



## Lemongrass Planting Guide

### About Lemongrass

For gardeners aiming to maximize value, certain edible landscaping plants such as lemon grass can fulfill dual purposes. This decorative grass not only enhances curb appeal but also provides flavorful fresh herbs for the kitchen. Lemon grass, with its rapid growth, is equally attractive swaying in the summer breeze and delectable in soups, stir-fries, and teas. Originating from Sri Lanka and India, similar to the crossandra, lemongrass thrives as a perennial in zones 10 and 11 but is commonly cultivated as an annual in other regions. The lengthy, slim gray-green foliage introduces stunning hues to autumn gardens, transforming into shades of burgundy and red.

### When to Plant

To give your lemongrass a head start, plant the seeds indoors up to three weeks before the final frost date. For successful germination, use seedling trays that can be covered to create a warm, moist environment.

### Where to Plant

Provide a sunny spot in your garden where they can flourish.

### How to Plant

Sow lemongrass seeds  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch deep and space them one inch apart. Once the seedlings sprout and grow, it's time to transplant them to an outdoor location basking in full sun.

When transplanting lemongrass seedlings to your outdoor garden, enrich the soil with a high-nitrogen fertilizer. Options like alfalfa meal or blood meal work wonderfully. Mix half a cup of the chosen fertilizer into the soil before transplanting.

### Caring for Lemongrass

Throughout its growing phase, keep the soil around your lemongrass moist by watering it two to three times a week. This consistent moisture ensures optimal growth.

Once the seedlings are established in the garden, continue to fertilize every couple of weeks during the growing season with a liquid plant food or fish emulsion.

Your lemongrass is primed for harvest when the stalks reach at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch in thickness, displaying a dark green hue and a height of at least 18 inches.

When it's time to harvest, snip the entire lemongrass stalk at its base. Wear gloves during this process as the stalks can be irritating to the skin. As the growing season nears its end, trim the lemongrass plants back to just six inches in height, and reduce your watering and fertilizing.

Sometimes, lemongrass may encounter leaf blight, which manifests as the leaves turning brown and wilting. In the face of this challenge, act promptly by removing the affected leaves. Safeguard your edible plants with a treatment of copper sulfate, a fungicide that ensures your lemongrass thrives.