

HOW TO GROW - BROAD BEANS

Fun fact- they are legumes and fix nitrogen into the soil via. Nitrogen fixing nodules on the roots.

21 May, 2020



The Basic information

Annual edible

- Sowing - spring and early summer- seeds germinate at low temperatures
- Temperature - cool season crop favouring 15 celsius and below. Some cultivars for autumn-winter sowing can withstand -10 celsius.
- Sun-half shade/ full sun

The picture above is crimson flowered broad bean, this variety is self supporting, high yield and excellent resistance to blackfly. One of the easiest broad beans to grow and lovely scented flowers May-June to go with it. I intersow with green manure such as mustard to act as a living mulch- reserves moisture and stops weeds

BROAD BEANS- HOW TO SOW/ PLANT THEM.

Direct sow in spring-early summer for a crop in late summer-autumn another option is you can get winter hardy cultivars like 'Aquadulce claudia' for sowing October onwards. (though doesn't give the best results especially in scotland)

Only sow them in autumn if you don't have problems with mice and you don't have a heavy wet soil that's prone to getting waterlogged. If you do, sow them indoors for overwintering into pots such as a 7cm pot or a toilet roll tube.

Direct sowing broad beans is an easy job to do, all you need to do is make sure it's weed free and the site you're using hasn't had any broad beans in it the last season. Sow them 4 cm deep and 20 cm apart from each other as they reach heights of 45cm or 30cm for dwarf ones like 'The sutton' Early sown ones can be protected with cloche or floating mulches like straw, newspaper. It's also good practice to pre warm soil with fleece/ cloches for early first sowing outdoors a few weeks before.

HOW TO CARE FOR THEM

Any variety of broad bean may need to be supported. Especially when it comes to the cropping season to stop the pods touching the ground. If you have planted them in a block, then 4 strong canes at the corners and two loops of 4 ply twine or wire will support. The two heights aren't necessary but it does help protect them more- one at 10 cm up the other 20-30 cm high.

Watering and pinching out- continuous after care for broad beans.

Broad beans benefit from being pinched out as this will help prevent black fly and encourage more pods. To pinch out broad beans just pinch out the area of clustered growth about the last leaf at the top of the plant like this-

They will benefit from extra thorough waterings every ten days or so when in flower, make sure its a very good watering to encourage deep rooting.

If you have managed to grow broad beans or are having troubles then don't hesitate to email us at cardeneden@orevalleyha.org.uk

