

Coriander

Place of origin: Southern Europe

Umbellifer – leaf and seed



Coriander is a popular herb used in many Middle-Eastern and Asian recipes. Well worth growing as it is best used soon after harvesting, quite expensive to buy and doesn't store well.



Coriander

Umbellifer – leaf and seed

Plant	For best results use fresh seed and sow direct into the soil from April until August/September. Sow every 3-4 weeks for continuous supply of fresh leaves. Later sowings may last through the winter, especially if grown under cover. Sow into a fine seedbed in lines 1 cm deep and 20 cm apart.
Grow	Grows best in full sun, in well drained soil that is not too rich. Water well in dry conditions to delay flowering. Seeds germinate in 7 - 21 days. Early and late sowings are more successful for leaf production, as plants go to seed quickly by mid-summer. Remove flower buds to delay seed formation or leave in place to harvest seed.
Eat	Start harvesting young leaves when they reach 10 cm high. Alternatively, thin and eat seedlings, then leave remaining plants to grow on. Use leaves as flavouring in many Middle-Eastern and Asian recipes, including soups, salads and curries. Harvest, dry and store seed for use in cooking or to regrow the following year.



Growing Guide

Easy

Average time to harvest

Pick leaves 6 - 8 weeks after sowing

Site / Equipment

Outdoors, sunny position, free draining soil, not too rich, fine textured

Germination

From 7 - 21 days

Average plant size

Will reach 60cm tall and 20 cm wide

Family to grow with

Carrot family – grow with parsley, carrots, parsnips

Seed saving

Plants form seed very easily. Leave seed heads on the plant until brown and dry. Collect seeds by shaking into a bag, or lift whole plants and hang upside down over paper to finish drying indoors.



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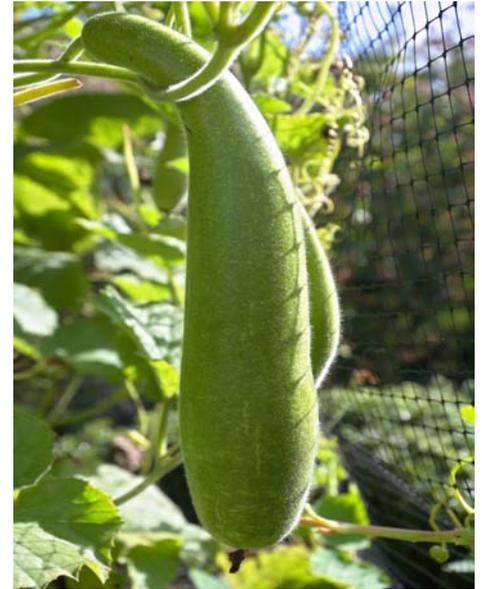
Dudi

Place of origin: Asia

Cucurbit - gourd



Dudi, also called bottle gourd, is like a large courgette. It is commonly eaten by Asians, Italians and Portuguese and favoured because it maintains a crunchy texture when cooked.



Dudi

Cucurbit - gourd

Plant	<p>Sow two seeds per small pot indoors in mid April. Sow seeds on their side 1 cm deep into seed compost. Remove the smallest plant in each pot after they germinate. Transplant outside when there is little chance of frost, usually by the end of May. Plants need plenty of space and need to be 1 – 2 m apart and grown up a very solid support.</p>
Grow	<p>Plants require a low to moderately fertile soil. They will grow rapidly, climbing up their support, and start to flower about 6 weeks after planting out. The large, white flowers are attractive, opening at night and pollinated by moths. Fruits appear 8 – 10 weeks after planting. They start off small and furry but later become glossy.</p>
Eat	<p>The fruits will dangle down from the vine as it climbs up the support. Pick when small or leave to reach full size. To cook, peel and chop into small cubes or thin strips then use in stew or curry. The flavour is similar to courgettes but the flesh remains crunchy after cooking.</p>



Growing Guide

Easy

Average time to harvest

18 weeks after sowing

Site / Equipment

Outdoors, moderately fertile soil, strong support needed

Germination

From 7 - 10 days

Average plant size

Huge – will take over if not trimmed back

Family to grow with

Other cucurbits – courgettes, squashes.

