

GROWING GUIDE FOR RUTABAGAS (SWEDE)

Binomial Name:	Brassica napus
Varieties:	Laurentian
Start:	Direct seed
Germination:	4 - 7 days, 7°C to 30°C
Seed Life (viability):	3 years
Soil:	Well drained
Sunlight:	Full sun, part shade
Sow Seeds:	5cm apart
Transplant/Thin to:	15cm apart
Ave. Days to Harvest:	52 - 75
Good Companions:	
Bad Companions:	

Sometimes called Swedish or Yellow Turnip or just plain Swede. Easy-to-grow softball-sized root crop makes a flavourful addition to stews, soups, roasts and can also be used raw in salads. Rutabagas are often confused with turnips but are sweeter flavoured. They were originally a cross between a cabbage and turnip.

Sowing & Planting:

Performs well on wide range of soils and, unlike most Brassicas, does not require rich soils. High organic matter and/or nitrogen levels may cause poorly shaped roots. Loosen the soil deeply or grow in raised beds to encourage good root development.

Direct seed 5cm apart and 1cm deep in rows 45 to 60cm apart in early to mid-summer, about 3 months before expected harvest for most varieties. Thin to 15cm spacing's. For early crops, sow seed as soon as you can work the soil in spring and harvest in early to mid-summer.

Do not wait until autumn to harvest as the roots will become woody and fibrous. Larger seeds germinate faster and may be ready for harvest as much as 5 to 6 weeks sooner than smaller seed.

Growing:

To help reduce disease, do not plant rutabagas or other cole crops in the same location more than once every three or four years. Use floating row covers to protect crop from early pests. Sustained mean temperatures above 26°C can cause excessively fast growth and root cracking.

Harvesting:

These tasty and hardy cool-season vegetables epitomize autumn root crops. Harvest rutabagas from three to four months after sowing seeds. Loosen the soil around the roots when they reach 8 to 10cm wide. Pull roots from the soil and twist off the tops, leaving about 1cm of stem. Rutabagas will keep for up to 6 months if refrigerated and can also be frozen.