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Seeds for Africa

Washingtonia Robusta

Fill a large container with equal parts peat and soilless potting mix. Moisten it thoroughly.

Press the seed into the soil, leaving the top inch of it exposed. Place the container in full sun and moisten daily for the next two months. If the seed is viable, it will sprout within that time.

Move the seedling into an area of light shade in the landscape when it develops its fourth leaf. The seedling must be small when transplanted because its root system below will be large. If you wait too long, the roots won't survive transplanting. Use a spade to dig a hole, and set the seedling in so that the base of the stem is exactly at, not below, the soil line. Pat the dirt down around it and water thoroughly.

Water whenever the top two inches of soil are dry. Do not fertilize Washingtonia palm seedlings in the first year of growth. Too much nitrogen will kill them.

Prune Washingtonia palm when it begins to develop a grey "skirt" of dead leaves. These are considered a fire hazard in many areas.

Fertilize Washingtonia palms after they are established; use fertilizer formulated for palms. Follow the instructions on the packaging for correct proportions for the size and age of the tree.

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