Seed saving

It is difficult to get mature seed from these plants. You may need to transfer pollen from a male flower to a female with a paint brush, then mark the fruit. Leave the fruit to dry and ripen on the vine before removing seeds.



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Fenugreek

Place of origin: S. E. Europe, W. Asia

Legume - leaf and seed



Fenugreek is eaten as a leafy vegetable, similar to spinach. The leaves and seeds are also used as flavouring, especially in curries. Seeds can be sprouted, and the whole plant used as a green manure to improve soil condition.



Fenugreek

Legume - leaf and seed

Plant	Two types are available: small and large seeded. Sow directly into the soil as fenugreek does not transplant well. Sow 0.5 cm deep, approx. 5 cm between seeds and 20 cm between rows. Sow from April to August, repeating every few weeks for the more common large seeded one, which has white flowers, as this will not regrow.
Grow	Young plants grow rapidly and are vigorous enough to outgrow most weeds. Will grow in most soil types, but does best in reasonably fertile, well-drained soil in an open, sunny position. Remove flower buds to keep leaves growing.
Eat	Harvest leaves when plants reach about 25 cm, cutting stems a few cm above the base. The smaller seeded, yellow flowered variety will grow back after cutting. Use leaves fresh as a vegetable, or dry to use as flavouring. To collect seed, leave pods on the plants until they turn yellow and collect seeds before they burst.

Growing Guide

Easy

Average time to harvest

Pick leaves 6 weeks after sowing

Site / Equipment

Outdoors, sunny position, free draining, reasonably fertile soil

Germination

From 5 – 21 days

Average plant size

Will grow 30 - 50 cm tall and 30 cm wide

Family to grow with

Legume family – grow with peas and beans

Seed saving

Leave seed pods on plants until dry and yellow, collect seeds before pods split



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Chick pea

Place of origin: South East Turkey

Legume - seed



Chick peas are perhaps most familiar in their dried form, but have you ever tried eating them as fresh green peas? They are grown by Asians on many allotments in the UK and are a delicacy eaten fresh.



Chick pea

Legume - seed

Plant

Chick peas are best sown directly into a rough seedbed 10 cm apart with 20 cm between rows. They will survive light frosts so can be sown in April. Choose a well-drained soil that is not too fertile. Some varieties release acids on the leaf edges, especially in hot weather, which can irritate sensitive skin. Wear gloves when handling plants.

Grow

The crop will produce purple or white flowers 5 - 6 weeks after germination. Pods will set about a week later and usually contain only 1 - 2 seeds per pod. Don't over-water, as this could lead to fungal rots. Beware of mice, which enjoy eating immature pods.

Eat

Harvest pods from August onwards, while they are still green and the peas inside are plump. Shell the pods and eat fresh as green peas, cooked lightly or in a curry. An alternative use is to wait until the pods are just turning yellow, then roast them over a fire to eat as a snack like peanuts.

Growing Guide

Easy

Average time to harvest

14 weeks

Site / Equipment

Outdoors, free draining poor soil, not finely cultivated

Germination

From 7 - 10 days

Average plant size

Grow up to 50 cm tall.

Family to grow with

Legume family - pea, beans

Seed saving

Can be done – need to wait until pods have dried on the plant.



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Haloon

Place of origin: unknown, possibly W.Asia

Brassica – leaf



Haloon is an Indian variety of garden cress, extensively grown on Indian and Bangladeshi allotments. Leaves and seeds are both used in cooking.



