

How to Grow Parsnips

General

The flavour of parsnips becomes sweeter after frost. They are a very versatile vegetable in the kitchen to fry, roast, steam, mash, or bake.

Latin

Pastinaca sativa
Family: Apiaceae

Difficulty

Easy

Timing

Direct sow from late March to early July. Optimal soil temperature for germination: 10-25°C (50-75°F). Seeds take 14-21 days to germinate.

Starting

Sow seeds 5mm-1cm (1/4-1/2") deep. Cover seeds with compost and/or put row cover over planting area to shade the soil and conserve moisture. Thin to 7-10 cm (3-4") apart in rows 45-60cm (18-24") apart.

Growing

Ideal pH: 6.0-6.8. Prepare ground as for carrots, digging deeply to loosen soil prior to planting. For even longer parsnips, you can dig or form holes 60cm (24") deep. Weed carefully and keep watered.

Harvest

Flavour is best after a couple of good frosts. Dig parsnips from October 1st through the winter as needed. Protect from freezing in the soil with a thick straw mulch if it is a cold winter. Parsnips keep better in well-drained soil. The average family will be well supplied with a 6m (20') row.

Diseases & Pests

Carrot rust fly maggots may injure the roots of parsnips. The most reliable control is floating row cover. Practice crop rotation to prevent soil-borne disease.



Parsnips

