



## Butternut

Give your seeds warm soil and room to grow. Because butternut squash is a somewhat delicate plant, if you are planting seeds directly into the soil, be sure to wait until after the danger of frost has passed. You can also plant seeds in individual pots filled with peat and plant in the ground when it has thawed. Butternut squash seeds should be planted in hills about 1/2 to 1 inch deep in the soil, and the seeds should be spaced 4 inches apart. Hills should be 4 to 6 feet apart.

### **WATER REGULARLY:**

Water your butternut squash seeds upon planting and then every two to three days until germination. However, do not saturate the ground, as squash grows best in moderately moist soil.

### **FEED YOUR PLANTS:**

Squash grows well in rich soil, so fertilizing regularly will help you grow healthy plants. Some experts even recommend initially side dressing the fertilizer into the soil, and then continuing to feed the soil fertilizer on a regular basis.

### **THIN THE HILLS:**

After your plants are 4 inches high, thin the hills to three plants per hill. Because this type of squash will grow to be 8 to 10 inches long, the plants will need plenty of room after they begin to sprout vines.

## **PROTECT YOUR PLANTS:**

All squash is susceptible to insect and fungus. Minimize damage. There are many products out on the market, both organic and non-organic, that will help minimize damage to your butternut squash. If you choose to use insecticides, it is recommended to wait until the evening hours. This keeps the bees from being affected by the insecticides as you need them to pollinate your plants.

## **HARVEST YOUR BUTTERNUT SQUASH:**

Butternut squash is ripe after the rind has hardened and when there is about 2 inches of stem. If you pick it before it is ripe it will lack flavor, and if you cut the stem while it is too short, it will not keep very long. Also, this squash needs to be harvested before the fall frost, as it will kill the plant and damage the fruit.

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