

# Rhubarb

## Planting & Growing Guide

Questions? Contact us at (888) 784-1722 or [helpdesk@groworganic.com](mailto:helpdesk@groworganic.com)



Rhubarb is a cool season, perennial plant that is very winter hardy and resistant to drought. Its crop is produced from crowns consisting of fleshy rhizomes and buds. Following a season of growth the rhubarb crown becomes dormant and temperatures below 40°F are required to stimulate bud break and subsequent growth. The first shoots to appear in the spring are edible petioles and leaves. These emerge sequentially as long as temperatures remain cool (below 90°F). As temperatures increase, top growth is suppressed, even appearing dormant in periods of extreme heat. With declining temperatures in later summer, foliage growth resumes.

### HEELING IN

When your bare root crowns arrive, open the plastic bags immediately. It is best to plant right away, within a week of delivery, however if you cannot plant right away, you may "heel in" the crowns to protect them and keep them alive (but still dormant) until you are able to plant them in their permanent spot.

**Outdoors:** To heel in bare root crowns outside, pick a location that is shielded from wind. Dig a trench about twice as deep as the roots are long. Place in the hole roots side down. Cover the crowns with soil or sand and gently tamp down to avoid air pockets. Periodically check the crowns and keep the soil moist.

**Indoors:** To heel in bare root crowns indoors, whether due to snow or a frozen ground, choose a cool place like a root cellar, basement, or garage. It's important to choose a place where the temperature stays between 38°F and 45°F. This is important so the crowns neither freeze, nor do the crowns break dormancy. Place the crowns in a container with soil or sand and be sure to keep them moist.

### CLIMATE & GROWING REGION

Rhubarb requires temperatures below 40°F to establish dormancy, and summer temperatures averaging less than 75°F for vigorous vegetative growth. The Northern U.S. and Canada are well suited for rhubarb production. In the United States it grows best in the northern states from Maine south to Illinois and west to Washington state. Once planted, rhubarb remains productive for 8 to 15 years. Rhubarb can be grown in the southern regions of the United States if it is grown as an annual, however, it will wilt very quickly on hot days (over 90°F). Excessive heat may cause Rhubarb to produce only thin leaf stalks which lack color.

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## Important Information

- **If your plants arrived damaged**, take photographs and contact us immediately and we will provide you with a refund of the purchase price, or a replacement.
- **You should plant your rhubarb within a week of delivery.** If you are unable to do so, you can plant it in a pot or "heel in" your asparagus until you are able to plant.
- **In the rare event that your rhubarb does not leaf out by May 15th**, we offer a Limited Guarantee on dormant plants. See the last page for details.

### SOIL

Rhubarb tolerates most soils but grows best on fertile, well-drained soils that are high in organic matter. A clean planting site is essential for the cultivation of rhubarb since no herbicides are registered for use on rhubarb. Small areas of perennial weeds can quickly build up to serious proportions. To prevent this, all perennial weeds should be killed the year before planting. The fields should be cultivated in the spring and after cutting, and hand hoeing may also be necessary. Rhubarb is relatively free of insect and disease problems.

### FERTILIZATION

Rhubarb is rather tolerant of soil acidity but does best in slightly to moderately acid soil. The crop can tolerate soil pH as low as 5.0;

however, maximum yields are attained at a pH of 6.0 to 6.8. Because rhubarb responds well to fertilizers liberal quantities are not needed. The quality of the crop harvested depends to a large extent on the care and fertilization received. Home gardeners should fertilize with a balanced fertilizer each spring.

Compost is an extremely valuable source of organic matter as it helps to conserve moisture, preserves the soil structure, and makes nutrients readily available. Apply compost in late fall or early winter, but do not cover the crowns as this may promote rotting.

## PLANTING & SPACING

Space rhubarb roots 24–48" inches apart in rows 3–4' apart for commercial growing. These distances can be decreased to 36" for plants in rows and rows for smaller home gardens. Much smaller than this will seriously crowd the plants and result in a diminished crop and increase the likelihood of spreading disease. Plant the roots with the crown bud 2" (5 cm) below the surface of the soil. The hole for the crown should be dug extra large and compost should be mixed with the soil to be placed around the roots. Firm the soil around the roots but keep it loose over the buds. Water the crowns after planting. Good garden drainage is essential in growing rhubarb. For home gardeners, planting in raised beds helps ensure against rotting of the crowns.

Rhubarb responds to good care and watering. Remove the flower stalks as they are seen. During the first year of planting, the stalks should not be picked, since food from the leaves is needed to nourish the roots for the next year's growth. One light picking may be taken during the year following planting if the plants are vigorous, and beginning the second year following planting, the entire plant may be harvested. When harvesting rhubarb, the first step is to cut the stalks at the soil line or simply pull them out individually. All of the stalks of a plant may be harvested at one time, or pulled out selectively over a 4–6 week period. After the stalks are cut, the leaves may be removed. For the home (small) gardener, rhubarb will tolerate a fair amount of neglect and still thrive, they are very tough plants.