Haloon

Brassica – leaf

Plant	<p>Indoors: all year round in shallow containers on a window sill. Seeds will germinate within a few days.</p> <p>Outdoors: sow from March to September; direct into shallow rows, 20 cm apart with 5 cm between pinches of seed. Repeat sowings every 2 weeks for a regular supply. Midsummer sowings will form flowers very quickly.</p>
Grow	<p>Outdoor crops grow best on well-drained, moderately fertile soil. Keep soil moist and water well in dry periods. Seeds will germinate within a few days. After a week, thin seedlings to leave 10 cm between plants.</p>
Eat	<p>For leaf harvest, cut seedlings after 10 days. Young leaves do not store well, so use quickly in salads or soups. Allow leaves to grow larger for using cooked in curries, mixed with spinach. To harvest seed, leave pods on the plant to dry. Collect just before they split, store in a dry place then separate seeds from pods. Seeds have a pungent, mustardy flavour.</p>

Growing Guide

Easy

Average time to harvest

Cut leaves from 10 days after sowing

Site / Equipment

Outdoors, free draining, moderately fertile soil

Germination

From 3 - 5 days

Average plant size

Indoors: up to 10 - 15 cm.

Outdoors: up to 60 cm

Family to grow with

Other brassicas - cabbages, broccoli, cauliflower, turnip

Seed saving

Leave pods on the plant to dry, collect before they split.



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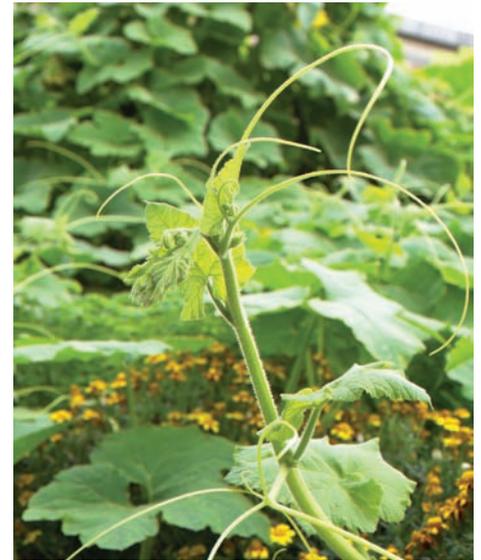
Shark fin melon

Place of origin: South America

Cucurbit – squash



The Shark Fin Melon is a fruit that is used as a vegetable. The stringy flesh, when scraped out and made into a broth, has a similar texture to shark fin soup. The plant is widely used in Asia and Southern and Central America.



Shark fin melon

Cucurbit – squash

Plant	Sow 2 seeds per small pot indoors in mid April. Sow seeds on their side 1 cm deep into seed compost. Remove the smallest plant in each pot after they germinate. Transplant outside when you know there is little chance of frost, usually by the end of May. Plants need plenty of space and should be 1.5 – 2 m apart.
Grow	The soil shouldn't be too rich or you will end up with huge amounts of leaves and little fruit. Yellow flowers will be produced about 8 weeks after transplanting and fruits start to form about 2 weeks later. Each plant has both male and female flowers, but usually the male flowers open first. Female flowers have an undeveloped melon behind the petals.
Eat	Harvest at the end of the growing season in September, before the first frosts. When ready to harvest the skin should feel hard, like a pumpkin. Shark fin melons will keep for at least 6 months if kept cool (but not freezing). Despite the name, they are eaten as a savoury dish with the flesh scraped out, cut into strips and put into soup.



Growing Guide

Easy

Average time to harvest

12 – 16 weeks from sowing

Site / Equipment

Outdoors, free draining soil, not too rich

Germination

Within 1 week

Average plant size

Sprawls along ground, needs 1.5 – 2 m between plants

Family to grow with

Other cucurbits - squashes, courgettes

Seed saving

Easy to produce and unlikely to cross with other squashes. Harvest in autumn, then leave whole fruits to mature in a warm place for 3 - 4 months. Harvest and clean seed, which will be black when mature, and store in cool, dry conditions.



