

ANOTHER
HERB HERBERT
FACT SHEET

SPECIAL INTEREST HERBS

GOURMET VEGETABLES

BRUSSEL SPROUTS

Brassica oleracea



DESCRIPTION

The brussel sprout will be the hardest vegetable in your garden. It can withstand frost and even light snow. It hates standing in water because of root rot, but likes well drained, moist conditions. It's a handsome plant to watch grow too. The walnut sized sprouts will grow all along the main stem at leaf junctions. Each sprout looks like a mini cabbage-head, with tightly packed leaves. This little sprout is slow growing but will store for 3-5 weeks after harvest if stored correctly. The plants reach a height of 30-36 inches.



GROWTH

You can start your brussel sprouts in seedling pots for the first 5-6 weeks before planting them out in your garden about 15 in/38cm apart, in rows spaced about 35 in/89cm apart. They should be 6 inches high when you put them in the ground, but if they are a bit smaller this is okay because they are really frost hardy. In fact the cooler the weather the better they taste! It's important to understand that warm weather will make the leaves loosen up and the flavor of the sprout more intense. Choose well drained but moist soil.



CULTIVATION

Heavy soils need to be loosened up with organic matter and it helps if you dig the soil a few weeks before planting. Sprouts can be harvested about 3 months after planting. You will know they are ready for harvest when the lower leaves of the plant turn yellow or when the sprouts are about 1 inch in diameter. For best results remove the growing tip of the plant about 1 month before harvest and the plant will divert extra growing energy into the sprout. Store in a cool dark place.



USES

Brussel sprouts are a great green vegetable that accompanies any dish, especially red meat with root vegetables. Sprouts are best cooked through but make sure they are not served soggy. To ensure that they cook through evenly, you can cut a cross through them before you place them in boiling water or the steamer. You can freeze sprouts which is handy if your harvest comes in all at once.



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