



Licorice Planting Guide

About Licorice

The root of licorice plant *Glycyrrhiza glabra* boasts remarkable benefits, and its ease of cultivation makes it a delightful addition to any vegetable garden. This versatile plant is highly regarded for its anti-inflammatory properties, making it a valuable addition. Its pleasant aniseed flavor makes it a favorite, particularly when brewed as a soothing tea. Known as "mulethi" in certain regions of Asia, this plant has held a cherished place in global traditions for centuries, finding applications both in wellness and the culinary world.

When to Plant

Plant licorice in spring or early summer when temps have reached about 60°F. Licorice likes warmer temps, so plant your licorice after the last frost has passed and the temperatures are beginning to increase.

Where to Plant

Space the plants 24 to 36 inches apart in your full-sun garden. Licorice plants can reach a considerable height, up to five feet high, but if space is a concern, opt for a large container to control its growth.

Ensuring proper drainage is crucial for the extensive root system of licorice. Although it's relatively less demanding in terms of soil fertility, it's essential to focus on providing excellent drainage conditions. The roots need to expand through the ground, so it doesn't do well in clay or compacted soils. It also needs lots of moisture, so add compost to your earth before planting, as well as mulch on top to retain moisture during the hottest days of summer.

One of the remarkable features of licorice is its ability to fix nitrogen from the air, making it self-sufficient for its nutritional needs. Licorice is a generous companion plant, benefiting neighboring flora as a nitrogen fixer. To maximize its potential, plant leafy greens like lettuce or spinach around the base of your licorice plants. Additionally, don't miss the delightful sight of licorice's striking blue or violet flowers blooming from August to September.

How to Plant

Gather your licorice seeds and plan for an early spring planting. Before sowing, soak the seeds in tepid water for 24 hours to improve germination success. Plant your licorice seeds ¼ inches deep in well-draining soil. It's crucial to keep the soil consistently moist but not soggy until germination, which usually occurs within 7 to 14 days. For faster results, consider using a seedling heat mat to maintain a temperature of around 68°F. Once the danger of frost has passed and the night-time temperatures steadily rise above 50°F, transplant the licorice herb plants outdoors.

Caring for Licorice

The eagerly awaited harvest time for licorice roots arrives after the first or second year of growth. For more substantial and sustainable yields, it's recommended to wait for three years before harvesting. When the time comes in the fall when the plants have finished flowering and the growing season is complete, carefully lift the plant from the ground using a spade or garden fork. Using gardening shears, remove most of the larger roots but leave the tap root and a few of the main roots intact, ensuring the continued growth of your licorice plant. Place the plant back into its hole, replace the soil, and water.