



GROWING TURMERIC

Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*) is a rhizome that grows underground from a seed piece (sometimes called the “mother”). The seed rhizome looks similar to the mature Turmeric you find in the grocery store however unlike the supermarket turmeric, this seed turmeric is certified disease-free and certified organic.

Turmeric is a tropical plant with a long growing season and the seed can be pre-sprouted indoors early in the year to insure a harvest before the weather turns cold. The rhizome is generally harvested in late September through November in order to enjoy the fresh baby turmeric before it develops a thick skin.

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



KEYS TO SUCCESS:

- Do not plant outdoors until soil temperatures are at least 55 degrees F and the air temperature is warming into the 70's.
- Turmeric does not like any weed competition!
- Turmeric requires three to four fertilizer applications during the growing season (see “FERTILIZING below).
- Turmeric plants can grow 3' - 4' tall and the rhizome can spread up to 1'. Give in-ground plants 5" to 10" between seed or a use large container or flexible grow bags for container grown plants.
- Turmeric 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 YOUR TURMERIC SEED: Pre-sprouting your turmeric seed indoors can give you a jump start on the long season turmeric growing season.

- To pre-sprout, place the turmeric 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 turmeric seed 5 to 10 inches apart in the trench
- Cover with approx. 2" of soil
- Unlike its cousin ginger, turmeric does not require hilling.

PLANTING IN CONTAINERS:

- Use well-drained, soilless media in containers. We recommend using a good quality, low-salt coconut fiber (also called "coir").
- Use flexible grow bags or large pots to allow the rhizomes to grow outwards

SUN REQUIREMENTS:

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

WATERING:

Turmeric 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 soil evenly moist.

FERTILIZING:

- Use a mild, balanced fertilizer (such as a 5-5-5 or 4-6-4) at planting time and top dress each month.
- 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. Compost alone will not supply all the nutritional needs of turmeric.
- Apply fertilizer at a rate of 1 to 2 lbs (depending on soil fertility) per planting row foot. A good quality composted poultry-based manure is commonly used.
- Early in the growing season, turmeric appreciates more nitrogen to support leafy growth. In August and September when the rhizomes are forming, turmeric benefits from added potassium.

HARVESTING:

- Beginning in late October and/or with cooler weather, the turmeric tops will begin to die back. For baby turmeric, 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 the stalks.
- Rhizomes left in the ground after the tops have died will start to form a thick brown skin.
- Harvest yields depend on fertility, water, competition with weeds, and temperatures. A typical seed to harvest range is from 1:8 to 1:12 ratio.



USDA Certified Organic Turmeric Seed



Pre-sprouting your turmeric seed indoors gives you a jump start on the long season required to grow turmeric.
Pre-sprouting your turmeric seed indoors gives you a jump start on the season.



Harvest turmeric by lifting the rhizomes with a garden fork and the stalks



The tops have been removed and it's time to cut the roots away from the turmeric rhizome



One seed piece produces lots of fresh baby turmeric!