



About Celery

Celery, a cool season vegetable, boasts a mild yet wonderfully nutty flavor that is the perfect addition to soups or salads. A long growing season with a low tolerance for temperature extremes and high water requirements sometimes causes growers to steer away. But fresh garden-grown celery has a much stronger, more pleasant flavor than the average grocery store variety.

When to Plant

In cooler climates start seedlings indoors, using a germination mat, at least 8-10 weeks before the last frost date in your area. In warmer climates, begin celery seeds in the fall during warm weather, and grow through a frost-free winter. Germination can take up to 18 days. Be sure to harden them off for 7-10 days before transplanting outdoors.

Where to Plant

Sow celery seeds in individual pots before transplanting outdoors, with as few seeds as possible in each planting container. Grow seeds in full sun and in rich garden soil.

How to Plant

A noteworthy trick is to mix celery seeds with sand and then sprinkle the mixture over the pots. Cover lightly with soil, with no more than 1/4" of soil as celery seeds like to be planted shallowly. After they have germinated and are large enough to thin, remove all but two or three seedlings. As they continue to grow, thin to one per pot or individual cell. Transplant outdoors after the last date for frost in your area and space plants 12-18" apart, in rows 24" apart.

Caring for Celery

Add plenty of compost and mulch around the plant, as they are heavy feeders and require a lot of moisture. Also, be mindful of celery's low heat tolerance during hot, dry weather. Try to keep the plants' roots moist at all times, and don't worry about excessive rain -- celery tolerates waterlogged soil better than most vegetables. When stalks are about 8" tall, harvest from the outside in. Stalk celery can be handled as a cut-and-come-again crop -- just harvest a few outer stalks at a time. Cut high, 1-2" from the ground. Trim off excess leaves and tough outer stalks before storing celery in the refrigerator.