Growing Turmeric

The Best Turmeric Cultivars

There are several primary species of turmeric, but the most common is Curcuma longa, with deep orange rhizomes, which is botanically known as Curcuma longa. But there are many wonderful cultivars out there.

- One of Hawaii's most popular types of this plant is 'Hawaiian Red'. Its flesh is a bold orange-red color.
- Indira Yellow's flesh is bright yellow and has a bolder taste than its parent species.
- White Mango has pale yellowish-green flesh that tastes like a green mango.
- The curcumin ratio of 'Lakadong' is high, while 'Alleppey' is stronger in flavor and has a higher curcumin content. In the US, this cultivar is highly sought after.
- Its bright yellow coloring makes the 'Madras' India's and the UK's cultivar of choice.

How To Plant Turmeric

Seed rhizomes are needed to grow turmeric. These are available at local retailers and online. For planting, look for rhizomes that have not been treated. In most cases, the rhizomes purchased at the grocery store have been treated and will not sprout.

In order to grow this spice, it needs to be planted in a sunny, warm location since it thrives in India and other warm regions. The growing season for this plant is long, so a consistent temperature range is needed for a long time to ensure optimum growth.

To produce a harvest, turmeric requires 8-10 months of frost-free weather and temperatures above 70°F. The plant will need to be brought indoors during the cooler months if you don't have a long growing season.

Ideally, turmeric should be planted in winter for harvest in fall or early winter. If your growing season is short, you can start plants indoors. The temperature can be raised by using heat mats.

Use loose, well-draining soil that contains plenty of organic matter, or use potting soil that is water retentive.

You should remove large rocks and clumps from the soil when you are preparing it for turmeric. Hence, raised beds are ideal for growing turmeric since you can avoid rocks and make sure the soil provides the best conditions from the start.

In order to grow rhizomes successfully, they need to be planted four inches deep as well as six inches apart. For the crop to grow properly, there needs to be enough space between the seeds so that they don't grow on top of one another.

In order to plant turmeric rhizomes, dig a small hole, insert the ends into the ground, and cover them with soil. The sprouts will grow in the correct direction if the nubs face upwards.

Planting in Containers

Turmeric should be planted in a large container. Since this is a root crop, it needs a lot of space for the rhizomes to grow large.

Turmeric is sometimes grown in empty wine barrels. One half-barrel can hold several plants. No matter what you use, make sure it has a foot-wide surface area and is at least five gallons. Also, it needs to be well-drained.

It is advisable to use a mix of 70-80% organic potting soil and 20-30% well-rotted compost for turmeric plants. Turmeric thrives in this mixture.

You can place them indoors under grow lights or near a sunny window. Make sure the plants are hardened off before taking them outside.

Taking Care of Your Turmeric

The turmeric crop will need to be cared for once it has been planted. The only thing turmeric needs are water and fertilizer occasionally. It is important to keep the soil mildly damp but never drenched.

Test the soil's moisture level every few days by poking your finger into it. It's perfect if the soil feels like a wrung-out sponge. Add water if it feels dry.

You will need to water more frequently during the summer and spring months. The temperatures won't be as high and there will be less evaporation in winter, so you can reduce your watering schedule.

Check your crop for pests and diseases when you water.

During the growing stages, fertilizer should be applied regularly along with watering your turmeric crop. Vegetable fertilizers work well.

Turmeric Harvesting and Use

You'll be thrilled when the time finally comes to harvest all your efforts after months of caring for your turmeric. Gardening is all about that, isn't it?

A majority of yellow or brown leaves are a sign that turmeric is ready for picking. Using a trowel or rake and gently pulling, turmeric can be harvested easily.

Turmeric needs to be harvested carefully to prevent the stalk from snapping when you pull it out of the ground. Wash the rhizomes with water after you have them and remove the excess dirt.

Turmeric is not just a health supplement or colorant but has a multitude of other uses. As with ginger, feel free to be creative when using it, whether on roasted vegetables, in soups, or even in cakes.