



GROWING GINGER

Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) is a rhizome that grows underground from a seed piece (sometimes called the “mother”). The seed rhizome looks similar to the mature ginger found in the grocery store, however unlike the supermarket ginger, this seed ginger is certified disease-free and certified organic.

Ginger is a tropical plant with a long growing season and the seed can be pre-sprouted indoors early in the year to ensure a larger harvest before the weather turns cold. The rhizome is generally harvested in late September through November in order to enjoy the fresh baby ginger before it develops a thick brown skin and becomes fibrous. The leaves can also be harvested for brewed for a tasty and aromatic tea.

Ginger plants require warm soil, room to grow and plenty of fertilizer. Ginger can be grown in the ground or in containers.



KEYS TO SUCCESS:

- Do not plant outdoors until soil temperature is at least 55 degrees F and the air temperature is warming into the 70’s.
- Ginger requires the soil to be hilled up around the base of the stem three or four times during the growing season.
- Ginger does not like any weed competition!
- Ginger requires three to four fertilizer applications during the growing season (see “FERTILIZING below).
- Ginger plants can grow 3’ to 4’ tall and the rhizome can spread up to one foot. Give in-ground plants plenty of room and use large containers or flexible grow bags for container grown plants.
- Ginger likes plenty of moisture but does not like wet feet. Make sure your soil, whether in the ground or in a container, is well drained.

PRE-SPROUTING GINGER SEED: Pre-sprouting your ginger seed indoors can give you a jump start on the long season ginger growing season.

- To pre-sprout, place the ginger seed in a shallow tray lined and covered with wet coir (ground coconut husks). Keep watered and warm until your outdoor growing conditions are ideal and the pre-sprouted seeds can be planted in the ground.
- If you are growing in containers, use the same technique directing in the containers until the conditions are right and the containers can be placed outdoors.



PLANTING IN THE GROUND:

- Plant in rows or beds three feet apart
- Dig a trench min. 6" deep and mix fertilizers/compost in the bottom of the trench
- Place pre-sprouted ginger seed 5 inches apart in the trench
- Cover with approx. 2" of soil
- See "HILLING" below

PLANTING IN CONTAINERS:

- Use well-drained, soilless media in containers. We recommend using a good quality, low-salt coco peat (also called "coir").
- Use flexible grow bags or large pots to allow the rhizomes to grow up and out and plant low in the pot to allow enough room for hilling.
- To plant, fill the bag or pot with 4" to 6" of soilless media and mix in fertilizer and gypsum. Cover with approx. 2" of media.
- See "HILLING" below.

SUN REQUIREMENTS:

Ginger enjoys partial sun – strong morning sunlight and afternoon shade or dappled shade all day. Ginger can be grown in full sun, but make sure the soil temperatures do not get above 90 degrees F in the summer.

WATERING:

- Ginger needs plenty of moisture, but does not like to sit in wet soil. Amend heavy clay soils to allow good drainage.
- Water plants enough to keep evenly moist without drying out.

FERTILIZING:

- Use a mild, balanced fertilizer (such as a 5-5-5 or 4-6-4) at planting time and at each hilling.
- Well-aged compost is beneficial, but do not add materials that are actively decomposing. Decomposing materials will use nutrients in the soil and may cause soil to heat up.
- Apply fertilizer at a rate of 6 oz. per planting row foot.

HILLING GINGER:

- In approximately 4 to 6 weeks after planting, check the base of the ginger shoots. When a bright pink color is observed at the stem base, hill the plant with 4" of soil and apply fertilizer.
- Every 2 to 4 weeks, repeat hilling and fertilizing.

HARVESTING:

- Beginning in late September and/or with cooler weather, the ginger tops will begin to die back. For baby ginger, harvest the rhizomes by loosening the soil approximately 12" from the base of the plant with a shovel or garden fork, then grasp the stems near the ground and pull the entire plant from the ground or container by.
- Rhizomes left in the ground after the tops have died back will start to form a thick brown skin.
- Harvest yields depend on fertility, water, hilling, competition with weeds, and temperatures. Harvests can range from 4 lbs to 12 lbs per seed.



Plant ginger seed in a trench and hill up when the base of the plant turns pink

