

# SFA

*Seeds for Africa*

## Spinach – Spinacea Oleracea

Annual

### EXPOSURE:

Full Sun / Partial Shade

### DAYS TO HARVEST:

4-6 weeks from seed. You can begin harvesting whenever the leaves are large enough for your taste.

### HARVESTING:

Spinach can be harvested in the cut and come again method of harvesting lettuce. Cut individual leaves, starting with the older, outer leaves, and letting the young inner leaves remain and continue growing for a later harvest. You can also cut down the whole plant, for a larger harvest. If you cut about an inch above the crown or base of the plant, it is very likely the plant will send out a new flush of leaves.

### TIPS WHEN USING SPINACH:

Spinach, especially the crinkled leaf varieties, hangs onto soil. Wash well before using.

Spinach leaves are very sensitive to the ethylene gas given off by many fruits. Don't store in the refrigerator with apples, melons or tomatoes.

Spinach can be frozen for later use. Wash the leaves well and allow them to dry somewhat before placing in a resealable freezer bag. Then zap them for about 1 minute in the microwave, on high. Allow to cool slightly and place in the freezer. Best used within 3-6 months.

## **PESTS AND PROBLEMS:**

Because spinach is grown when the weather is cool and damp, several fungus diseases, like downy mildew (blue mold) and fusarium wilt, can become problems. Space your spinach plants so they get good air circulation and try to keep water off the leaves in the evening. And plant disease resistant varieties, like: 'Melody,' 'Nordic IV,' 'Olympia,' 'Tyee' and 'Wolter'. All available from Seeds for Africa.

Aphids pose a risk because they can spread viruses. Monitor for aphids regularly and hose them off immediately.

Several 4-legged pest, rabbits chief among them, will also raid your spinach patch.

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