

Design for Everyday Living

growing peppers

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Peppers are grown in very much the same way as tomatoes. They are set out after all danger of frost is over and the weather is warm. The row spacing is usually 2 1/2 to 3 feet apart, depending on cultivation equipment. The plants are set about 18 inches apart in the row. Pepper plants require continuous growth for satisfactory results, are very sensitive to unfavorable weather though, of course, the gardener has little control over the weather. Peppers will often drop their blossoms when temperatures are high and humidity is low. Cool weather can also keep the plant from flowering. Deep cultivation that cuts the roots causes a water stress on the plant that frequently makes blossoms drop. Even a short dry period can cause the same conditions.

Varieties: Bell Tower; Calwonder; Bell King; Golden Bell; Cubanelle; and Sweet Banana.

Hot Peppers: Early Hot Portugal, Red; Hungarian Wax, yellow turning red when ripe; Rummarian Wax, yellow turning orange then red when ripe; Habanero, one of the hottest.

Good Soil: Peppers require an even supply of water to prevent stress in dry periods; therefore, they should be set in soil high in organic matter. If available, apply 15 tons of manure per acre. (60 to 70 pounds per 1000 square feet) A good sod of red, sweet or crimson clover, or alfalfa, plowed down, is one of the best practices to insure high yields. A small grain crop plowed under every year is a very good practice.

Fertilize well and as recommended, after having soil tested. A general recommendation is 1500 pounds of 10-10-10 per acre or 40 pounds per 1000 square feet. Of this amount, broadcast 1000 pounds per acre or 25 pounds per 1000 square feet before plowing. If possible, the remainder should be applied in bands on either side of plants. If band application cannot be made, broadcast the remaining portion after plowing and disk or harrow into the soil.

When to Plant: Set plants in as soon as danger of frost is past. Pepper plants need a long growing period and moisture levels in the soil are usually more favorable in the spring season.

Start with Good Plants: Good thrifty plants about 6 weeks old are best for transplanting.

Setting Plants: Set plants about 1 inch deeper in the soil than they grew in the plant bed. They should be watered in using a good starter solution. A commercially prepared starter solution is best, but an adequate one can be made by dissolving a cup of 5-10-10 or 10-10-10 fertilizer in 4 gallons of water.

Sidedressing: If plant growth is not as vigorous as desired or plants are a light or pale green, apply a tablespoonful of nitrate fertilizer around each plant after several blossoms have set. Do not apply if plants are very vigorous or show excessive vegetative growth.

Weed Control: Herbicides: after the soil has been prepared and before transplanting date, the field should be sprayed with diphenamid at the rate of 4 pounds per acre on light soils (1.5 oz. per 1000 square feet), and 5 pounds per acre on heavy soils (1.9 oz. per 1000 square feet).

For small plantings, such as a home garden, a more practical method of controlling weeds is cultivating and hoeing. Only shallow cultivation should be practiced (1 inch deep). Deep cultivation cuts many of the feeder roots which in turn diminishes the water supply and often causes blossom or fruit drop.

Contact your local county extension office for current pest control recommendations.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SAFE USE OF PESTICIDES

1. Read the label and follow the directions every time you apply pesticides. The cautions and warnings protect you.
2. Store all pesticides in a safe place—in their original containers. Keep all pesticides out of reach of children and pets; store in locked cabinets and away from food, feed, seed or other materials which might be contaminated. Store herbicides separately from fungicides and insecticides.
3. Rinse pesticide containers at least three times pouring rinse water into sprayer tank. Safely dispose of empty containers so that they can never be reused.
4. Wash thoroughly with water and soap immediately after using pesticides and before eating, drinking, or smoking.
5. Change work clothes regularly and immediately if clothing is contaminated. Launder contaminated work clothes separately from family wash.

February 1984 1M

Names of products and manufacturers cited do not constitute endorsement. Names are used only where this information is necessary to provide knowledge of products likely to be unfamiliar to retailers or homeowners. Listings of products and manufacturers are neither assumed or intended to be complete. A number of similar and satisfactory herbicides are available under a wide variety of trade names.

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Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, West Virginia University and the United States Department of Agriculture, Cooperating. R. Rudy Filek, Interim Director, Morgantown, West Virginia. Published in Furtherance of Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914.