**Only eat the stalks!**

**The leaves are toxic and should NOT be consumed.**

### Return Policy

#### Perishable Items (3-Day Return Policy)

We guarantee the perishable items we sell to be in good, viable condition when we sell them. Perishable items include, but are not limited to, garlic bulbs, flower bulbs, seed potatoes, onion sets & transplants, bare-root trees, vegetable crowns... etc. If your perishable item arrives in substandard condition, please contact us within 3 days of the purchase date (or delivery date) and we will provide you with a refund of the purchase price (including shipping costs), or a replacement. Accordingly, we urge you to open any boxes marked as "Perishable" immediately upon receiving them. Because some perishable items can deteriorate very quickly, we cannot accept any claims beyond the 3-day time frame as it becomes too difficult to determine if these items were delivered in substandard condition, or if they turned into such substandard condition because of having been improperly cared for or stored once delivered.

### Limited Product Guarantee

#### Limitation of Remedy

We warrant to the extent of the purchase price only that the seeds or plants sold hereunder are as described on the label within recognized tolerances. No other warranty is given, expressed or implied, of (1) the merchantability or fitness of the seeds or plants for any particular purpose, or (2) against loss due to any cause. We cannot accept any responsibility for the many uncontrollable growing and climatic conditions (soil preparation, fertilization, weed and pest control, temperature control, irrigation...etc.) that must be met to insure the success of your crop(s) or plants.

### Limited Dormant Tree & Plant Guarantee

#### \* Claim deadline is June 15th

We guarantee that your dormant tree or plant will arrive in good, viable condition. If your tree arrives in substandard condition, notify us within 3 days of delivery. Please email pictures of the box, inside packaging, the tree and its roots to [helpdesk@groworganic.com](mailto:helpdesk@groworganic.com). We will investigate your claim and process a request to exchange or refund the damaged product.

If your dormant tree or plant has not grown new leaves by June 15th, you may be eligible for our Limited Dormant Tree & Plant Guarantee. This guarantee provides for a store credit for the purchase price of the tree, excluding shipping. Please see the Instructions below.

#### Important Dates:

- April 1st Dormant trees/plants must be planted in the ground
- May 15th Perform scratch test, if no new leaves have grown
- June 15th Deadline to apply for a dormant tree/plant credit

All required documentation must be received by June 15th for your claim to be considered. Claims or documentation received after June 15th will be denied, without exception. Instructions listed below

#### Terms and Conditions

We cannot guarantee that your tree or plant will remain alive and healthy after it is received, or bear fruit as there are too many variables in your environment that are beyond our control (i.e. soil preparation, weed and pest control, proper irrigation, chill hours, compatible hardiness for your growing zone, proper choice of pollinator, extreme weather, rodent damage, disease, etc.).

We cannot guarantee that we will be able to provide a replacement tree/plant of the same species either that same growing season or in future years. Customers are responsible for all shipping fees associated with replacement trees and plants.

If we determine that the tree you purchased directly from us is not viable, we will issue you a store credit (not a refund) for the purchase price of the affected dormant tree or plant. Shipping is not included in the dormant tree/plant guarantee. Store credits can be used to purchase any product we sell and are valid for use only until July 1st of the following year.

Historically, 98% of our dormant trees and plants grow and thrive when they have been cared for and planted using our growing guides. Dormant trees and plants must be planted in the ground by April 1st in order to be eligible for credit. If the ground in your area is still frozen solid, you may temporarily plant your tree or plant in a pot.

Potted, non-dormant trees or plants are excluded from this guarantee as they are not dormant at the time of shipment. Evergreen trees such as citrus, avocado and olive trees are not available for credit under the Dormant Tree and Plant Guarantee.

#### Instructions

We guarantee that your dormant fruit tree or plant will leaf out, if you care for it according to our growing guides. In the unlikely event that your dormant tree or plant does not have leaves by May 15th, follow these simple steps to apply for a store credit:

Before you call or email, please perform a "scratch test" to determine if the tree or plant is still alive. This video shows how to check for live tissue under the bark. Scratch tests need to be done a few inches above and below the graft.

#### Green Cambium Layer–Living Trees/Plants

If the cambium layer under the bark is green, give your tree a little more time. It is still alive, but hasn't come out of dormancy yet. Check to make sure that it is getting the right amount of deep root water, enough sunlight and that the weather is warm enough for that type of tree/plant to come out of dormancy. Every tree has its own personality and will come out of dormancy at different times. Be sure to submit the required documentation listed below by June 15th, if it doesn't grow leaves.

#### Brown Cambium Layer–Dead Trees/Plants

If the scratch test shows a brown cambium layer or if your dormant tree/plant doesn't have leaves by June 1st, please email us at [helpdesk@groworganic.com](mailto:helpdesk@groworganic.com). All required documentation listed below must be received by June 15th for your claim to be considered. To be considered for the guarantee claim, all required documentation must be received by June 15th. Incomplete submissions will be denied.

#### Required Documentation

1. Order number
2. Name of dormant tree/plant and the quantity affected
3. Photos of each tree or plant showing: The roots (tree or plant must be pulled out of the ground), the scratch test areas, the entire tree/plant

We reserve the right to not issue credit for items that have already been replaced. We also reserve the right to require photographic evidence that the tree/plant was not killed by root rot, rodent or mechanical damage.



**Peaceful Valley Farm & Garden Supply**

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