



Peppers come in all different shapes, sizes, colors, and flavors, and they can be found in cuisines throughout the world! Peppers are scientifically considered to be fruits because they contain seeds and are produced from a flowering plant.

This means that you can use the seeds from your peppers to grow your very own plant! Check out our "[Seed Saving Guide](#)" for more instructions.

## Did you know?

- Bell peppers have many different names around the world. For example, in Australia and New Zealand they are called Capsicum (kap-sah-km).
- In addition to being a popular food worldwide, peppers are also used for self-defense sprays, organic insecticides, muscle ointments, food coloring, petroleum jelly, and throat gargles.
- As peppers become ripe, their vitamins A and C content increase, which makes sweet peppers get sweeter and hot peppers get hotter. You can tell when peppers are becoming ripe because their colors change from green to red, yellow or orange.



## Pepper Jokes

Q: What is a ghost's favorite pepper?

A: A Ha-Boo-Nero



Q: What did the small pepper say to the big pepper?

A: I'm a little chili



Q: What do you call a nosey pepper?

A: Jalapeno business

Q: What do spice lovers put on their pizza?

A: Pepper-only



Hungarian Hot Wax Pepper



Purple Beauty Pepper



Highlander Pepper

## Why are some peppers hot?

- Some peppers are hot because they contain a high concentration of chemical compounds known as capsaicin (kap-say-sn). These chemical compounds are mainly found in the white lining/ “internal ribs” of a pepper.
- When you bite into a pepper, these chemical compounds will attach to heat-sensing receptors in your mouth that will then send a message to your brain that your mouth is on fire! That is why people can break into a sweat or have watery eyes.
- The soil and climate where peppers are grown will affect how hot they are. Hot nights will make hot peppers produce more capsaicin.
- The Scoville Heat Unit (SHU) was developed in 1912 by Wilbur L. Scoville to rank the heat level of peppers. This measurement system is determined based on the amount of capsaicin found in the pepper.
- The hottest pepper in the world is the Carolina Reaper. It is rated 1,569,000 on the Scoville Heat Unit (SHU). For comparison, a bell pepper is 0 SHU and a jalapeno is between 2,000-8,000 SHU.



## You can check the hotness of some peppers before you even taste them.

- Stretch marks occur when a pepper plant has been under stress due to lack of water or when the pepper itself has aged. When peppers such as jalapenos have more stretch marks, they tend to be hotter.
- The color of hot peppers can also determine their heat level- As hot peppers age their color becomes red, orange or golden and they become even hotter!



## You can reduce the heat of hot peppers!

- When cooking, you can minimize the spice of hot peppers by scraping out and discarding the seeds and inner ribs of the pepper.
- If you want to make a dish hotter, you can add those hot pepper seeds to it.
- Make sure to use gloves when handling hot peppers!

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