

Organic Radishes:

Growing and Seed Saving Information



Types of Radishes

Radishes (*Raphanus sativus*) are hardy annuals in the *Brassicaiceae* family, which includes broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collards, kale, kohlrabi, turnips, mustards, watercress and horseradish. Most varieties are best harvested young, but some are specifically selected as winter storage radishes.

Soil and Nutrient Requirements

Remove stones from loose, well drained soil with pH 5.8-6.8. Go easy on nitrogen, as excessive amounts can lead to big tops and little roots.

Position

Full sun to part shade

Seeding Depth

Planting depth: 1/4-1/2"

Plant Spacing

Plant spacing: for garden radishes 1", for daikon 4-6". Thin if necessary to ensure even sizing.

Row Spacing

For garden radishes 8-12", for daikon 12-16".

When to Sow

Radishes can be direct seeded as soon as soil can be worked and are best adapted to the cooler temperatures and shorter day-length of spring and fall. Optimal soil temperature for germination is 65-85°F. Seedlings emerge within a few days. Plant every 10 days for a continual supply. Winter radishes should be planted to mature around fall frost date.

Frost Tolerant

Yes

Drought Tolerant

No

Heat Tolerant

Best quality will be achieved in cool weather conditions.

Seed Specs

1,800-3,500 (2,650 avg) seeds/oz, 30-58M (44M avg) seeds/lb.

Seeding Rate

Garden Radishes- 2M seeds/100' single row (3/4 oz/100' single row), 958M seeds/ acre (~22lb/acre) using 20 seeds/ft, 12" row spacing. Daikon Radishes- 660 seeds/100' (1/4oz/100' single row), 288M seeds/acre (~6.6lb/acre) using 6 seeds/ft, 12" row spacing. M= 1,000

Seed Coating / Pelleting Info

Some of the varieties we carry receive an organic film coating applied to the seed, which make the seed easier to see during planting.

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Harvest

Harvest radishes on time as they do not hold well in the field, especially in warm weather when roots tend to become pithy and pungent.

Storage

Topped radishes will keep good quality for 3-4 weeks if store at near freezing temperatures with high humidity in semi-permeable containers.

Pest Info

- Flea beetles can present a problem, particularly for young plants, by chewing small holes in the leaves. Healthy plants usually outgrow the damage to produce a fine crop. Where undamaged leaves are desired or flea beetles are especially problematic, use floating row cover (see Supplies) from time of planting until two weeks after leaves emerge.
- Floating row cover also helps prevent the cabbage root maggot, which feeds on the plant roots.

Disease Info

- Like other crucifers, radishes can be subject to fungal diseases in wet seasons, such as Alternaria Leaf Spot and White Mold (sclerotinia).
- Clubroot is a soil borne disease which stunts the roots of the plants so that they are not able to develop normally. Rotate crops and add lime to raise soil pH to 7.2.

Seed Saving Instructions

Insect pollinated. Different radish varieties should be isolated by a distance of ¼ mile to prevent cross pollination. The distance may be shortened if physical barriers exist such as tree lines, buildings or woods. Thin plants to 6" apart and allow to bolt and flower. Some staking will be necessary as the plants will grow to 3'-4'. Allow the seed pods to become papery and dry and harvest the entire plants. Some further drying may be necessary before threshing. A ¼" screen on top of a 1/8" screen can be used for cleaning the seed. Radish seeds remain viable for 5 years under cool and dry storage conditions.