

Rhubarb is a cool season perennial crop that remains productive for 8 - 15 years. Rhubarb grows best in fertile, well drained soils that are high in organic matter. It like slightly acid soil with liberal amounts of fertilizer. Apply 1 cup of organic 10-10-10 vegetable fertilizer in a circle around the plant when growth starts in the spring. Fertilize each year and cultivate shallowly as often as necessary to keep weeds down. Mulch is beneficial once weeds have been removed in the spring.

Well rotted manure and compost are valuable sources of nutrients and both help conserve moisture, soil structure and nutrients.

**Planting:**

Plant roots in early spring spacing roots 24ø- 48ø apart in rows 3-4 ft apart. Dig the planting hole extra large and amend soil with lots of compost and well rotted manure and plant the roots so the buds are 2ø below the soil surface. Firm soil around the roots but keep it loose around the buds, and water well. Work 1/4 cup of 5-10-10 fertilizer into the top 10 inches of soil around each plant.

**General Growing:**

Rhubarb responds to good care and watering. Remove flower stalks as they appear. Do not harvest any stalks the first year of planting, since the leaves provide food for the roots. The following year , if the plants are vigorous, a light harvest may be picked as long as you keep some leaves on the plant to feed the roots. After the second year you may harvest the entire plant. You may harvest the entire plant at one time or you can selectively pulled over a 4-6 week period. Once the plants are established they will tolerate some neglect and still thrive.

The harvest season is April to September. Only the stalks are edible, the leaves are poisonous. Leaves are safe to add to the compost pile and the oxalic acid in decomposed and pH balanced rather quickly.