



GROWING PEPPERS IN CONTAINERS

PLANTING AND SPACING

Pretty much any type of pepper will do fine in containers if taken care of properly. You can grow Bell Peppers of any color, all hot peppers including Jalapeno, Cayenne, Cherry Bomb, Thai, Habanero and frying peppers such as Cubanelle. Peppers can be harvested any time you like. Earlier in the season, you can pick the green peppers. Then later you can leave them on the vines until they ripen to a lovely red. Peppers will need a pot that is at least 8-10 inches deep and 12 inches in diameter. Most varieties will grow to about 12-16 inches, so plan for a decent sized pot. The important thing to remember about peppers is that timing is everything. If you plant your peppers too early, then frost will possibly kill them. If you plant them too late, then they will never mature in time for you to pick them at a reasonable size. When choosing plants from a local garden center or nursery, look for thick, compact, bushy plants.

TEMPERATURE

It is important to keep peppers warm. They need full sun and very warm weather. Move pots around if necessary to keep them in as much sun as possible.

SOIL

It is important to use good soil; specific container mixes are available at your local Garden Center. In pots as in the ground, peppers need well-drained soil with lots of organic matter. You can also add a little bit of lime to provide extra calcium (which helps prevent blossom end rot).

NUTRITION

Peppers love fertilizer that is rich in phosphorous. Superphosphate and bone meal are good for peppers, and should be mixed into the soil when you transplant them into their large pots. Other nutrients that are beneficial for peppers include calcium, sulfur, and magnesium. Do NOT give them too much nitrogen, or you will end up with beautiful plants and no fruit.

WATER

Water regularly. Peppers need consistent moisture; swinging between extremes of wet and dry can damage your fruit. Be prepared to water daily. Water-holding gels (sold in crystal form and mixed in the soil) are especially good for container peppers.