



BEANS (POLE/VINING) GROWING GUIDE

Beans are one of the most popular vegetables for the home garden, and one of the easiest to grow. They're warm season, heavy-yielding plants, providing harvests for months. Green beans come in three different types based on their growing characteristics, bush, the compact variety; pole, featured here; and half runner which is a combination of them both.

Pole beans grow in a vining manner and require some support, such as a trellis or cage. Their vertical growing habit makes them great space-savers, versus the thick, horizontal growth of the bush variety. Pole beans also require a little less maintenance. They make very tasty side dishes, as well as hearty soups that are often enjoyed with cornbread or rice, and can also be canned or frozen for later enjoyment.

Our pole varieties include Scarlet Emperor Runner Bean, the best-selling runner bean, Blue Lake (a fantastic freezing and canning variety) and distinctively delicious Kentucky Wonder Pole.

WHEN TO SOW	SUN / PART SHADE	SEED SPACING	ROW SPACING	PLANTING DEPTH	SPACING AFTER THINNING	DAYS TO GERMINATE	DAYS TO MATURITY
1-8 weeks after last frost	Sun	3-5 inches	18-36 inches	1 inch	8-12 inches	7-10	55-75

Soil and Fertilizing

It's best to have your soil tested before planting, so you know what nutrients and pH adjustments may be needed to support your crop. For a thorough soil test, consult your local county extension office.

Beans typically need more potassium and phosphorous than nitrogen, which is why you should get soil test results before feeding. They also prefer a deep, well drained, sandy soil pH of 6.5-7.5, with an ideal soil temperature of 75-85° F before germinating.

Planting

Most bean vines grow up to 8 feet, so they will need special support, such as a pole, trellis, or other structure for the beans to climb. It's best to set up the support before the beans are planted. One way you can handle this is to use three poles (bamboo poles are inexpensive) to make a tepee instead of planting in rows. The poles should be inserted one inch deep into the soil, and at least 2 feet apart. Remove a shovel full of dirt by each tepee, and fill it with some compost.

Our bean seeds aren't treated with fungicides, so they shouldn't be planted in very wet or cold soil. When the ground is sufficiently warm or dry, plant 5-6 seeds one inch in depth at the base of each pole, and tamp the soil down firmly. To enjoy continuous harvests, plant beans every two weeks until the first week in July.

Watering

Beans need even moisture for best growth. Provide about one inch of water per week, especially during flowering and pod development, watering deeply and infrequently. Mulch after the second set of true leaves appear to keep the moisture in.

Harvesting / Storage

Beans are best when used as soon as possible after harvest, but they can be stored in the refrigerator for a few days if cooled immediately. This applies to freezing and canning as well. For best quality, canning and freezing should be done within a few hours after picking.

Harvest your beans while still green, before the seed can be seen through the pod, and while the pods are still tender. You will know they're ready if the pods break easily with a snap. For the best quality, harvest in the early morning.

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Harvesting / Storage (Continued)

Green beans can be eaten as soon as they are picked, without cooking, or after a quick blanching to retain the freshest flavor. If you prefer to store your green beans, it's best to freeze them. You can either leave them in pods or shuck them. Either way, blanch them in boiling water for one minute, then let them cool. Next, spread them out on a cookie sheet in one layer before freezing them. Once they are frozen, store them in freezer bags and put them back in the freezer.

For soil testing or other questions specific to your growing climate, please contact your local county extension agent.
Visit <http://www.almanac.com/content/cooperative-extension-services> to find the office nearest you.