

How to Grow Spinach

A few standard tips on plant care and harvesting

SPINACH
to WIN it!

- ✓ Spinach, with its buttery nutritious leaves and cold hardiness, will never go out of style!
- ✓ It prefers cool weather, especially as it changes into fall, when days gradually become shorter and the sun rises lower in the sky.
- ✓ Spring plantings are the best for baby leaf production as plants tend to bolt quickly with lengthening hotter days.
- ✓ As always, refer to your seed packet for plant care and harvesting information specific to the variety you've chosen.

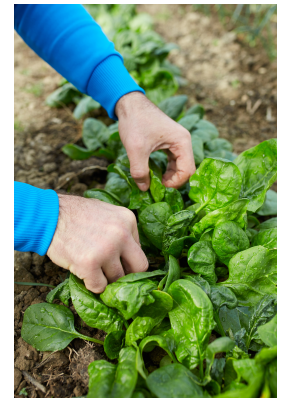
When to Grow

Spinach is a cool-season crop that grows best at the beginning and end of the growing season. In Georgia, we can grow it in the fall, through the winter, and into the spring.

In fall, plant seeds starting about a month before your first frost. Spinach is very frost-hardy, and you can keep growing successions of it through the Fall and Winter. Frosty weather actually makes spinach leaves sweeter!

In the spring, plant seeds early, until about 8 weeks before the last frost date.

When the weather gets too hot, plants will bolt, or go to seed, and the leaves will become too bitter to eat. If your spinach does bolt, don't worry! It's an exciting time in the plant's life cycle. Take students out to the garden to observe and talk about it!



Where to Grow

Plant spinach in full sun and cool, well-drained soil. You can mulch the soil (with leaves, hay, etc.) around spinach plants to help keep the soil cooler. Spinach roots will rot if their soil is too soggy; loosen up the soil before you plant the seeds. If you want to grow spinach in a container, make sure excess water is easily drained from the container.

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How to Grow Fact Sheet

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Planting

Spinach grows a deep taproot and needs well-drained soil, so work the soil to a depth of at least 1 foot before you plant.

Plant spinach seeds about ¼ inch deep. Cover them with just enough soil so they won't get blown or washed away) in rows 1 foot apart.

Spinach seeds are very small, so it's easiest to just sprinkle seeds along the row in which you want to grow. When the seedlings are about 4 inches high or have at least two true leaves, thin them to be 4-6 inches apart.

Plant Care

Spinach likes cool, short days and healthy soil that is rich in organic matter and has a neutral pH, and plenty of water.

As your plants grow, consider mulching the soil around them to keep the soil temperature cool. Consider covering your spinach with shade cloth if the temperature gets above 80 degrees.

Prevent diseases and pests with crop rotation and good sanitation (weed often, don't leave dead plants in the garden beds, etc.)

How to Harvest Spinach

Start harvesting in 6-8 weeks. Carefully cut (with scissors, a small knife, or just pinching off with your fingernails) the outside leaves to extend productivity. When your plants start to show signs of bolting, cut just below the root attachment to harvest the entire crop.

How to Save Spinach Seeds



Step 1

Allow the growing spinach plants to go to seed. Then, cut the seed stalks with a knife when they are brown and completely dry.



Step 2

Shake the seed heads over a large bowl to dislodge the seeds. Then, separate the seeds from the chaff and other plant debris.



Step 3

Place the seeds in a paper bag and fold the bag several times. Then, place the bag into a glass jar and screw the lid tightly.



Step 4

Store the jar in a cool dry place until planting season!

Tip: Spinach seeds don't store well so make sure you use all of your saved spinach seeds the following season.