

CUCUMBER



FAMILY

Cucurbitaceae

BOTANICAL NAME

Cucumis sativus L.

CULTIVARS

Slicing: Burpless, Dasher II, Poinsett, Poinsett 76, Slice Master, Straight 8, Sweet Slice, and Sweet Success

Pickling: Calypso, Carolina, Fancypack, MultiPiK and National Pickling

COMMON NAMES

Pepino, Pepinillo (Spanish), Kyu uri (Japanese), Huang gua (Chinese)

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CULTIVATION

PERIOD

Spring (after last frost) through fall

PROPAGATION

Cucumber can be established from seeds, seedlings, or can be grafted onto pumpkin or squash rootstocks. Close spacing increases yields for pickling varieties in addition to providing more uniform maturity. Close planting also reduces the need for weed control but requires more fertilizer.

GROWING CONDITIONS

Soils: Best in loose sandy loam soil, but can be grown in any well-drained soil. Plant into beds 10-15 cm. (4-6 in.) high and 91 cm. (36 in.) apart. Soil pH: 6-7.

CARING FOR THE GROWING PLANT

Trellis, fertilize with 10-10-10 or 10-20-10. Scatter 1 cup on every 3 m. (9.8 ft.) of row. Water and control weeds as necessary and rotate with other crops to minimize pests and diseases.

DAYS TO MATURITY

About 50-70 days from seeding

HARVEST / YIELD POTENTIAL

Store at a temperature of 10-13°C (50 - 55°F), with 95% relative humidity for 10-14 days using hydrocooling.

AREAS COMMONLY CULTIVATED

Grows in most continents. The major world producer is China.

PLANT DESCRIPTION

It is a creeping vine that produces a fruit used as a vegetable.

VISIT US

<http://www.pvamu.edu/cahs/carc/plant-systems/>

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GROWING STEPS

Buy seeds and start seedlings indoors or in a greenhouse if you want to use seedlings to begin your garden. You can also start the garden with grafted plants. Prepare your site or containers. Plant when conditions are optimum. Water as needed. Feed with fertilizer when plants are grown. Control weeds, diseases and insects. Harvest when mature.

POTENTIAL PESTS AND DISEASES

PESTS

Striped cucumber beetle (*Acalymma vittatum*), spotted cucumber beetle (*Diabrotica undecimpunctata howardi*), pickleworm and melon worm (*Diaphania* spp.), melon aphids (*Aphis gossypii*) and two-spotted spider mites (*Tetranychus urticae*)

DISEASES

Cucurbit downy mildew (*Pseudoperonospora cubensis*), *Phytophthora* blight, belly rot (*Pythium aphanidermatum* and *Sclerotium rolfsii*)

CULINARY USES

Salads, pickles, salsas, sauces, smoothies, soups, appetizers, and flavored water

NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS

Vitamins B₁, B₂, B₃, B₆, B₉, C, K, and pantothenic acid. It contains minerals such as calcium, iron, magnesium, manganese, phosphorus, potassium and zinc.

REPORTED HEALTH BENEFITS

Contains antioxidants, promotes hydration, aids in weight loss, and lowers blood sugar. Promotes bone health. May help reduce cancer risk. Soothes skin and combat bad breath.

REFERENCES

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