

Beets

Beets are a cool season crop, and should be planted early in the spring – about 4 weeks before the average date of last frost. Sow beet seeds every 3-4 weeks until midsummer to extend the harvest. Although beets are really a biennial, they are always grown as annuals. There are red, striped, and golden varieties.

Direct sow seeds ½” deep and about 1” apart in full sun or partial shade. They prefer well-worked, loose soil that is high in organic matter. Thin seedlings to about 2” apart once they are large enough to handle. Cultivate regularly as beets do not compete well with weeds, being careful not to damage the shallow roots. Beets have few significant pest problems.

Both the leaves and roots are edible. Beet roots can be harvested anytime after the root reaches 1” in diameter. Twist off the leaves rather than cutting them to prevent “bleeding.”



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Additional Resources

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- UW-Extension Publication A3686, *Growing Carrots, Beets, Radishes, and Other Root Crops in Wisconsin*, at <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/Growing-Carrots-Beets-Radishes-and-Other-Root-Crops-in-Wisconsin-P525.aspx>
- Article on MG website at <http://wimastergardener.org/article/chioggia-beets/>
- UW-Extension Pub. A1989, *The Vegetable Garden*, at <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/Vegetable-Garden-The-P518.aspx>

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