



Asparagus

GROWING INDOORS:

Start your seeds indoors before last frost. When using seeds, pre-sprouting will ensure greater success.

Spread seeds between folds of lightly dampened paper towel, slip into a plastic baggie and seal. Lay the baggie on top of your refrigerator where it's warm. Expect germination within 10 to 14 days. Sow your pre-sprouted seeds in 3 1/2 to 4 inch pots and place on a sunny windowsill. Water as needed and fertilize only once, if at all, with a diluted liquid organic fertilizer.

PLANTING YOUNG ASPARAGUS:

Prepare your asparagus bed with deep fertile sandy loam soil. Low fertility can cause fibrous spears. Attention to plant spacing and soil pH will reward you with many years of this delicious treat.

After the last spring frost, dig holes 8 inches deep then carefully remove your new asparagus plants from their pots and settle them in the bottom of the holes. Fill each hole with soil about half way, making sure the greens are still above the soil. Space the plants 12 inches apart. Over the summer, gradually fill in the planting holes to the surface as greens grow above ground level. Deep planting will encourage a strong root system and protect the slender shoots of young plants from heavy winds.

Asparagus has plenty going for it. The first vegetable in the spring garden after a long winter, this hardy perennial can last for 20 or 30 years in well planned asparagus beds. A highly nutritious vegetable, asparagus deserves a place in every garden.

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