

HOW TO GROW CORIANDER !

This annual herb is known officially as coriander just about everywhere outside of the Americas. We often think of the fresh leaves as cilantro, and the seeds (which are very easy to harvest) as coriander. Cilantro is the Spanish name for coriander. The plant is native to North Africa and Mediterranean Europe, and is a member of the carrot family, Apiaceae. Its close relatives include parsley, fennel, and dill, which is easy to see when the plant flowers, producing tall umbels of white flowers.

Difficulty

Easy. Cilantro works well in containers over 15cm (6") deep.

Timing

Direct sow from early March to around the third week in September. Cilantro is a cool-loving plant, and will bolt in warm weather, so grow it in the spring, and then in the fall/winter under a cloche. In summer it can be grown, but you need to stay on top of it, or simply allow it to flower and harvest the seeds.

Sowing

Sow seeds 1cm (1/2") deep, about 8cm (5") apart in rows 15cm (6") apart.

Soil

Grow in full sun or bright shade, in rich, well-drained soil. Cilantro develops a tap root like a short, white carrot, so it requires deep soil to prosper. Aim for a pH of 6.0 to 7.5.

Harvest

Wait until the plants have formed small bunches of dark green leaves before picking as needed. Otherwise, harvest as whole bunches. To harvest the leaves, allow the plant to flower, and then wait for a number of days until the seed heads begin to dry. These can be shaken into paper bags for later cleaning and storage. NOTE: cilantro seeds need to be kept out of the compost, as it will appear like a weed in following seasons.

Storage

Cilantro leaves and stems do not dry or freeze well. Use fresh whenever possible. It will hold in the refrigerator crisper for about 5 days. The seeds should be allowed to dry thoroughly, and then can be stored in the spice cupboard in a sealed glass or plastic container. These can then be ground (sometimes roasted first), as needed for curry powders and other spice blends. The roots of cilantro can be hard to find in winter here in North America, so cut some from their stems, rinse them and dry them well, and then freeze them in foil for later use.

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Seed info

There is no government standard for cilantro germination, but it will remain high for up to 5 years.

Growing for seed

Some bolt-resistant varieties are available. If growing for seed, isolate individual varieties by 1km (½ mile) for best results. The plants are insect pollinated, but will not cross with other vegetables or herbs.

Source:

www.westcoastseeds.com

A collage of logos and text. At the top left is the Harrowsmith & Son logo with the tagline 'Plant • Grow • Share a Row presents...'. In the center is the 'GROW YOUR SOUP' logo featuring a bowl of soup with various vegetables. At the bottom left is the 'PLANT-GROW SHARE A ROW' logo with the French text 'UN RANG POUR CEUX QUI ONT FAIM'. In the bottom center is the 'Conseil canadien du COMPOST Council of Canada' logo. At the bottom right is the 'GARDEN WRITERS ASSOCIATION' logo featuring a green leaf and a pen nib.

As part of your garden this year, plant and grow an extra row of your favourite veggies and donate the harvest to your local food bank. Help us help all those in need.

Special thanks to McKenzie Seeds for their great growing information and their long-time support for Plant • Grow • Share A Row