

BROCCOLI

When you have a vegetable garden, you don't want to exclude a vegetable like broccoli. Growing broccoli is not all that difficult. Let's take a look at how to grow broccoli in your garden.

Starting broccoli

Direct seeding of broccoli plants is possible. This is especially so with a fall crop. For the first summer harvest, start your broccoli seeds in early spring. For a fall harvest, start your seeds in midsummer.

Broccoli transplants can grow in six to eight weeks for a summer crop and only five to six weeks for a fall crop. When growing transplants in the spring, you want to make sure to give them enough cold weather to harden off, but make sure they are protected from freezing temperatures.

Some Broccoli Growing Tips

Broccoli grows best in the cooler season and prefers temperatures between 65 and 75 degrees F, so it is a good rule of thumb when trying to figure out when to plant broccoli so that they grow mostly during these temperatures. When planting broccoli in the spring, you want to make sure to allow plenty of time to harvest the broccoli before the weather becomes too hot.

As far as broccoli growing tips go, when planting broccoli, make sure the rows are three feet apart. Plant the plants one and a half to two feet apart.

Growing broccoli is done best in soils that are well-drained with a texture between sandy and clay loam. One of the best broccoli growing tips is to provide a uniform water supply to your plants. You should water the garden in the morning so the foliage is dry before the sun goes down. Make sure you water the broccoli enough to moisten the soil to a depth of six inches at least. If you only sprinkle the plants lightly, your broccoli will have shallow roots and not get the nutrients it needs to provide you with a good crop.

Broccoli needs lots of nutrients. A general rule for fertilization of the plants when growing broccoli would be to apply 5-10-10 to the soil before planting broccoli in the soil.

Harvesting Your Broccoli

Broccoli is usually ready to pick 65 to 70 days after planting. You want to pick the broccoli when the heads are three to six inches around. To harvest, just cut the main stem of the broccoli about six inches below the head. Depending on the variety you planted, you may get some secondary smaller heads after you harvest the main head of broccoli. Make sure the flower buds are still closed. If the plant has bolted (is flowering), it's too late to pick it.