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LOTTERY FUNDED

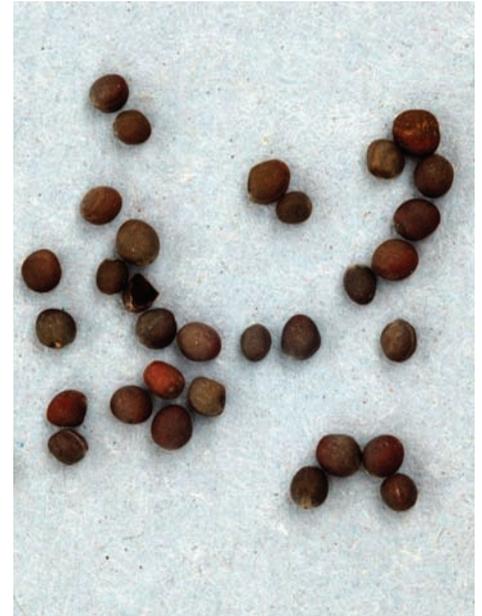
Vietnamese mustard

Place of origin: Asia

Brassica – leaf



Vietnamese mustard is a type of Chinese mustard. It has a peppery, strong taste but is also quite sweet. It is great in salads, lightly steamed or stir-fried.



Vietnamese mustard

Brassica – leaf

Plant	<p>Sow one seed per module indoors towards the end of April. Place outside to 'harden off' one week before planting. Transplant 50 cm apart with 50 cm between rows, when there is little chance of frost, usually by the end of May. Another option is to sow direct into the soil in August.</p>
Grow	<p>Plants require reasonably fertile soil to encourage leaf growth. Start cutting leaves about 4 weeks after transplanting and the plants will continue to produce leaves. Leaves lose their flavour once the plants start to flower. Sow a new batch every month to ensure a regular harvest of young leaves.</p>
Eat	<p>Cut leaves and use as soon as possible for best flavour in salads, steam or stir-fry, add to stuffing or other cooked vegetables. Leaves have a strong peppery taste, especially when raw, so you may prefer to mix them with other more bland leaves. The hotness can vary depending on age and where on the plant the leaves are growing, so test before eating.</p>



Growing Guide

Easy

Average time to harvest

8 weeks after sowing

Site / Equipment

Outdoors, fairly rich soil

Germination

Within a few days

Average plant size

Grows up to 70 cm high, needs 50 cm spacing

Family to grow with

Other brassicas - cabbages, broccoli, cauliflower, turnip

Seed saving

Seed pods are produced after flowering and should be left to dry on the plant. Harvest just before they shatter. Shouldn't cross with most other brassicas unless Chinese mustard is flowering nearby.



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LOTTERY FUNDED

Calaloo

Place of origin: South America

Amaranth - leaf



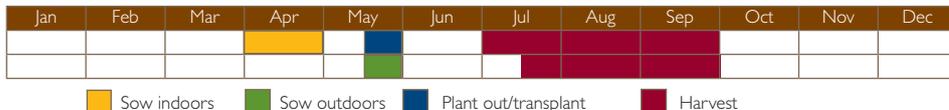
Calaloo is a type of amaranth, grown as a leaf crop similar to spinach. It is very easy to grow and there are many different colours and types eaten by Jamaicans, Bangladeshis, Indians and in many parts of Africa.



Calaloo

Amaranth - leaf

Plant	<p>Calaloo is most often sown directly into the ground, but can also be transplanted. To sow directly, make very shallow grooves in the soil, 50 cm apart, and sprinkle a small pinch for each metre, about ¼ g of seed. Cover very lightly, firm the ground and water well. If transplanting, raise indoors and water plants well until established.</p>
Grow	<p>Calaloo grows very quickly and shouldn't need a lot of weeding or watering once it is established. Cut leaves regularly throughout the season, removing flower buds to encourage leaf production. If you leave the plants long enough, you can also collect seeds from them.</p>
Eat	<p>The leaves are similar to spinach and can be used in soups, stews or curries. Seeds can be eaten as a grain, similar to rice. The seeds must be washed very thoroughly before cooking, as they are coated in 'saponins' that give them a soapy flavour.</p>



Growing Guide

Easy

Average time to harvest

Pick first leaves 6 weeks after sowing, then continue picking through the summer

Site / Equipment

Outdoors, free draining soil, not too rich, fine textured

Germination

Within 1 week

Average plant size

Will grow at least 1 m tall and 40 cm wide

Family to grow with

Amaranth family – grow with spinach and chard

Seed saving

The plants will flower and produce seed, but the seed must be left on the flowers until it is almost falling out. If you take seed before it is ready, it won't grow next time.



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