



Winter Vegetable Gardening Tips from Joyce Gemmell

Cauliflower *Brassica family*

Cauliflower is supposed to be one of the more difficult Brassicas to grow well. Proper planting time and variety choice is the secret to an easy crop in this area.

Cauliflower has no tolerance for a check in growth during the juvenile period. It is also sensitive to trace elemental deficiencies which cause hollow stems and malformed curds.



Cauliflower planted during the first week in October can be harvested in December. The plant likes deep soil with organic additions. Add a pre-plant fertilizer, in top 12 inches, high in phosphorus (16 - 20 - 0) and side dress when half-grown.

Use young transplants from the nursery, or your own, no more than 4 inches tall. If raising your own, start seeds in containers 4-5 weeks before planting in the garden. Seedlings started Sept. 1" in a partially shaded place will grow much faster during this warm period and will not need bottom heat to germinate. Be sure not to let seedlings wilt. Water daily or put on a capillary mat and water from below. Seed will sprout in 5-7 days and four weeks later should be large enough to put in the garden. Plant a little deeper, but don't compact soil around roots.



Plant may need cutworm protection with a paper collar wrapped around the stem when transplanting.

Fall planted cauliflower tends to make larger plants so space 18- 20 inches both ways on a staggered pattern in raised beds. Prepare soil ahead of planting with organic matter and composted manure or pre-

plant fertilizer high in nitrogen and phosphorus (16 - 20 - 0). If only compost and manure are used, side dress with liquid fish emulsion every 2 weeks until heading begins.

Use self blanching varieties to keep top of the “curd” white or break a leaf or two over the head for shade.

Cauliflower does well under row covers and eliminates a lot of spraying for the imported cabbage worm and loopers. It also prevents the soil from drying out too rapidly. Follow same recommendations under broccoli for pest control and inspection. After plants reach top of row covers, remove the covers and start a spray program with Bt and soap.

Watch heads for maturity. Don't let them get ricey. Cut whole head off while buds are white and compact. Cauliflower can be stored in a plastic bag for one week in the refrigerator, or freeze.

Varieties:

Snow Crown Hybrid 53 days, Stokes and Burpee
Purple Head 80-85 days, Burpee
Floccoli 60 days. Hybrid cross between broccoli and cauliflower, Thompson & Morgan
Romanesco 85 days, may be same as above, Thompson and Morgan Seed and Stokes Seed.

If you like to have a longer season, stagger plantings every 2-3 weeks or plant early and late varieties a week or so apart

Also check out ...

http://vric.ucdavis.edu/veg_info_crop/cauliflower.htm

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/selectnewpest.cole-crops.html>

Cauliflower, as its name implies, is a flower growing from a plant. In its early stages, it resembles broccoli, which is its closest relative. While broccoli opens outward to sprout bunches of green florets, cauliflower forms a compact head of undeveloped white flower buds. The heavy green leaves that surround the head protect the flower buds from the sunlight. The lack of exposure to sunlight does not allow chlorophyll to develop. Therefore, color is not produced, and

Planting Dates:

Coastal region

Plants can be set out from September to February.
Seeds can be planted from August to December.

Inland Region

Plants can be set out from September to February.
Seeds can be planted from August to October.

the head remains a white color. Cauliflower is an excellent source of Vitamin C.

Cauliflower, raw (edible parts)

Nutritional value per 100 g (3.5 oz)

Energy	103 kJ (25 kcal)
Carbohydrates	5 g
Sugars	2.4 g
Dietary fiber	2.5 g
Fat	0 g
Protein	2 g
Thiamine (Vit. B1)	0.057 mg (4%)
Riboflavin (Vit. B2)	0.063 mg (4%)
Niacin (Vit. B3)	0.53 mg (4%)
Pantothenic acid (B5)	0.65 mg (13%)
Vitamin B6	0.22 mg (17%)
Folate (Vit. B9)	57 µg (14%)
Vitamin C	46 mg (77%)
Calcium	22 mg (2%)
Iron	0.44 mg (4%)
Magnesium	15 mg (4%)
Phosphorus	44 mg (6%)
Potassium	300 mg (6%)
Zinc	0.28 mg (3%)

Percentages are relative to US recommendations for adults.

Source: Wikipedia : USDA Nutrient database