

How to Grow Cilantro



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Cold Tolerance/Season

Cilantro can survive a hard frost or two, but it's dead once the ground freezes. In hot-summer areas, cilantro is a cool-season plant that performs best when sown in spring and fall. If you're growing cilantro in high summer, plant "Slow-Bolt" cilantro in the shade of taller plants.



Planting Cilantro

Cilantro goes from seed to salsa in a little over a month, so for a steady supply, plan on planting a few seeds every 3-4 weeks throughout the growing season. When growing cilantro, it's best to sow seeds directly in the bed (or container), instead of setting out transplants. Cilantro has tap roots that twist quickly in pots, and plants with twisted tap roots are never as strong as those started in place from seed.

Soil Needs: Cilantro grows well in loose, sandy loam, but adding aged manure and/or compost to the bed when planting produces faster and more luxurious growth. It will thrive in most garden soils.

Plant Spacing: In a single-dug bed (soil loosened to 1 shovel depth), dig ½" deep furrows 10" apart, and plant seeds 6" apart in each row.

In deep-dug beds (soil loosened to at least 20"), plant seeds on 6" centers in staggered rows throughout the swath to be planted. Press the soil gently over the seeds, cover with ½" of fine mulch, and water thoroughly.

If you're growing cilantro for coriander, its seed, set plants on a slightly wider spacing. Plant 8" apart in rows 1' apart for a single-dug bed, and plant on 10" centers in staggered rows in a deep-dug bed. The plants will get tall, so plant on the north side of shorter vegetables to avoid shading them.

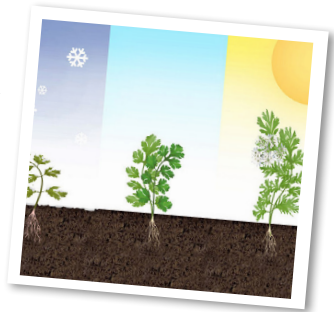




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Care and Feeding of Cilantro

Cilantro, like other spring ephemeral plants, grows best when it has ample moisture and cooler temperatures. *The longer you can maintain succulent growth, the longer it takes for the plant to bolt.* Heat and drought stress signal the plant that it's time to flower, but regular water can stretch out the useful lifespan of the plant.



Watering: Cilantro needs regular watering, especially in sandy soils.

Fertilizing: If you add garden compost or composted manure to the bed before planting, no additional fertilizer is needed. If you're growing cilantro for seeds, give the plants a shot of fish emulsion, compost extract, or compost tea as the flower spikes are rising.

Plant Care: Cilantro is a short-lived plant that goes to seed within 8 weeks of planting. To keep a steady supply on hand, plan on sowing a few seeds in garden gaps or pots every 3-4 weeks throughout the growing season.

Pests and Diseases

Cilantro has few insect pests or diseases. Aphids may be a problem if plants are crowded and sunny days are few and far between.

