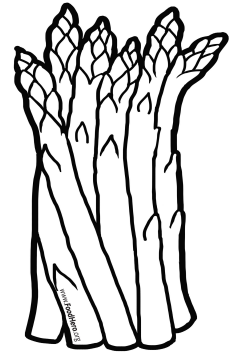




## Growing Asparagus

Plant asparagus in spring, in a sunny location. Preferably at the end or side of the garden where normal garden cultivation that happens each year, won't disturb the asparagus bed.

Asparagus is a hardy perennial, available as bare root. It will have a crown or grow tip with fleshy roots below the crown. Once established, a nice patch of asparagus will provide a bountiful harvest for 15 to 25 years, if given good care.



### To plant -

Dig a trench 6 inches deep. Space the plants 12-24 inches apart. Place the crown with the roots in the trench and spread out the roots so that they remain flat. Make sure the crown or grow tip is facing up. Cover the roots with 3 inches of soil. Water well. After the grow tips begin to grow, fill in the additional 3 inches of soil.

### Watering -

Water regularly to keep soil evenly moist, especially for the first year growing season. Asparagus doesn't like extremely hot, long summers and mild winters.

### Harvest -

Do not harvest any asparagus the first year to allow the plants to develop and get established in the new location. You may need to wait until the third season to harvest if the new patch doesn't look developed enough. Even in the second season, only harvest a few spears, leaving the rest to develop into fronds that unfurl into nice airy foliage that deliver nutrients to the plant to help it develop. Once you have a well established patch, you could be harvesting asparagus for a full month each spring.

### Fertilizing -

After harvest time is over, apply a balanced fertilizer, such as, Espoma Garden Food (10-10-10), or top dress the soil with nutrient-rich compost.

### Overwintering -

Remove dead foliage in late fall or winter. The foliage stems need to be cut back before new growth starts in early spring.

### Varieties – available at Andy's Garden

**Jersey Giant** – produces heavy yields of large uniform spears. An all male variety, meaning every plant produces spears and not seeds. Disease resistant.

**Mary Washington** – popular variety among home gardeners. Good disease resistance and heavy yields. Open pollinated variety – meaning any seeds that develop will be true to the variety.

**Purple Passion** – 20% higher sugar content than green varieties. Spears are tender and less stringy, so more of the spear can be used and not cut off. Mild nutty flavor. Disease resistant.