

GROWING BEANS

Snap beans are a popular home garden crop. They are easy to grow and will produce well for both beginner and advanced gardeners. Beans are not frost hardy and should not be planted until around May 20th or so. Beans mature in about 50 to 55 days so you may want to plant several crops to insure continuous picking throughout the season.

Beans do best in a well-drained soil. They do not require much nitrogen fertilizer as they are legumes. This means that with the aid of bacteria on their roots, they can extract nitrogen from the air for their own use. Make sure beans get plenty of water, especially when the pods are forming. Pick ripe pods regularly, or production will decrease.

There are two different types of beans commonly grown. Pole beans are tall, stringy plants which need some type of support. Bush beans are determinate plants, meaning that the plant grows only to a certain height and bushes out rather than growing as one long stem.

The green-podded bush snap beans are probably the most popular in this area. Some recommended bush bean varieties include: Tendercrop and Blue Lake. Kentucky Wonder is one recommended pole bean variety.

Yellow bean varieties include Early Wax and Kingdom Wax. If you like the flat, stronger tasting Italian beans, try Bush Romano. It is a stringless bean with a very distinctive flavor.

The **Master Gardener Hotline** is open from April to October, Monday through Friday. Lines are available 9:00 am to noon and 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at 888-678-3464

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