 times a day.

In the autumn, as the weather turns cooler, container grown plants may be moved into a greenhouse or conservatory to extend the fruiting period.

After Care

To assist fruit set mist spray with water, except during dull, cool weather. These operations are best carried out around midday, but do not spray foliage under strong, direct sunlight or scorching may occur.

When the first fruits have set, commence feeding with a proprietary high potash, tomato, fertiliser. Ensure plants are kept adequately moist, particularly during flowering and fruiting periods. Avoid alternating dry and over wet conditions, aim to keep plants evenly moist.